

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing
Board of Trustees
268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - APPROVED
January 12, 2022

Zoom Meeting due to Covid-19 Virus Social Isolation

President Maria Baratta called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Also in attendance: Vice President, Jamie Evanini; Secretary, Colleen McCourt; Joe Schenk, Treasurer; Scribe and Trustee Heather Edwards; Trustees: Michael Waas, Wendy Stasolla, Jim Sanders, Michael Howe-Smith; Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Congregational Administrator, Susan Irgang and Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement (DLFE), Robin Pugh.

First Hour

Consent agenda (no vote)

- Treasurer report pending at time of Board meeting but per Treasurer Joe Schenk, the net positive variance for the year has grown a bit.
- Trustee Michael Howe-Smith commented on Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement (DLFE) Robin Pugh's report, that it's disappointing that we are seeing reduction in participation in children's participation (see appendix for details).
- Capital Campaign discussion centered on:
 - Per Board President Maria Baratta, there is not a formal report from the Committee yet due to competing priorities. Joe has been in contact with George Faulkner about status reporting and target figures and reminded the Board that we are slightly behind the projected time frames from the last report and we need to continue tracking against goals and adjusting deliverables as needed.

Stewardship Update

Joan McCloughan arrived at 7:20 p.m. to discuss this Stewardship Campaign. Key points included:

- The Stewardship Committee is aligned with recommendations of the Board and staff to push back the official start date of the campaign to Feb. 20, to align with the resumption of multi-platform services, in the hopes of reaching more people.
 - There is potential to have listening circles after Stewardship Sunday as a further means of communicating with the congregation.
- This official Stewardship Sunday will be supplemented by "soft open" efforts to gain early momentum, aided by conversations with Board members and church leadership.
- Strategic, consistent communication is needed, including scripts to aid in effective messaging.

- The Board discussed campaign logistics and considerations at a high level, with an expectation of having specific plans and goalposts outlined by mid-February.
- **ACTIONS:**
 - Scripts will be developed by Rev. Kim, Maria and Trustee Jim Sanders in partnership with the Stewardship Committee.
 - Stewardship is working on a brochure providing more information and key talking points, including the UUA fair share contribution guide.

Second Hour

Reopening/Regathering Discussion

Maria and Rev. Kim led general discussion around reopening plans for multi-platform services. Key points included:

- The Board discussed planning to be back in person in February or March as long as there is a quick drop in COVID numbers - we are not looking at 1/23 for a multi-platform service. It is difficult to plan definitively on a certain date until we see how numbers change, with a hope that the current case spike will be followed by a quick drop, mitigated by a milder strain and immunized population. **ACTION:** The Board will likely need to discuss this further via email or Zoom before the Feb. board meeting.
- The Board discussed adding to the reopening guidelines by specifying the types of masks recommended for use by the CDC, and proposed that the church keep a supply on hand for those who need them. **There was a Zoom poll** approving this addition; it passed with unanimous consent.

Music Program

- Rev. Kim reviewed at a high level the outlined goals/approach for the future of UUCWC's music program:
 - Seek an interim or development minister, with possibility of renewal of the contract after a set period of time (e.g. 18 months at least). The purpose of an interim is to be creative, discover possibilities, and receive information on a 3-6 month rolling basis. This provides a space to consider our goals, capabilities, and desired direction, etc. Rev. Kim has a draft job posting in progress, with the hope of having it published by February, and starting the first round of interviews around March and the second round in May. Erin Busch is willing to play as the accompanist during interviews. Ultimately we hope to hire in late May for a late August start.
 - Need to determine who will make up first-round interview team.
 - Rev. Kim compared UU job descriptions based on similar size and need - salary TBD.

- We have the option to look for a shared position combining the accompanist and the music director.
- The music minister would also be responsible for cultivating relationships with the community and engaging outside musicians regularly. Looking for someone to help prepare us in health for a more diverse music program.
- Also discussed planning for a celebration of Carol Tipton's retirement.

