



Board Meeting – December, 20 2022

Our mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.

Meeting Minutes

Board: Kim Reid, President; Paul Trewartha-Weiner, Vice President; Kimberly E., Secretary, John Helmers, Treasurer; Brianna Berg, Molly Dingel, Jodi Edmonson, John Tacinelli & Walt Rothwell, Members at Large, Reb. Luke Stevens-Royer, ex officio

Absent: Paul for a portion of the meeting.

1. **Call to order.** Kim R. called the meeting to order.
2. **Chalice Lighting & Reflection.** John T shared a reflection on wonder.
3. **Motion to approve agenda and previous meeting minutes.** Approval of the Minutes and agenda moved by Walt, seconded by John H. Motion carried.
4. **Financial reports.** The financial reports were sent out prior to the meeting. John reviewed the highlights.
5. **Minister's report:**

Don't push the river.

I've shared this phrase a few times in recent weeks, hearing this teaching from a colleague recently. It's a good reminder, and multi-faceted, for church life (and life in general, for that matter.) It reminds us that the movement of a church (like the soul, like life), is always in motion, attending to the terrain it is traveling through. Sometimes, there are calm pools, at other times raging rapids, and everything between. You don't want to force things along, and you also don't want to dam them up.

I'm feeling the wisdom of that teaching in this season of waiting – not just for holidays, but for a building vote. I'm also feeling it in programming: a desire to rebuild what felt like a vibrant pre-covid time in our church. There is certainly some of that happening (returning programs, dinners, and more), as well as increased participation in many things. Just this Sunday, a newer, younger family remarked how vibrant it feels each week – on Wednesdays and Sundays – even with numbers being slightly lower than pre-covid. We are trying to attend to that energy (thinking how to re-energize the children's choir without overburdening music staff or family schedules, etc., is one example.)

I think that's true. It's a combination of changing demographics (a lot of newer younger families showing up consistently), as well as changed habits of longtime members – there is an energy of vibrancy and connection. Our membership, as of Monday, was 387 (after some weeding of the rolls.) This is, given the general state of churches, especially

post(ish) pandemic, remarkable. We have grown during these few years, especially this past year.

We are among many other UU churches in an odd mid-range in terms of ministry. Right around 400 is when it becomes possible, though not a necessity, to have more than one minister. However, those thresholds are not clear-cut, they are much more nuanced. We feel well staffed right now in terms of hours and responsibilities, and the immediate financial question is about our building. I think over the next few years, we will gain a clearer sense about where we are headed, and how ministry staffing may or may not need to shift. I want to keep that on our radar, and part of our ongoing conversations moving forward.

As always, it is a work in progress, and will continue to ebb and flow. We are trying to read the energy of the time, attend to it, and move with it – not too much ahead, or behind. This is the same with our building work. It is important to read the energy of our people, including the results of the vote, and move with that vibrancy in ways that feel right – leaning with faith toward uncertainty, even as we take our time. It will be important to move with the *overall* terrain of our congregation, knowing that it is not universal. And, I'm sure we will do so, in love.

In faith,
Luke

Old business

6. Shared Ministry Team Updates: for the full reports go to:

<https://uurochmn.org/shared-ministry-team-meetings/>

- Shared Ministry Governance Team – Kim R
- Administration – Kim E. & Walt (met 11/20 and will meet 1/15)

Topic 1: Memorial Garden – Update on Moving Memorial Garden • Walt met with the Memorial Garden team to talk about thoughts on moving the Memorial Garden. It was decided that we table discussions until after the vote in January. Keeping in mind that no matter the decision in January, the Memorial Garden will have to be moved and/or stored and that it will be done with ceremony, care, empathy, and respect. Walt will bring to the board verbiage change to the Memorial Garden policy. Changing the word “sample” to “samples or sampling.”

Topic 2: Outdoor Property Workday Attendance (PWD) • Barb Foss brought up the fact that the last PWD was not very well attended. This could be for a number of factors. Recommend to keep PWD as they are scheduled. A large scaled inside/outside work day will be scheduled in spring of 2023.

Topic 3: Tree Line behind church • Walt spoke about how the Board mentioned getting an arborist to come out and look at the tree line in back of the church.

It was decided to wait until the vote in January to determine if/when and arborist should look at the property

- Congregational Life – Jodi (will meet 1/25)
 - The website has been updated to allow for on-line sign-up for volunteer activities.
- Faith Development – John T & Kim R.(will meet 1/8)
- Financial Stewardship – John H. (will meet 1/17)
- Social Justice – Brianna & Molly (will meet 1/11)
- Worship & Music – Paul (will meet 1/11)

New Business

7. Building Our Future:

<https://uurochmn.org/buildingourfuture/>

- There was a brief discussion on the value of the forums. It is believed they were effective in communicating the issues related to the building question. In addition, a PowerPoint summary that Karen Tarara would like to share with the board. The 1/11 forum will be the last one for the Building our futures team to present their findings.
- The is coming up, January 22nd - 29th. It was determined that an announcement announcing the vote on 1/22 would be sufficient and an additional forum would not be required. Melissa will be working with Chalice Circles to get volunteers to staff the voting tables at church. A Board presence to help address building questions would be of value. Board volunteers for these dates were identified and all board members are encouraged to attend and participate by being available to answer questions during the vote.
- Building our Futures Beyond Ourselves Team submitted a Resolution to the board for review and endorsement. The board discussed whether they were ready to approve the resolution prior to the 1/11 forum. After much discussion, the board wanted the congregation to see the resolution prior to a board endorsement. A plan for sharing the resolution/recommendation was developed to allow for the maximum amount of congregation input.
- Discussion of recent meeting with Rachel Maxwell and next steps after the vote.
 - After the vote have a moving forward meeting with Leadership and Rachel on 2/5 followed by a “Moving Forward” forum with the congregation in Feb. 2023.
 - Property Forum/Straw Poll to guide pre-design - February 2023/March 2023
 - Architectural Pre-Design - March-May 2023 (Locus is aware this might be a possibility)
 - Annual Meeting (potentially finalize property, present pre-design, etc.) - June, 2023

- Feasibility Study - Fall 2023 (Rachel is aware this might be a possibility)
- Capital/Pledge Campaign Co-Launch - Spring 2024.

8. Other

Meeting adjourned.

Next Meetings:

Thursday January 12th, 7:00 special meeting to consider the Building our Futures recommendation.

Tuesday January 18, 2023, regular board meeting 7:00

Reflection theme: Finding Our Center – Molly

Respectfully submitted, Kimberly Edson, Secretary