

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



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - FINAL
July 8, 2026
In-Person Meeting

President Bob Alt called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Also in attendance: Vice-President Karen Kent; Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris; Mike Gianella; Joseph Goldfedder; Nicole Horlacher-Robinson; Chris Marietti; Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski; and Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez.

First Hour

Consent agenda (no vote): Rev. Kim Wildszewski provided an official welcome to new board members: Jessica Barnack-Tavlaris; Mike Gianella; and Nicole Horlacher-Robinson. She offered an orientation to the board experience. It was noted that there was no Executive Report as no meeting was held in July due to vacations.

Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez provided an update on the church water system and ongoing issues with water odor. Marilyn noted that member Scott Drew is leading efforts to explore solutions including tank recoating and osmosis systems, though they are now seeking a new well compliance company after the previous company became unavailable. The board agreed that a Bob should follow up with Scott to explore the status of the water solutions project.

Treasurer Denny Rogers made several remarks and noted that there is no fiscal report as the previous years fiscal reconcile is still underway. He briefly noted a large anonymous donation will be kept in the previous fiscal year to help defray the deficit from previous fiscal year.

FACILITIES USAGE POLICY: Marilyn, Sandee Steinberg and Maria Barratta presented a new facilities use policy focused on clarifying the distinction between rentals and fundraisers, particularly addressing insurance liability concerns. The policy requires church sponsorship for internal fundraisers and church sponsorship for external fundraisers, while rentals must provide their own liability insurance. The discussion highlighted challenges in determining what constitutes a fundraiser versus an event that is not related to the church mission. Internal and external fundraisers will be reviewed individually at least annually to determine where liability coverage decisions need to be made. Liability insurance for one time events range from 180-500 and can be established through the church insurance provider. Donna Miller is the chair of the Fundraising Committee. The policy was voted on for approval. The vote to approve facility use policy was unanimous. Consensus vote achieved, facility policy was approved. There was further discussion about

the importance of reviewing all current and future fundraising events to determine eligibility for church sponsorship and coverage of liability insurance. Further clarity may be needed about who will approve events, and whether a workgroup or committee is needed.

Second Hour

STAFFING DISCUSSION: Rev. Kim provided an update on applicants for the new Community Connector position. She noted that 19 applicants were received and top candidates will be interviewed next week. She also reported that the applicant pool included highly skilled candidates, and that the interview included experiential activities. The position requires two skillsets programming planning management and ambassador skills. Rev. Kim and Bob noted the comments from listening circles about the position and the importance of messaging about the need for all church members to be involved in creating community in partnership with the new position. The position will be a 12-month at will hire.

Rev. Kim discussed coverage of music ministry while Dr. Erin Bush is on leave. There will be two musicians covering the time.

Additionally, two new positions will be posted soon. A new position of Rental coordinator will be brought on. There will also be a need for a new controller due to a retirement. The Rental Coordinator and controller search committee will be underway in the next 6-8 weeks. There is a need for 3-4 people for each committee.

SOLAR PANEL UPDATE: Denny provided an update on the solar panel task force, explaining that a fire in the equipment room led to system testing, which revealed maintenance issues with loose wires in the remaining inverter. The team successfully reactivated the partially functioning system and is now saving approximately \$300 per month, with potential for further savings by replacing the inverter. Further discussions reviewed a potential solar panel investment, with costs ranging from \$4,000 to \$100,000 depending on the configuration, including options for lawn and carport installations. The current inverter has a lifespan of one to three years, and there are concerns about its reliability. The decision on whether to proceed with the investment and its location would likely rest with the board for smaller investments but could require broader congregational input for larger amounts. The group also addressed safety concerns about the existing inverter system, which has been tested and cleaned, with a recommendation to potentially have facilities staff check it quarterly due to its age.

REALM TASK FORCE: Bob noted that four congregational members have been identified to assist in the further rollout of the Realm system. They have received the Realm presentation to the board and will work to identify priorities and plan future steps. and will then share with the board for alignment and support.

Upcoming Events: Rev. Kim noted that Pathways course is underway with a large group planning on joining as members.

BOARD RETREAT: Bob noted that a Board Retreat has been scheduled for Saturday 9/26.

Unfortunately, no dates worked for everyone, however, materials will be made available for all. The agenda will include a review of last year, setting priorities, identifying recommendations from the strategic plan and strategic plan adjustments. There will be discussion of the board goals and how these intersect with staff goals. The new staff Community Connector will attend the retreat. Generally, retreats will occur in Fall and Spring with the Spring retreat checking in on priorities and financial planning.

EXECUTIVE NOMINEES: Bob shared that the search is underway for Vice-President and Secretary roles on the Executive Committee. Bob is having a conversation with one person about the Vice-President role, and he will be speaking to others about the Secretary role.

COMMITTEE LIAISONS: Bob noted that there is a need for board liaisons for church committee. The liaisons needed include: endowment, personnel, stewardship, and safety. There may also be a need for future liaisons for future taskforce workgroups. The liaison works to Inform and keep the board up to date. It was noted that for the endowment the board liaison is also a voting member.

Bob will ask for volunteers at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Zechner

Secretary, Board of Trustees