

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



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
February 9, 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: 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. Absent was Trustee Michael Waas.

First Hour

Consent agenda (no vote)

There were some general comments on the reports:

- Trustee Jim Sanders commended the staff's work and noted positive progress in several areas including Capital Campaign updates.
- Treasurer Joe Schenk noted that the reserve fund is in excellent shape, and that he is working with John Unger to review best practices and capture them in a finance policy - e.g. defining capital items vs. operating budget items, to understand which expenses are static and predictable.

Caryl's Retirement Celebration - Task Force

There was discussion of planning a celebration for Caryl Tipton's retirement.

- At Rev. Kim's suggestion, the Board generated a list of potential members who could serve on a planning task force. **ACTION:** Board President Maria Barratta will reach out to these individuals and invite them to be part of the task force.
- Timing and budget considerations were discussed, as well as multi-platform availability.

Congregational Engagement Update

Nathalie Edmond joined the meeting at 7:30 on behalf of the Congregational Engagement team, to provide an update on their work. Key points included:

- The planned phases of the team's rollout, including settling into the new team structure and mission, setting the tone through the use of nourishing circles, and planning for tactical initiatives such as interviewing congregants about their interests
- Continuing nourishing circles to try to reach as many people as possible; so far, some people express feeling very nourished by church, some feeling disconnected, and some feeling in the middle
- The team's structure can be supported not only by roles but by volunteers handling discrete tasks, such as interviewing, developing interview questions, indexing results, etc. There are several people interested in helping in this way.
- The Board reviewed open leadership positions that may need to be filled this year.
- Maria volunteered to serve as the Board's liaison to the committee.
- Kim and the Board expressed their gratitude for and affirmation of the committee's intentional and important work, and acknowledged that it's very encouraging to see the planned, mindful evolution of the process bearing positive results.
- Maria thanked Nathalie and she left the meeting.

Stewardship Campaign Update

Rev. Kim provided a high-level update (details are referenced within the Minister's Report in the appendix). Key points included:

- Rev. Kim has been having small group conversations which have felt positive, fruitful and well-received.
- The initial sample group showed an average pledge increase of 25%.
- The Stewardship Campaign will continue with more small group conversations, video testimonials from members. The Board will have access to talking points, but will probably not be making individual appeals.
- There is a positive feeling of momentum and small group participants have expressed enthusiasm about the campaign's goals.
- The Stewardship Committee is a small group working hard, but they will need more support in the future. The Board and Rev. Kim will need to have a strategic visioning conversation about the future of stewardship, and how we can build a healthy team for year-round giving efforts.

Second Hour

Capital Campaign update

The Board discussed the most recent updates from the Capital Campaign team, including target dates for going out for quotes in February.

- There was positive affirmation of the committee's momentum and communication/reporting efforts.
- Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang met with the team to update the capital campaign section of the website with current info and drawings.

Housekeeping & Action items

- Spring Board retreat will be April 9. Rev. Kim and Maria will discuss agenda.
 - **ACTION:** Might need to revisit policies in the future that state the timing of retreats/review of Board goals, to allow for increased flexibility.
- The primary Board meeting in April will be exclusively designated to discuss the budget, with a secondary meeting to discuss other topics as needed,
- The ministerial evaluation process should be revisited. Jim will share the past evaluation form and results with the executive Board and Rev. Kim.
- Spring Council Meeting will be March 1 and will be multi-platform.
- Vice President Jamie Evanini will write the next CrossCurrents article.

Executive Session

Staff exited the meeting, with the exception of Rev. Kim. The Board entered executive session for approximately 40 minutes to discuss short and long-term personnel planning.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Edwards

Scribe, Board of Trustees

Colleen McCourt

Secretary, Board of Trustees

Appendix: Executive Team, Staff and Treasurer Reports

February 2022 Exec Team Report

1. During January, BOT members heard from the administration team that improving developments in COVID infection rates meant that resuming in person gatherings in February could proceed. Via email it was agreed that an announcement to that effect would go out to the congregation, including language about requiring N95 or KN95 masks for attendees.

