

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis – (UUI)  
Board of Trustee (BoT) Meeting Minutes  
September 18, 2023/7pm/Regular Meeting/Zoom**

*Prepared by Tammy Jackson, BoT Secretary  
Our Slack Website: uu-indy.slack.com*

**Board Members Present:**

*Jennifer Gatz – President  
Reuben Benzel – Treasurer  
Tammy Jackson – Secretary  
Mike Hertel – Trustee  
John Russell – Trustee  
Kate Stephens – Trustee  
Sharon Chrust – Trustee  
Sergio Cianci Chapman - Trustee  
Sarah Cannon – RE Director  
Rev Dawn Cooley – Interim Minister*

*Guests: Judith Skyles, Mariah Arkins, Nan Schulte and Ray Wilson*

*Meeting called to order by BoT President Jennifer Gatz at 7:00pm*

*Chalice Reading – Rev Dawn Cooley*

**Gratitude Cards**

- *Thank you cards to be sent to Linda Parr for her work with and dedication to the UUI choir, Mariah Arkins for finishing the cottage bathroom and Bob Blake for contributing to the energy efficiency (weather stripping) and mouse-proofing of the doors in the RE building (John Russell will send thanks to Mariah and Bob and Mike Hertel will send thanks to Linda).*

**Member Input**

- *Mariah Arkins stressed that snacks were needed for the children during coffee hour. It was suggested that this request be passed on to the coffee hour volunteers.*
- *Kate advised that a member of the congregation had voiced concern regarding voting over Zoom and questioned if there might be a better way for those using Zoom to attend congregational meetings to vote. This is something we will have to investigate.*

**New Business:**

**Open Positions**

*Since Jerry Foster resigned his position as Board Vice President and his spot on the Leadership Committee, we have not yet found a replacement for these openings. The board has the right to appoint someone for 90 days, until the next congregational meeting. Jennifer will reach out to the Leadership Fulfillment Committee and request that they put together a team of people who will review potential members. There are 3 members on the Leadership Fulfillment Committee, with one rolling off. Jennifer will start an email thread regarding a potential replacement. Kate had some questions regarding the*

*Leadership Fulfillment Committee, which she will direct to Jennifer and Jennifer will discuss with David Jackoway.*

### **Congregational Meeting**

*Jennifer stated that there have been some changes to the congregational meeting agenda. She met with Ray Wilson and the facilities team and rather than asking to vote on approval of a budget for a specific fund, they will ask to vote for approval on a ballpark fund. The congregational meeting that was scheduled for September will be moved to December. Jennifer will email Erica Pahud to take the congregational meeting off the calendar and to put out a notice in our e-blast.*

### **Treasurer Position**

*Alex Ervin, who is currently our Assistant Treasurer, is ready to step up as Treasurer and Reuben Benzel will be stepping down. Rueben will no longer be on the board but will stay on the Finance Committee. He will also train Alex and Alex will take over on October 1<sup>st</sup>. David Culp will continue as Assistant Treasurer. John Russell thanked Rueben for all his hard work and for doing a fantastic job as Treasurer. The other board members echoed that praise. We truly appreciate Rueben for who he is and all he has done for UUI!*

### **Board Retreat**

*The board retreat is scheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup>, following service. This is a time to revisit our covenant and goals for the year. Rev Dawn suggested that we allow time to talk about Governance, what it is and the different modes of it. This would include discussing how to run more efficient and effective board meetings. Rueben felt these topics were important to discuss. John was concerned about not having enough time to discuss the needs we set last year, and he felt it better to stick to the nuts and bolts for our retreat. Kate Stephens felt it is important to discuss board responsibilities and Sharon Chrust backed her up by relaying that she had felt short-changed by the orientation that was given to new board members and didn't feel she came away with the tools she needs to be effective on the board. She felt there was too much focus on UUA. She also noted that this was just her personal observation, and she was not speaking for anyone else. It was decided that we would work on our covenant and goals and introduce the governance modes.*

### **All-Congregation Pitch-in & Workshop**

*Rev. David Pyle, the Regional Lead of the UUA's MidAmerica Region, will be facilitating, along with Rev. Dawn. The workshops within this retreat will be designed for our congregation, new interim minister, and new Director of Lifespan Religious Education to find grounding, deepen relationships, and create shared expectations as we begin our journey together. The schedule for this retreat is as follows:*

*Friday, September 22 – 5:30-6:45 – Pitch-in. Attendees will be able to share 3 joys and 3 sorrows in relation to their time at UUI.*

*Saturday, September 23 – 9:15am with lunch at 12:30pm*

*Rev Dawn will talk to Sarah Cannon regarding childcare. Jennifer is bringing sandwiches for the group.*

*Rev Dawn voiced concern over being down 2 staff members who are no longer here. She stated that teams are struggling to figure out how to fill the holes those members have left. David Pyle will walk us through the issue and that will be the primary topic of conversation on Saturday. Mike reminded*

*everyone that the staff cut was due to a budget deficit and these positions were funded by a special grant.*

