

First Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist  
Auburn, ME  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
November 2, 2022

Present: Ed Bell (member-at-large), Anne Perron (President), Claire Hebert (member-at-large), Jane Pentheny (member-at-large), David Das (Clerk), Rev. Jodi Hayashida (*ex officio*)

Guests: Levesque, Angela Foss, Leah Boyd (via Zoom)

6:35: Meeting called to order.

Rev. Jodi welcomed the Board members (new and old).

Ed Bell read the Mission and Vision Statements; Rev. Jodi lit the virtual chalice; the Board identified congregation members to receive expressions of gratitude.

The Board accepted the Consent Agenda with the understanding that the meeting minutes from September 20, 2022 are not available.

The Board agreed to establish a Board email address and to place a binder containing the Board Policy Manual, Church Bylaws, the Communication Covenant, and Board meeting minutes at the back of the Sanctuary. The Board will inform the congregation of these decisions at the congregational meeting on November 6.

7:00: Angela Foss and Leah Boyd (via Zoom) joined the Board for a discussion of the upcoming congregational meeting on November 6, 2022.

The discussion revolved around the following themes:

- Does the motion approved by the congregation on September 29 require a final vote on the fate of the Drop-In Center? Or was it intended to force a conversation about the Center?
- How do we use the results of the conversations held at the facilitated session on Saturday, October 29?
- There is a sense of a crisis within the congregation; yet also a moment of cautious optimism. How do we seize and make the most of that moment? How do we get back to a sense of “US?”

- The new Board is on the spot. The Board must regain the trust of the congregation.
- Sunday's congregational meeting is a crucial first step in the process of rebuilding trust.

Process for Sunday's meeting agreed to by the Board:

- Each Board member will briefly introduce themselves: name, role on Board
- Inform the congregation of the planned Board email address and the binder of information.
- Remind the congregation of the Communication Covenant.
- The challenge that the Board has set for itself: "How do we get us back to 'US'?"
- Acknowledgement of the difficult process -- that the Board spent close to 3 hours on Wednesday evening discussing the issues and a process for today. The sense that this may be an existential moment in the life of the Church, that we all need to dig into our better selves. There is no magic wand.
- The Board agreed that any further physical changes to the church, except the completion of the bathroom and laundry facilities, will require approval of the board and/or the congregation depending on the scope the change.
- The Board has crafted a proposal based on the results of last Saturday's conversations as a first small step:

The Board will propose a motion to:

- continue the Drop-In Center through the winter (specific date to be determined in consultation with the Steering Committee of the DIC)
- continue discussion and discernment with the goal of re-establishing balance between and among the various Church ministries (the Board will lay out the details soon)
- request that the Steering Committee explore other collaborators and sites for the DIC

9:35: Board entered Executive Session to choose officers.

- Anne Perron as President
- Nicole Rush as Vice-President
- David Das as Clerk

9:45: Board decided to appoint members to the Committee on Ministry via an email discussion.

9:50: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

David H. Das (Clerk)