In addition, the UUA has changed their guidelines for regathering during COVID. Those changes are addressed here:

[Letter to Congregations on Omicron and the Future](#)

[Pandemic Strategies](#)

2. Rev. Kim asked for a meeting on February 3 with Personnel and BOT Exec Team members to present a general strategic plan to address long and short term staffing needs at UUCWC and how those needs fit into Stewardship campaign discussions. She will share more on the strategic plan at the February Board meeting.
3. Stewardship Campaign update - Several BOT members will be participating in at least one of the small group stewardship sessions scheduled by Rev. Kim to speak to members about our staffing intentions, their impact on Faith Engagement programming and our Music Ministry. BOT members may be asked to reach out personally to members and friends in support of the stewardship campaign with talking points and/or a script provided for the purpose.
4. Reviewing UUCWC's policy on the [Minister's Role](#), item number three indicates that the Board and Rev. Kim should be doing a mid-year evaluation of our contributions toward the goals and priorities set for the year within two proscribed periods, January - February and June-July. Such evaluations are generally part of the Board retreats, so when the spring retreat is scheduled, the Board will do their assessment. Action item - revise the language of this policy to allow for flexibility in when assessments are done.
5. Plans are in the works for the Spring Council meeting on March 1st. Jamie Evanini will develop an outline and reach out to reps to present on:
 - Update on the stewardship campaign.
 - The 2022-2023 church year budget
 - Nominating/Congregational Engagement update
 - Right Relations to present something on covenants.

If there is time, starting the meeting with an exercise from the Soul Matters packet from February will be incorporated. The theme is Widening the Circle.

6. Nathalie Edmond will be coming to the February BOT meeting to provide updates on Congregational Engagement/Nominating.

February 2022
Minister Board Report
Rev. Kim Wildszewski

Celebrate Life (Worship & Rights of Passage)

Since we met last, worship has moved from fully remote to multi-platform! Though there are numerous logistical pieces to still work out (closed captioning on the big screen in the sanctuary; joys and sorrows; communicating a time of quiet and centering starting at 9:50, and more) this transition felt smooth and like the worship team was ready. I will be interested to hear the feedback after this Sunday when all UUCWC leaders are in the sanctuary but our preacher, the Rev. Karen Hutt*, preaches from Minnesota. I have no doubt that we are not used to or only celebrating a multi-platform approach yet.

Rev. Karen Hutt's time with us will be paid for out of the Racial Justice Ministry. I need to continue a conversation started with Steve Saddlemire earlier in the year about dedicated money for Preachers of Color.

To note:

- o Stewardship Sunday is February 20th, kicking off the 4 week campaign.
- o I am working with a small sub team of Worship Associates who will lead a service in March on "Why We Worship."
- o The spring Auction-won sermon (the third of four sermons) will also be delivered in March.
- o I am working with a small group of congregants on a service for April on Reproductive Rights, most of which will be remote.
- o Jo Milner's and Tony Panzetta's memorial services (two for Tony) have been scheduled for the spring and early summer.
- o Attendance has been consistent with about 150 participants each week
- o Our Worship Tech Team is growing: Simone Niemczura, Karen Coleman and Nick Mellis have begun or will begin training in either zoom or sound in the coming weeks.

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. It would be great to see more of you there!

This week I launched our next path to membership classes, "Pathways" with 14 potential new members and a new lay leader/ co-facilitator: Alison Baron. The group is strong, already very connected to UUCWC despite being entirely remote participants (note: one participant lives in Oregon!), and, as always, inspirational. I look forward to introducing you to them in March.

With Robin, I am co-facilitating the Tending the Flame (parent support) classes that are held once a month. Last month we welcomed grandparents to the space which allowed for needed and deep cross-generational connection.

Robin and I were also preparing for another round of Coming into Connection but have pushed this off until Pathways concludes.