### ***Personnel Manual & Committee***

*John Russell had volunteered last month to revisit the policies and procedures of the personnel manual. He recommended a 4-person committee with a board liaison or to have the board heavily involved. Ryan Robinson offered to join the committee. Rev Dawn will also be involved as well as John. Jennifer stated that Carla Koertge may be interested. Rev Dawn stated that the personnel manual has been reviewed and that changes need to be made and then portions sent to the board for review. Rev Dawn will check to see if there is a previous charter. Mike Hertel suggested the need for a personnel standing committee. John will reach out to the committee members and go over the updates and figure out how best to break it out. He will follow up with the board next month.*

### ***Religious Education Council***

*Kate Stephens provided an update stating that they had started using Breeze to track volunteers and attendance. They have recruited 28 volunteers and of those, 17 have been background checked so far. They have also come up with a list of interested OWL teachers.*

### ***Potential Religious Education Building Tenant***

*Mike Hertel advised that they had been working with a daycare center but needed additional information. The daycare center had reported a \$400,000 increase in income, but their bank statement showed declining enrollment, which doesn't add up. They don't pay rent where they are currently located. He also stated that conversations with them had been difficult and suggested we move on with other potential tenants. Sharing space has been an issue with several potential renters. 15 parties have toured the space. Mike is still hopeful to have a tenant by the end of the year. Thanks to Mike for all his time and hard work on this endeavor!*

### ***Board Meetings***

*Sharon suggested sharing the agenda of board meetings with the UUI members. Jennifer will provide these to Erica prior to future board meetings. John suggested the need to get financial reports earlier, at least 24 hours before a board meeting. Rueben stated that shouldn't be a problem going forward.*

### ***Document Review***

*Rueben advised that the Finance Committee has been reviewing work on some documents.*

*Document 1 – Financial Policies & Procedures – roles of Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Pledge Treasurer and Congregation Administrator. He stated that the person reporting money should not be the same person collecting money and that document retention is important as well as reconciliation. Alex will do a monthly reconciliation of the bank statement. He also advised that we need to track PTO for staff. Blake Warner, a colleague of Mike Hertel's, helped with the review.*

*Document 2 – Endowment Fund Policy – written policy managing what requests go through the Endowment*

*Document 3 – Transfer Protocol – through our excess cash account (rollover account) it accrues interest. This is a policy the board approved. We need to revisit the checking account balance. The Finance Committee will work on this over the next couple of months.*

*Rueben stated that after they incorporate written recommendations the board should have a more finalized document to approve. Mike advised that the board must officially approve the document and suggested breaking it up into 3 parts for review. He suggested having the Endowment and rollover policy for review at the next board meeting.*

### **Task Team to Review/Recommend Revised Policy for Board Approval**

*Rev Dawn and Sarah Cannon talked about the Safe Congregation Policy. They suggested that the team be comprised of a board member and an RE Council member. Mike Hertel volunteered to act as the board liaison and Kate Stephens will be the liaison from the RE Council. Rev Dawn will coordinate a meeting.*

### **RE Director Report**

*Sarah stressed the need to increase Erica's hours to take some things off her plate. Rev Dawn recommended a 1-hour total increase which would equate to \$873.60 in additional payment for the year. This will free up Sarah's time to focus on more pertinent issues.*

### **Board Vote**

*Sharon Chrust moved that Erica's position be increased to 13 hours per week from 12 hours per week. Ruben advised that the money would come from the savings in moving expenses from Rev Dawn's move. Mike was concerned about how this might look relative to the previous staff cut.*

### **All approved**

### **Discontinuation of Membership for Inactive Members**

*This is relative to members who have not pledged and/or participated for 3 years. Jennifer advised that there were 20 people on the list. Kate noted that she had seen 2 of those involved in online services. Rev Dawn stated that the bylaws require an annual pledge of financial support to be a member. Holly Hendrickson has sent out an email to those members in question.*

### **Financial Report**

*Rueben led this discussion by talking about pledge behavior and that we had received \$50,000 in pledges for this fiscal year. \$25,000 was collected before the fiscal year. He advised that July and August were typically slower collection months for pledges. He also stated that the Finance team had moved to QuickBooks for reconciliation. Apparently, there was a glitch that occurred resulting in inaccurate numbers, which lowered the checking account balance this month. Rueben informed that they would withdraw money from other accounts to get the checking account more balanced. He was also excited to inform the board that the Medallion Stamp is in process. Next, Rueben went over the Operating Statement. He said that August was a big month for expenditures and that other than the HVAC, the building projects had now been paid for.*

### **DRLE Report**

*Sarah stated that she is pleased with registration numbers, and they are still getting registrants. They have 25 volunteers and are working on being more transparent and scheduling further out.*

### **Ministerial Report**

*Rev Dawn advised that she has shifted from meeting with people to looking at the data she has gathered from these meetings. Mike was concerned that the attendance numbers from UUA looked off. He was curious as to what we might have counted in the past and if we've changed something going forward. He said that the 2023 number of 100 doesn't seem accurate. He also relayed that the numbers were reported to UUA by UUI. Kate informed that her team is developing a better way to track attendance. Rev Dawn stated that it wasn't unusual for numbers to be off and that she would also be going over this with staff. John will talk to David Jackoway about this as well.*

### **Meeting Adjourned**