

**Minutes**  
**Board of Trustees: April 16, 2025**  
**First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh**

**Board Members Attending (End of Board Term):** Brian Junker, President (2026); Jim Pashek, Vice President (2027) Kyle Gracey (2026), Treasurer (2025); Nicholas Izzo, Secretary (2025); Maria Lauro (2027) Raeann Olander (2025); Jean Schmidt (2026); Christine Milcarek (2025); Richard Dum (2027)

**Absent Members:**

**Ex Officio Member:** Rev Kate Walker

**Others:** Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

**Visitors:** Martin Schmidt, Chair Building Committee, Mac Perkins-High, Intern Minister

**Call to Order (Brian) (7:00) (Zoom)**

1. **Opening Words (Raeann)** ....life anger: I Cheerfully Refuse: someone asked what he refuses: to freeze, to be forced into hibernation, fear, when you need direction the worst thing to have in your pocket is a broken compass, ...but I think it means you need to respond not be paralyzed...refuse to ignore the rope ladders...paying the attention which becomes devotion...third I refuse to despair,...all of us are needed, doing our various jobs...
2. **Welcoming Guests (Martin Schmidt)**
3. **Announcements (Jim)**
  - a. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, May 21, 2025 (zoom meeting).
  - b. May Opening Words: Jim
  - c. Committee reports due in April; Stewardship, Building, Finance minutes, Investments, UUA Opportunities and Activities
4. **Consent Agenda (Brian) (Documents)**
  - a. Minutes from March board meeting. Motion to accept (with edits) by Brian. Motion carries with unanimous approval.
  - b. Minister's Report.  
Rev. Kate notices an increase in pastoral care.
  - c. Intern Minister's Report  
Mac submitted this morning, nothing to add. Kyle will investigate some additional places to post a campus ministry position.
  - d. LRED Report  
Nothing to report. Erica will update later in the week. Nominating committee is prepared for the upcoming meeting.
  - e. Treasurer's report:  
Nothing to report.
  - f. Committee reports:
    - i. Nominating Committee  
No potential nominee for Treasurer has been found. Kyle will delineate how to help break up the position duties if necessary. Richard mentioned he spoke with Alice Carnes who spoke with Lee Carnes who said he is still working and feels he may not have the available time.

- ii. Personnel  
Reviewed campus coordinator earlier.
  - iii. Program Endowments  
Nothing noted in the current report.
  - iv. VIM  
Jean mentions a summary document. VIM will use it to update the strategic plan, for later discussion with the board. Delayed discussion on Maurice.
- Jean refers to page 4: What could First Unitarian do to make positive change? A covenant group for members giving elder care came up. A further idea is to market the RE program outside the church.

#### **5. Priorities for use of Funds from Capital Campaign Update (Jim, Martin Schmidt)**

Martin notes priority list from his many years of involvement with the building committee, mentioning it is a living list. Nick notes work on sanctuary lights and fans should coincide. Jim notes acoustics are very important. Jean asks if there is a need for Men's and Women's rooms. Kyle moves to adopt a list of priorities. Richard asks about capital endowment fund and mentions he is uncomfortable. Jim asks about replacement windows as well. Maria mentions it is a very extensive list. Kyle mentions matching could be added under miscellaneous projects. Mac asks for more gradations amongst the money expenditures. Kate mentions endowment was mentioned during capital campaign meetings. Brian is on board with high priority items.

Suggests posting the list in the sanctuary. Jim asks if numbers are scaled to the overall campaign raise. Kyle confirms \$806,000, Mac confirms 15% is a normal percentage.

Kyle recommends to replace the numbers with percentages. Jim suggests to discuss to mention this in a way that shows how it is accounted for. Kate says \*is note to be maxed out as a percentage.

Jim mentions that perhaps we can note more to see. Arthur cautions how to move forward. Kyle says endowment may be considered by percentage. Brian says we don't have to vote at this time.

Brian invites a sense of consensus that allows us to move forward in the future. Nick asks how to proceed with moving forward with the projects. Martin says we can seek approval for items above 100k.

#### **6. Capital Campaign Update (Jim)**

Jim mentions it's been a struggle to attract attendees. Richard suggests appealing to covenant groups to organize sessions

#### **7. Vote on Delegates to GA (Brian)**

Brian moves to approve Kyle Gracy as a delegate to the UU General Assembly. The motion passes 8-0 with 1 abstention.

