

First Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist  
Auburn, ME  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
January 4, 2023

Present: Anne Perron (President), Linda Greathouse (Vice President), Jane Pentheny (member-at-large), David Das (Clerk), Betty Riggin (member-at-large), Ed Bell (member-at-large) via Zoom; Rev. Jodi Hayashida (*ex officio*)  
Invited Guests: Greg Whitney (co-chair, PSDI); Ellen O'Brien (Treasurer); Greg Bianconi (chair, Finance Committee)

Guests: Angela Foss, Levesque

6:35: Anne Perron called the meeting to order.



*Board Chalice*

Anne read the Mission and Vision Statements.

Sharing by Board members.

Opening words by Betty Riggin.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

- Accepting the December 29, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Minister's Report (appended)

**Minister's Report:**

- Discussion of hiring Rev. Paul Langston-Daley as facilitator for Truth Telling session in February. He is well regarded as a facilitator by many including Anne Kinney. Cost calculated on a sliding scale ranging from \$2035-\$3500. Consensus that we

should request lower end of scale given our financial circumstances. Rev. Jodi to contact Rev. Langston-Daley. Date of facilitation session: February 18.

- Rev. Jodi gave overview of procedures re: accessing board meetings. Details in appended Minister's Report.

### **Policy on In-Person Participation at Board Meetings:**

Motion by Jane Pentheny, second by Linda Greathouse to accept the proposal to amend the Board Policy Manual by adding Section 1.4.1.2.6.:

1.4.1.2.6. In-Person Participation by Members at Board Meetings

*Members may address the Board in-person at Board meetings. After the Consent Agenda, members may address the Board once on items that are not on the agenda. After each Discussion/Action item, members may address the Board once on that item. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes per address. The Board shall appoint a timekeeper.*

Unanimous approval.

Will ask Toby to inform the congregation.

### **Discussion of how PSDI finances fit into general church financial structure:**

Joined by Greg Whitney, Greg Bianconi, and Ellen O'Brien.

Conversation topics:

- PSDI and Finance Committee in regular, close conversation
- PSDI has a separate checking account under the auspices of the church. Signatories on the account: Greg Whitney, John Davison, Ellen O'Brien, Anne Perron
- Greg W. outlined checks and balances system for donations and expenditures
- PSDI has paid for all its expenses from donations
- Bathroom project financed by PSDI grants and donations. Anne Perron stated that she has contracted to work on bathroom; Board saw no conflict of interest or had any concern.
- Cost sharing discussion:
  - Greg W. stated that PSDI should cover the extra costs of janitorial supplies (consumables)
  - PSDI does not create extra cost for heat (Greg W. expressed his concerns about problems with the church heating system)
  - Cost sharing around other utilities: water; electricity

- Should we agree on a sum that the PSDI would contribute to general church finances? Would be a drop in the bucket vis a vis the budget gap, but would be a good gesture.
- Insurance and Liability issues: Greg Bianconi will contact broker at Church Mutual. Board will create a task force of Greg Whitney, Greg Bianconi, and some Board members to work through these questions.
- PSDI 501(3)(c) status: PSDI looking into it. Nothing concrete so far. Would change relationship between PSDI and church with PSDI becoming a tenant.
- Should we return to having an outside cleaning service? How to split the cost? Buildings and Grounds Committee and Finance Committee should be involved in that discussion.

Guest Comments:

- Levesque:
  - liability lessened if the church is known to be a drug free campus;
  - concern that drug use keeps people away from church;
  - utilities costs with new bathroom and washer/dryer.
- Angela Foss:
  - bring up Duty of Care in conversation with insurance broker.

8:45: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

David H. Das (Clerk)

## Minister's Report

### 1.4.23

This report is primarily informational **but does include one action item.**

**Facilitated meeting update:** I reached out to Paul Langston-Daley, the facilitator recommended by Anne Kinney that I had originally contacted in the fall. He is still willing to work with the congregation. The only date in February (the month I believe we were aiming for) that he has available is the weekend of February 18th. [Here is a link](#) to Paul's proposal from this fall. While it may shift slightly, his description and price range will still be largely applicable. Because of his limited availability, **it would be beneficial if we decided whether or not to move ahead at this board meeting.**

#### **Proposed Zoom access process:**

The board is committed to expanding accessibility to church life and process whenever possible. At the same time, we recognize the challenges of conducting in-depth conversation with healthy boundaries, especially with larger groups, in person and over zoom simultaneously. Therefore, we request that participants prioritize in-person attendance at board meetings whenever possible, accessing the meeting through zoom only when necessary. If members or friends are attending as observers, we ask that they do so in person to avoid pulling focus away from the conversation at hand and onto the need to manage technology.

**Calendar-** I've asked Ben what needs to happen so that Claudia can access the calendar on the website so that she can update it regularly. Once that process is clarified, Claudia and I will figure out how to best ensure she has the info she needs to keep the calendar current.

**Event creation process-** Toby has found her proposal for an event creation process that the board was just beginning to look at when the pandemic struck. The sense of the board at the time was that, though the process as mapped out would need to be significantly simplified to make it a manageable process for folks, Toby had done an excellent job of thinking through every detail of what members and friends would want to consider as they prepared to offer an event.

**Religious Education:** I have not had time since returning from Christmas Break to have significant conversation with colleagues about RE and how it is changing/has changed in their churches. I'll spend time before our next meeting doing that research. Until then, here are two resources for those of you who may want to poke around yourselves. First, [The Death of Sunday School](#), written in 2017, is a paper by UUA staff that maps out some of what we talked we have been talking about here for years- the idea that the current model of Sunday School simply does not work for many modern families. And [here](#) is the UUA page on multi-generational ministry, one of the ways churches are addressing the dual realities of the failure of the Sunday School model and the ongoing need for spiritual formation for our children. Lots to talk about moving ahead!

**Committee on Ministry:** As you know, the COM has been meeting weekly for a bit now. Part of our focus has been developing a shared understanding of the COM's purpose and a process by which the congregation can access the COM. Below is a draft description and process. The

COM welcomes your feedback! It's also worth noting that this will likely evolve over the course of the year as we see how well it works and meets the needs of the church right now.

***Revised Draft 12-31-22***

## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

### ROLE

To serve as the designated point of contact for members of the congregation and the Minister in order to ensure mutually strong communications and promote opportunities to resolve concerns and questions.

### COMMITMENTS

The Committee on Ministry (COM) will uphold and support the Covenant on Communications and promote congregational right relations.

Members of the Committee will offer respectful active listening to members of the congregation and the Minister.

All concerns, questions or other matters to be considered by the Committee must be accompanied by explicit permission to share the name of the person offering their thoughts.

When issues are brought to the Committee, all discussions will be strictly confidential.

### PROCESS

Members of the Committee will actively reach out to members of the congregation and to the Minister, offering opportunities to listen.

To meet immediate needs, the Committee will reach out to members of the congregation and offer opportunities to share thoughts, concerns, or questions related to the Church and its ministry.

The Committee will discuss and seek to offer options for resolution.

COM will promote community problem solving whenever possible.