Housekeeping Items:

- Spring retreat: should start thinking about/planning; continuing some of the topics from the fall retreat since that was abbreviated, Rev. Kim and Maria will propose some dates.
- Next CrossCurrents article: Jim will be giving high-level report.
- Need to schedule next council meeting; usually takes place in March when we're launching budget season.
- Maria will invite Congregational Engagement to next meeting; we need a Board liaison to that committee. **ACTION:** Board members to let Maria know if they're interested.
- Jim and Joe to review gift policy in general and as it relates to an unrestricted gift from a church member's estate.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Edwards

Scribe, Board of Trustees

Colleen McCourt

Secretary, Board of Trustees

Appendix: Executive Team and Staff Reports

Board President's Report for January 2022

Stewardship update - In mid-December the Stewardship Team asked for Board input on a brochure they are preparing to send out to all members and friends. The turn around time was about 10 days so the Exec Team members made some suggestions for language and asked that Stewardship emphasize the need to fund our staffing issues as part of their main message this year. Board members will be asked to participate in outreach to the congregation to support the stewardship campaign.

The **Finance Committee** needs results from the Stewardship team in time to prepare their draft budget for Board review by the time of the April Board meeting. Based on growing staffing needs, there is concern from Finance that we could be looking at deficit budgeting in the 2022-2023 year.

Capital Campaign - According to the CC Team, the mechanical/electrical/plumbing engineer contracted COVID and is not yet recovered. This has created a backlog of projects for the engineer, but they will try to look at the architect's drawings for the UUCWC plans by mid-January. This likely pushes timelines on the project out by at least a month.

COVID / Reopening - With the latest case counts so high in the Mercer/Bucks area the Board agreed with the staff of UUCWC to postpone onsite services for January 9th and return to a status of no onsite in-person use of church facilities for the time being. Hopefully, case counts and hospitalization rates will drop soon (and quickly) so that onsite services and activities can resume.

Future of the music program - Accompanist Steve Ryan's last day with UUCWC was in early January. Caryl and Rev Kim have made arrangements for Eric Busch to fill the role until the end of June. With Caryl also retiring at that time, there will be no legacy staff in place as of July. During the January meeting, the Board will begin discussions on the future of the music program and its role in our spiritual practice.

Spring retreat - Since the Board's fall retreat was somewhat abbreviated, a follow up retreat for sometime in the spring of 2021 will allow the Board to focus on continuing and emerging priorities. Long term strategic planning and short term needs planning would both be major topics for a spring retreat. A date has not yet been established.

Cross Currents Newsletter authors are needed from the Board. The monthly church wide newsletter is a great vehicle for informing the congregation of Board activity or can be more personal and discuss why Board members choose to serve on the Board in leadership roles.

January 2021(2022)
Minister Board Report
Rev. Kim Wildszewski

Celebrate Life (Worship & Rites of Passage)

Worship was full and rich this past month, and it took numerous committed teams to make it all happen. Aside from the magic of our first in-person service in nearly two years *and* an in-person caroling event on Christmas Eve, and the rituals and tours with new and established members the day before reopening (which took numerous hours of planning, consideration, and then contact tracing), I also lift up:

The Tech Team (lay and staff) who worked collaboratively and conscientiously to produce three services (live and pre-recorded) within one week; Caryl and the Choir who recorded two services worth of music within an hour; Robin who recruited and recorded with youth to help with Christmas Eve; and Susan who made every communication and detail possible.

Our annual Generations Service brought us into the New Year and last Sunday, though we were remote once again, the 17 new members who joined since we've gone remote were celebrated.

With the support of the Racial Justice Ministry, the Worship Associates have revamped the racial justice candle language so that it now says:

We work to build a race-conscious and multicultural community through our actions to dismantle racism and other intersecting oppressions in ourselves and our institutions. We commit to the work of anti-racism and collective liberation.

Aside from Sunday mornings, I've been working with a non-member couple on their wedding; on the memorial service of a young local man; and coordinating with Kevyn and family for Tony Panzetta's memorial service, which will be on June 25th.

Create Community (Small Groups)

Twice a week, I hold a drop in space for anyone to practice 30 minutes of Lectio Divina. It continues to be a small but lovely and calming space of shared spiritual practice.

Though we intentionally kept January free of new programming, Robin and I are now preparing for February's Coming into Connection launch, the restart of our parent group Tending the Flame, and the next path to membership Pathways classes.

Change the World

As you know, before the new year I ended our employment relationship with Steve Ryan and hired Erin Bush as a short-term accompanist (through June 2022). If there are questions about process or cause, I will speak to these at the meeting. Of course the Personnel Committee was consulted and have been a support to me throughout his tenure.

Separate and further information about the transitions in our music program can be found as an addendum.