Change the World

As you know, I am spending a considerable amount of time on Stewardship and Personnel right now. This week and next I am holding four small group conversations with congregants on our personnel and therefore financial expectations. After Monday's small group discussion, 5 families pledged (totaling \$17,980) and, based on that small sample of 5, we have seen increases of up to 67% or an average of a 22% increase.

I have written a letter to our visitors and newer participants explaining the stewardship campaign and process, and of course inviting them into giving. Robin and I are currently in discussion about how to re-educate our newer, lower pledging, members.

I am working with Personnel on finalizing the Transitional Music Director position; with Robin on a job description for the Faith Engagement Director; and with Personnel on the process of hiring the Controller.

Barbara Drew and I are meeting this week to talk about Auction marketing during worship. I continue to work with Right Relations and will be co-facilitating a covenanting conversation with RRC leaders and our Council for Faith in Action.

Professional Development

Last week I was able to spend time with colleagues (remotely) for our weeklong professional development: Institute. I participated in daily worship, conversations with the UUA President, keynote speakers on the future and purpose of worship, and took classes on sustainable leadership.

I continue to participate in the year long Wellspring classes for Religious Professionals, meet with a spiritual director, and my colleague group monthly.

Susan Irgang

Administrator BOT Report for February 2022

Create Community

Monthly COVID rate update: Mercer and Bucks Counties are now at “Very High Risk”. According to the COVID Act Now metrics, as of 2/7/22, the 7-day average of cases per 100,000 for Mercer is 39 while Bucks is at 38. This represents a decrease of 87% and 82% respectively compared to last month’s report. Based on these metrics, the decision the church reopened for in-person attendance at multiplatform worship, with limitations to number of attendees and with N95/KN95 masking required (I ordered a supply of masks to be offered at the door). The building is also open other days for use by committees and others following the latest guidelines. As we move into more regular use of the church, we will be adjusting staffing at the building, cleaning protocols and schedules, etc.

I have worked closely with the Stewardship team this past month, on contribution statements as well as the pledge drive preparations, including preparing the mail/merge database, ordering the printing of pledge forms, proofreading the booklet being prepared for print, buying postage, updating the webpage and other supports. This relatively new and small team is invested in learning and in their work and are doing a great job.

I completed the annual certification of the congregation with the UUA, with inputs from Rev. Kim and Robin Pugh, and a consult with Mary Baltycki for two of the financial numbers. Each year we are required to update leadership information, membership and participation statistics, financial data, information on diversity and completion of a questionnaire about current programs, challenges, etc. Inherent in the process is a review of members to update their status, and the resultant adjustment to our membership numbers. Certification is used to determine our contribution to the UUA Annual Fund as well as the number of delegates UUCWC will have at General Assembly.

Celebrate Life

Our current (certified) membership is 275 Church Members (includes 7 Virtual Members), 18 Friends, 40 Participants and 27 Attendees. As the numbers show, while our membership is officially 275, we are actively serving a system of 353, 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, Craigslist, Simply Hired and LinkedIn. To date, there have been 19 applications, with 5 new applicants last week; it should be noted that not all applicants have the level of hands-on experience on QuickBooks as required. So far, I have held screening interviews with 6 candidates and the Finance/Personnel team of Joe Schenk, Mary Baltycki and Scott Drew interviewed 4. In addition to the posting and screening, I am sourcing a laptop for purchase to be used by the new Controller.

MJ Hansen and I continue the project to enhance security of UUCWC information and to better control continuity of information at leadership transitions using Google drives/emails. We create shared Google drives for teams that have important/historic information that should be secured and available for current/incoming leaders, and we set up committee chairs/co-chairs with new @uucwc.org “work” emails to access these shared drives. To date, we have set up Finance, Auction, Endowment, Worship Tech and IT, and are awaiting users' replies to complete the process for Capital Campaign, Congregational Engagement and the Treasurer account. We will be reaching out to Right Relations next, and in coming weeks to Personnel, Stewardship and others.

