

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2025

Board Members Attending: Jim Pashek, President (2027); Maria Lauro, Secretary (2027); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2026); Jean Schmidt (2026); Richard Dum (2027); Lucinda Beattie (2028); Deborah McGuire (2028); Casey Taylor (2028); Rev. Kate Walker, ex officio

1. Opening

- Meeting called to order
- Opening words by Casey, reflecting on gratitude and historical resilience.

2. Vice President Appointment

- Motion by Maria Lauro to appoint Casey as Vice President.
- Unanimous approval.

3. Announcements

- Next meeting: Wednesday, October 15 (Hybrid).
- Committee reports due: Stewardship, Finance, Personnel, Program Endowments, VIM, RE Council.
- Executive Committee meeting moved to first Tuesday of October.

4. Consent Agenda

- August minutes approved unanimously with minor corrections.

5. Minister's Report

- Rev. Kate Walker shared her nomination for PIIN (Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network) presidency.
- This will be her sabbatical project and aligns with the strategic plan goal to become a community hub for social justice.
- Board expressed general support; no formal vote taken.

6. Committee Reports

- RE Council: Casey to be included in future meetings. Positive feedback on RE launch.

- Treasurer's Report: Finance Committee minutes reviewed; investment report pending.
- Capital Projects: Electrical work nearly complete; screens installed; windows expected in October. \$1.1M pledged, \$384K received, ~\$50K available for current projects.

7. Sabbatical Planning

- Staff liaison assignments and logistics discussed.
- Sabbatical and study leave planned for January 1 through June 1, 2026 ; flexible based on staff needs.

8. Board Priorities

- Motion to approve by Jean Schmidt.
- Unanimous approval.
- Kyle and Brian suggested earlier finalization in future years.

9. Committee Appointments

- COSM:
 - Ebe Emmons appointed to complete Sue Oerkvitz's term.
 - Kate Snow appointed Chair for one year.
- Finance & Investment Committees:
 - Chap Donovan appointed to both committees for 5-year terms.
- All appointments approved unanimously.

10. Behavioral Covenant Development

- Rev. Kate outlined a 3-phase process: education, dialogue, drafting, with a goal to be ready for vote at the May 17, 2026 annual meeting
- Motion to approve process by Casey.
- Unanimous approval.

11. Leadership Development Discussion

- Discussion led by Casey

- Topics included onboarding, recruitment, and sustaining board engagement.
- Kyle and Brian emphasized formalizing recruitment and support structures.
- Suggestions included leveraging UUA resources and improving visibility of volunteer needs.

12. Preliminary Budget Presentation

- Presented by Kyle.
- Budget projected at ~\$600,000.
- ~\$21,000 deficit from current year to be addressed.
- Key points:
 - 4.5% pledge increase requested.
 - Staff cost of living increase included (3.2%).
 - Sabbatical reserve and capital campaign funds used to offset costs.
 - No fantasy auction revenue expected.
 - Membership flat but stable.
 - Insurance and healthcare costs rising.
- Discussion included comparisons to other UU churches, grant opportunities, and membership trends.

13. Future Business

- October agenda items:
 - Strategic Plan vote.
 - Communications Audit presentation.
 - Social Hour planning.
 - Thanksgiving luncheon coordination.
 - Finance Committee Charter approval.
 - Recordkeeping roles and Breeze updates.

14. Acknowledgements

- Appreciation expressed to:

- Jean Schmidt for organizing the ingathering picnic.
- Erica for RE program launch and community building.
- Casey for accepting Vice President role.
- All volunteers who contributed to recent events.

15. Adjournment

Approved by the Board October 15, 2025

Maria Lauro, Secretary