Robin, Susan and I are meeting this week to begin a strategic staffing conversation that we hope will help not only Stewardship but the whole system prepare for the next seasons of reopening and the changes that have occurred these last two years.

As an FYI: Pete Rafle has joined the Right Relations Committee; Michael Howe-Smith, Anne Godlasky and Nicole Robinson have all joined the Worship Associates

Regarding Stewardship: After discussion with the Exec and the Stewardship Teams, we will be pushing Stewardship Sunday back an additional two weeks to Feb 20th. The theme is about reconnecting and we want the best possible chance to be in person when kicking off the campaign. That said, I am proposing that from Feb 6-20th we do our best to quietly receive the pledges of our highest donors so that by the 20th we can invite people to join them, rather than start from scratch. This timeline still gives finance enough time before their April meeting to put together a budget. Stewardship is requesting the assistance of the Board to make this possible.

I believe there are three messages that need to be shared during the Stewardship Campaign:

1. We must *grow* our budget to not burn out staff or lay leadership, and to replace the staff that is transitioning
2. Those who have given at a lower or lower-mid level for some time need to be encouraged to grow their pledge to allow our retirees to make adjustments, too.
3. Those who are waiting for us to reopen before they feel like they should pay for services, need to give to the mission, not the personal feeling of connection.

Professional Development

I am taking the year-long Wellspring class for religious professionals that meets every other week for 10+ months; meet with a Spiritual Director monthly; and gather with a small group of supportive colleagues for discernment and support once a month.

Susan Irgang

Administrator BOT Report for January 2022

Create Community

COVID rate updates: Mercer and Bucks Counties are now at Severe Risk levels, according to COVID Act Now (1.3.22). According to the metrics, as of 1/10/22, the 7-day average of cases per 100,000 for Mercer and Bucks are 305 and 210, respectively. For a point of reference, I reported this metric last month at 36 and 40, respectively. Based on this information, the decision was made to temporarily close the church building except for essential use until further notice and this information was communicated to the congregation.

Much preparation went into welcoming members and friends for the Rededication Ritual and for Sunday's multiplatform worship held on 12.18-19. Cleaning and preparation of all our spaces for a tour for new members, creation and monitoring of signups, nametags/lanyard distancing designations, check in lists and more preceded the events. I attended both events in support and saw people joyfully attend events of Regathering Weekend, as well as the Christmas Eve outdoor caroling; we used these events as a learning experience and can adjust for next time.

The Stewardship team's End of Year efforts led to exceeding their goal for the Holiday Gift campaign, for which I provided administrative support. As the team shifts focus to the Pledge drive, I will continue to assist their work with creation of reports and information for the pledge forms, participation in the creation of some content for the booklet, and provide general help in advance of the Annual Pledge Drive mailings, responses and acknowledgements.

Celebrate Life

Our current membership is 282 Church Members (includes 7 Virtual Members), 18 Friends, 43 Participants and 30 Attendees. As the numbers show, while our membership is officially 282, we are actively serving a system of 373, not counting children or visitors.

Change the (UUCWC) World

In consultation with Personnel, I posted the Part Time Controller job on our website, Facebook pages and Indeed.com; I am also looking at other (free) places to post the position. I will screen initial resumes, conduct "pre-interviews" to be sure that the job requirements are met and job basics are understood, and pass potential candidates to the Treasurer for a more extensive, technical interview. Final interviews prior to an offer are traditionally done by Rev. Kim as head of staff. We hope for a good pool of candidates for this key new position.

I am working with Caryl to onboard Erin Busch as our pianist for Jan-June 2022; Erin's first day is expected to be 1.16.22.

Last month I reported on the rollout of the AmazonSmile program. We currently have not earned enough to get money back, as we are below the minimum of \$5 in earnings on eligible orders. It's not yet clear if this will result in any substantial payout, but it is the only Amazon program for which we are currently eligible. Wendy Stasolla has also launched a pilot program of Shop with Scrip, which can bring rebates to the church for gift cards purchased through the program. I am working with Wendy and Mary Baltycki to understand and create the processes and procedures that will be needed before this program rolls out. These opportunities to raise money as people do their everyday purchasing may bring in income with minimal effort.

