



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

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes February 21, 2024 7:00 PM

Present: Kim Reid, President; Kimberly Edson, Secretary; John Helmers, Treasurer, Aleta Borrud, Brianna Berg, Rod Milbrandt, Jodi Edmonson & John Tacinelli, Members at Large, Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer, ex officio

Absent: Paul Trewartha-Weiner

1. **Call to order** Kim Reid called the meeting to order.
2. **Chalice Lighting & Reflection - Justice & Equity** Kim R. shared a reading for the chalice lighting.
3. **Check In/On Our Hearts**
4. **Approval of agenda and January meeting's minutes**
The agenda and minutes, as amended, were approved as distributed and by consensus.
5. **Minister's Report**

*It is time now that we thrive – and what a time to be alive;
in this great turning we shall learn to lead in love...*

- *From "We Shall Be Known", by Karisha Longaker of MaMuse*

It certainly is quite a time to be alive, in the world (as always, I'm reminded by elders and children alike), as well as in our church. The success and energy of our building campaign is palpable, and the vibrancy in our church with both long-time, medium-time (?), and newer members and friends is a regular joy. While attendance and participation remain less consistent from week to week as people's patterns and routines have shifted since the pandemic (as is the case across denominations), each month we are glad to welcome new visitors, engage young and returning families and children, and have found a renewed depth and gladness in programming. Each Sunday I look out on the parking lot wondering "anyone coming today?" and like a little parade (at 8:55 – typical) seems to show up and I'm reminded that something is at work in our church. Call it Spirit, Love, Community, Compassion – I believe in all of it.

With that energy, and with the intensity of change in our community, feelings and reactions and emotions show up in different ways. Sometimes, with unexpected joy; other times, with worry and anxiety, other times with misplaced criticism or rigidity. I say this all to be clear: this is normal in church life. Naming it as normal does not mean to minimize concerns or not address them, but it does help me remember that community is messy, and to keep leading in love.

This includes the work right now with *Article II*, our national UU bylaw proposed changes from our 7 principles (which I preached on recently as being beloved to me) to new shared values. I shared resources with you, and at a forum this evening, and there is another gathering on March 10. Mostly, I want to acknowledge that these changes feel significant, and at the same time, maintain much of the same spiritual language we now hold dear, in different ways. I am supportive of these changes, even if I don't find them perfect. I believe they express, overall, the values that we hold in common as Unitarian Universalists of many identities, and give voice to the active embodiment of those values in our lives.

Finally, as I was preparing the budget and continue to think about keeping up with the energy of the church with appropriate support for staffing and programs, I wanted to share some general guidance from the UUA. We are in "Size Profile 3" which is 200-450 members (we are currently 422), which calls for 1-2 Ministers, and program staffing levels (excluding custodial, childcare, etc.) of 2.5-6 FTEs. We are currently at ~3.625 for the coming year. So, in short, we are toward the higher end of membership, and toward the lower half of staffing. I do feel that we are currently at a healthy place, and at the same time wanted to give you some context for your own discernment and for sharing with other congregants the need to continue to support increases in staffing in various areas. To keep things "balanced" and to avoid burnout or overburdening staff or, in turn, volunteers for lack of staff support.

As I prepare for sabbatical at the end of next month, I'm feeling the need for rest from the intensity of church life, trying to re-set to have more space to tend to aspects of ministry that I love and simply haven't had time for: small groups and classes about the UU common read, theology and spiritual practice, justice and more. The old ministry adage was *for every minute of sermon, plan an hour of prep* – meaning for study, reflection, and writing. I'll be honest – that doesn't happen (and for deeper honesty, never has, as each minister's writing style is different, and mine is more reflective). All that to say, creating time and space for rest and thinking, *soul space*, is a deeply important investment you are making for the ministry of this church. I'm deeply grateful for the gift of this time, and am hoping to continue to find ways to keep the energy of the church, and our support of it, balanced for nourishment and thriving.

In faith,
Luke

6. January Church Financials

- a. January finance report -- John H. shared an overview of the church financial statements and discussed Connie's notes.
- a. Insurance cancellation. Our insurance company discontinued our policy effective 2/24. John, Connie, Luke have been looking for replacement policies to cover the church. The new policy options are much more expensive with higher deductibles. Research shows there are dramatic increases in cost for property insurance across denominations and across the country. Workman's comp, liability insurance, and liability for the Viola property is now covered by separate policies which were authorized.

John H. moved and Aleta seconded the motion to increase the insurance budget from \$5,000 to \$44,000 to accommodate the increase in insurance premiums. The money for this increase will come from the Working Capital fund and Wells Fargo Sweep Account. Motion approved.

Research on policy options will continue prior to the renewal next year.

7. **Updated draft budget for next church year** Luke shared projected budgets for the next fiscal year with base, mid-line, and aspirational budgets. Some budget challenges were discussed as well as a discussion of the financial priorities. The goal is for the board to have a preliminary budget by the end of March so that the new staff salaries can go into effect June 1st.
8. **Building Our Future Beyond Ourselves** (Kim R. and John H.)
 - a. December Building Our Future Financial Reports. John reviewed the BOFBO budget. So far we have received 43 Pledges. The paid pledges are \$319,531.88; Unpaid (receivable) pledges = \$1,424,433.12. The campaign is going well and expenses will increase during the next phase of the project.
 - a. BOFBO Updates.
 1. The BOFBO team got very different results from their requests for preliminary estimates. The team needs to investigate further to get more reliable cost estimates to make decisions for next steps. Union Labor and prevailing wages for construction are what are being considered from all of those providing estimates.
 2. Cost and benefits of flat floor vs sloped floor in the sanctuary are being looked at more closely.
 3. We have asked Locus to slow down on design revisions because we need to be further along with information from the preliminary construction estimates before contracting with Locus for the schematic design phase.
 4. A structural engineer is also needed to work with the city as part of this process. Options are being explored.
 5. The team is also exploring options with a construction manager for coordinating the sub-contracting. This would be an alternative to hiring a general contractor.
 6. The current UU Church Building went on the market on 1/15.
 - a. Joint Board/BOFBO. On March 20 there will be a joint meeting with BOFBO and the Board. This will be our opportunity to prioritize our building needs and develop a strategy moving forward.
 - a. Possible Board or BOFBO Forums:
 - April 3, Capital Campaign and BOFBO building update.
 - May 1, Bylaws changes and Budget update. (Possible bylaw change is to update the bylaws to allow for additional people to sign legal documents authorized by the board. Kim R. will work with Kathy Brutinel to help draft some updates.)
9. **Shared Ministry Governance**
 - a. Approve new Nominating Committee policy. Motion to approve updates to the policy made by John T, seconded by John H. Motion carries.
 - a. Materials to review in preparation for approval of policy changes at the March Board meeting. Kim R. shared the drafts and locations of the draft policy changes for board members to review prior to the next meeting.

a. Team Updates (Team Board Liaisons)

- Congregational Life met 1/22. Jodi reported that current church membership is at 422. The Caring Congregation group has been meeting with Julie Gilkinson to better coordinate efforts. There is a need for more cook team members. There will be an option to shadow a cook team and childcare will be provide for parents on cook teams. 2025 women's retreat is tentatively set for April 2025.

10. Ongoing Business

- a. Immigration LLC update. Shelly called a meeting for people working on immigration issues for the church. John was there to share the requirements and recommendations for the newly created LLC and the team has created a sub-committee to work on developing this further.

0. **Other Topics/Announcements?**

0. **Adjourn**

Next meetings:

March 20 - Joint Board/BOFBO meeting

March 27 - Topic: Transformation (Rod)

June 2 – Annual meeting