Mac notes that he will also be in attendance.

#### **8. Vote to confirm email vote on transfer of funds for laptop purchase (Nick)**

Kyle moves to allocate \$650 for a replacement work-from-home computer, with \$540 coming from the Landscape R&M Reserve.

This motion was approved unanimously by email vote. According to Bylaws, the motion was reaffirmed unanimously at this meeting.

**9. Statement on elimination of Ombuds officer (Maria)**

Statement was drafted to the congregation on the elimination of the Ombuds officer position with an instruction on how members can direct their issues. Following discussion, it will be tweaked by Rev Kate and Maria to indicate that there was never much contact with the Ombuds officer since the position was created.

**10. Quarterly Financial Report (Kyle)**

- a. About a third of pledges have been received. Investments have done well so far. Most income is from bonds, so it will be stable. Expenses have been relatively stable.
- b. Running more at a net loss than budgeted, due to shifted income to later in the year.
- c. Nothing stands out particularly negatively or positively yet.

**11. Proposal for Board Initiative (Rev Kate)**

- a. Rev Kate notes during a time of great political scrutiny on activists there is more attention to people who focus on contentious societal issues. Creation of a networking event to help folks access resources for help and council to help.
- b. De-escalation training for security folks assisting the event.
- c. Arthur and Jim to work on proposed banner.

**12. Planning Annual Meeting (All)**

- a.) Sunday May 18th at 4 pm
  - b.) Brian will make a report
  - c.) Kate asked about the council of communities, Raeann noted during dinner the din of sound is too much
  - d.) An update on the capital campaign
  - e.) Kyle asks, Kate responds Mary Dennison is involved with Share the Plate voting for second half year topics.
  - f.) Nick volunteers to coordinate a cleanup team
- Rev Kate will ask Rita to ask Dan to setup tables for the event
- g.) Childcare - Jean noticed Erica's report about the subject
  - h.) Publicity – Brian
  - i.) Rev Kate - reserved the room
  - j.) Maria to make flyers
  - k.) Zoom link for the meeting, Nick will run voting procedures by Kyle

**13. Vote on voting procedures for Annual Meeting (Nick)**

Nick moves that the Board of Trustees authorize the use of secure online voting (Election Buddy), Absentee ballots and proxy voting at the Annual Congregational Meeting, with proxy votes to be allowed to be cast in person or by electronic ballot, with proxy requests to be received by email or in person at the church by Thursday, May 15, 2025.

Motion passes unanimously, 9-0.

## **12. Discussion /Vote on Policy for notification of Group Accounts by Treasurer (Nick)**

a.) Nick moves the following:

*Regarding accounts with a "Group" designation, The Treasurer shall, on an annual basis, notify the chair of the group associated with the funds of the balance in that fund and provide them with information on submitting reimbursements."*

Motion passed unanimously

## **13. Future Business (All)**

- Jean mentions that COSM, VIM and Rev Kate have been coordinating how often we go to the congregation for board assessment purposes. Is the strategic plan fine as written? Rev Kate and Brian mentions this may also be a retreat item, agrees with Jean it is a discussion item for retreat.
- Nick - we need to pin down the retreat date. Retiring Board members will not be required to attend.
- Nick mentions when we voted to remove the air filters, we agreed to write a statement for release. Jean asks about the refund. Nick hasn't heard anything.
- A revised Charter for the Building and Grounds Committee will be put up for approval at May meeting
- A Revised Governance manual will be put up for approval at the May meeting
- Behavioral Covenant needs to be addressed – probably at retreat.

## **14. Acknowledgements and Appreciation (All)**

A.) Raeann thanks the amazing team who helped pull off the capital campaign events. Mina chipped in, Shelly Ross, Mimi Durthcik, Nick, Martin, Chas helped with dish washing, Chris made very valued aprons as well.

B.) Richard and Maria thank Martin for all the work he is doing to solicit bids.

C.) Nick thanks Arthur for sharing expertise to the Building committee

D.) Rev Kate thanks Bob and others for their expertise helping with camera setup.

E.) Chris thanks those for helping.

F.) Kate appreciates that we do not have 5 hour Sunday board meetings like some other congregation she knows of.

## **15. Adjourn (Brian) (9:05)**

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: May 21, 2025



Nicholas Izzo, Secretary