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: Feb. 9, 2022

Re: Monthly DLFE Report

Celebrate Life (Worship and Rites of Passage)

- We've started weekly multiplatform Sunday services. I am juggling being downstairs with the kids, spending time with new members and visitors and being a presence in Worship (especially when Kim is not in the pulpit and our minister is remote). There is a lot that is different on Sundays for me and I will learn more and adjust accordingly each week.
- I continue to host a virtual Family chapel from 9-9:30 on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

Create Community (Small Groups)

- I continue to track and welcome visitors in our Sunday services both online (in the chat and after services) and in person. I've encouraged our regular visitors to take the next step in involvement at UUCWC and take Kim's Pathways to Membership class. 14 potential new members registered.
- I am delighted to be meeting and welcoming new people in person before and after services. I have been communicating with them online for the past 2 years.
- For February and into March, there will be one classroom using an all ages curriculum for children who attend on Sunday. I will begin to recruit 2 RE volunteer teachers per week and experiment with zooming the time for all ages from the classroom.
- Using what I learned in the "Spiritual Direction with Children" class I took last semester, Kim and I are meeting with parents and grandparents (new!) once a month in a class focusing on children and spirituality. I invited grandparents because they have more time to focus on the inner life of children. It turned out it is a wonderful subject (the inner life of children that they love) for cross-generational connection.
- I continue to consider what our children's program might look like in the next few months, over the summer and in the fall. The goal needs to be bringing our families back. There are groups of kids/ families (family chapel, fire pit middle school, Sunday morning in person) who attend. The challenge is expanding the program to 2 groups of children who have not attended during the pandemic. In one group the parents are involved in UUCWC (easier), in the other the families have not participated in UUCWC life at all during Covid (about 1/3 of our families).

- 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.

Change the World

I am working on a job description for the ½ time Director of Faith Engagement position. My goal is to not to replicate what the children's DRE position was pre-Covid but to allow for flexibility, creativity, and initiative.

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.

The Fall annual LREDA conference for 2021 was rescheduled for April 2022 and now has been canceled.

I am in the second trimester of my 2-year spiritual direction course for adults.

I see a Spiritual Director monthly.

Treasurer's Report

February 6, 2022

Statement of Income and Expense as of the close of the January Month have been provided in the pre-reads.

Summary:

- All financial indications are positive with a \$17k positive variance to date (down from \$30k in December)
- Interviewing activities for a Professional Bookkeeper/ Controller are in progress
- Bookkeeping software upgrade to Quickbooks Online is in "parallel":
 - o existing records were exported from our legacy Quickbooks platform and uploaded to the Online version recently purchased
 - o Reports and entries are being compared before the final migration is completed
- Bank Account Balances total \$1.38 million:
 - o \$472k Operating combined balances
 - o \$679k Capital Campaign
 - o \$242k Endowment
 - o -\$12k payables

Year to Date Finances as of 1/31/2022

Income		Expense	
Sunday "Plate"	12,675	Staff	183,326
Pledge	243,218	Operations	46,298
Year End Gifts	18,840	Program	12,415
Paycheck Protection Forgiveness	17,500	Denomination	12,609
All Other (SRECs, ARE Fees, Misc)	6,014	Debt Service	14,855
	298,247		269,503
Net Income (Loss)	28,744		

Financial highlights are as follows through January 31

Overall Budget Tracking: \$17k Positive Variance Year to Date

1. Down from \$30k as of December 31
2. Expenses outpaced income for January:
 - o Pledge income was below target Budget by \$14k
 - o Overall income below Budget by \$17k
 - o Offset by \$3.6k positive variance in Personnel & \$2k in Operations – both resulting, largely, from continued COVID closure

Income: *Negative* variance: \$26.6k (\$26,600 less income than budgeted)

1. Plate Income lower by \$5.4k year to date
2. Pledge Income lower by \$24k year to date

Expense: Positive Variance: \$44k (\$44,000 less spend than budget)

1. **Staff:** positive variance \$23k positive year to date reflective of sexton and other delayed staff expense
2. **Operations:** \$14k positive variance to budget Year to Date
3. **Program:** \$7k positive variance year to date reflective of reduced spend, most notably Adult & Children's RE and delayed CFA disbursement
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