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: Jan 9, 2022

Re: Monthly DLFE Report

Celebrate Life (Worship and Rites of Passage)

- We had our first in-person service on 12/12. I taught Faith Engagement downstairs to the one child that attended. I broadcasted the time for all ages from the classroom. In order for kids to attend Faith Engagement, parents must either be with their children downstairs or be able to reserve a spot in the sanctuary on the sign-up genius (as of this writing, limited to 100 people including worship personnel and choir). This limits the number of kids who can attend Faith Engagement.
- I continue to host Family chapel from 9-9:30 on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. This will continue when we are open physically.

Create Community (Small Groups)

- The Family holiday get together with s'mores around the fire pit and ornament making and tours inside the building went well. Eight Families attended. Some Families also attended the Christmas eve caroling around the firepit.
- I continue to consider what our children's program might look like when we reopen weekly in February. What the children will be doing, what safety measures we need to have in place, who will teach, what our children need right now. There are many factors to consider.
- Kim, Susan and I will have a strategic staffing meeting on 1/21. One part of the conversation will be about family ministry and our children. The pandemic and the closing of our church has negatively impacted children and youth attendance at UUCWC. Children and teens do not attend Sunday services and do not want a Faith Engagement class zoom option. I meet with young children and their parents at the family chapel, with middle schoolers at the fire pit and with parents in our once a month Tending the Flame class. There are many children that I've not seen since March 2020.
- I continue to track and welcome visitors in our Sunday services both on line in the chat and after services and in person. I look forward to meeting people in person. I will be a greeter on Sunday morning. We had our new member service last weekend and welcomed 17 new members.
- I continue to meet with our 15 Chalice circle facilitators monthly and lead 3 of the 10 chalice circles myself. Chalice circles are critical to connecting people to each other and to church.

Save The World

- I continue to recruit people to be OWL teachers. UUCWC needs OWL teachers for the 3 classes we offer. (K-1, 5-6 and 8-9). There are many factors that go into recruiting so it is a difficult task. OWL is important because families will make an extra effort to bring their kids to church for OWL classes. I'm hoping OWL will jump start family attendance at UUCWC.
- I continue to co-lead 1st and 3rd evening fire pits for our 6th-9th graders. These get-togethers are a fun, safe and an important supportive space for our teens.

Professional Development and Support

This primarily serves as an FYI about my professional development opportunities that benefit my leadership at UUCWC.

Once a month I meet with UU religious educators in the metro NY area to share information about programs and offer support.

I completed Beloved Conversations “within part A” for religious professionals. I signed up for “within part B” which starts in March. I am in the second trimester of my 2-year spiritual direction course for adults.

I see a Spiritual Director monthly.

Treasurer's Report

January 12, 2022

Statement of Income and Expense as of the close of the December Month were shared in the pre-reads.

Summary:

- All financial indications are positive with a \$30k positive variance to date (up from \$22k in December)
- Bank Account Balances total \$1.36 million:
 - o \$524k Operating combined balances
 - o \$655k Capital Campaign
 - o \$230k Endowment
 - o -\$53k payables

Year to Date Finances as of 11/30/2021

Income	Expense
Sunday "Plate" 11,240	Staff 159,550
Pledge 222,132	Operations 40,565
Paycheck Protection Forgiveness 15,000	Program 9,938
All Other, including Year End Gift 24,187	Denomination 12,610
272,559	Debt Service 12,732
	232,395
Net Income (Loss) 40,164	

Financial highlights are as follows through December 31

Overall Budget Tracking: \$30k Positive Variance Year to Date

Income: Negative variance: \$10k (\$10,000 less income than budgeted)

1. "Plate Income" lower by \$5k
2. Pledge Income lower by \$10k
3. Year End Gift to target
4. Fund Raising and Miscellaneous Income positive

Expense: Positive Variance: \$39k (\$39,000 less spend than budget)

Increasing - continuing to reflect closure of the building and associated expenses

1. **Staff:** positive variance \$18k reflective of sexton expense savings and other delayed staff expense
2. **Operations:** positive variance \$13k reflective of reduced utility and maintenance expenses
3. **Program:** positive variance \$8k reflective of reduced expenses associated programs, most notable Adult & Children's RE

4. **Debt & Denomination Expenses:** To Budget (no variance)

Reminder Items:

1. A **looming budget deficit** of an estimated \$85k for the next fiscal year – 2022-2023 based on current and increasing staffing plans including the Bookkeeper and RE roles
2. Hiring plans for a Professional Bookkeeper/ Comptroller
3. Bookkeeping software upgrade to Quickbooks Online: the purchase was made from the non-profit site, TechSoup.com