

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



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - FINAL
MAY 13, 2026
Multi-Platform Meeting

President Bob Alt called the multi-platform Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Also in attendance: Vice-President Karen Kent, Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Bob Busch, Chris Marietti, Wendy Stasolla, David Thomas, Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez. Excused: Bob Busch

First Hour

Consent agenda (no vote): Quick review of reports. Additionally, Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Congregational Administrator Marilyn Gonzalez briefly reported on a recent fire that began at the solar panel inverter. This incident means that the entire inverter must be replaced and the church is unable to generate any solar power. The situation is complicated by an 18 year old system that is difficult to find parts for repair. Costs for repair or replacement are not clear, and there are concerns about the financial resources to make the changes at this time. The Board will request assistance from the Earth and Climate Ministry and the Facilities Committee to generate a plan to consider repair or replacement.

Marilyn also updated the group on the current water situation at the church. Currently, the water is not potable due to both a bacterial infusion and ongoing issues with the filter system. The group briefly touched on a water remediation estimate of at least \$5,000 and continuing to pursue solutions to the situation. The situation is complex as the church received state funds for remediation initially, and the remediation has not been fully effective as of yet. There were suggestions that someone begin to advocate for additional state support. The group identified several members who could help with the situation, and Rev. Kim agreed to reach out and make the request.

Additional notes included Marilyn identifying a professional sound person for future rental concerts, the costs to be part of the rental contract. Senior Minister Kim Wildszewski noted a request from a local Bahai group to lead a peace prayer at the Pennington Library.

Denny provided a financial update, reporting that the church was at 124% of budget for plates and 109% for operating pledges, with projections indicating approximately \$96,000 in reserves

by year-end, including expected auction proceeds. Additional facility issues were discussed, including the need to remove a dangerous tree and address HVAC system problems, with estimated costs of \$5,000 for water treatment and \$16,000 for one HVAC system replacement. Denny noted that there is also some concern about one HVAC system urgently needing replacement and 2 additional that are the same age. The group will request assistance from the Facilities Committee to assess whether to replace all units simultaneously or spread the replacements over time, considering factors like crane access and budget constraints.

Annual Meeting Agenda: The team discussed preparations for the upcoming annual meeting on June 7th, President Bob Alt reviewed the annual meeting agenda, and requested assistance for the meeting. Bob will lead the meeting and there will be several guest speakers from committees including the communication committee and congregational engagement.

Denny noted that there will be a pre-meeting budget discussion on 5/31.

Award Nominees for Annual Meeting: Reviewed the award nominees and voted upon the roster. Added information to the description of the nominees. It was noted that many people deserve recognition in the extensive support and work they do for the church. The board agreed to have the categories of Flaming Chalice Award, Distinguished Service Award and a new category of public recognition (ie Kudos and Words of Appreciation) to lift up the many members who support the work of the church.

Second Hour

Upcoming Events:

Budget Review Meeting 5/31

UUCWC Annual Meeting 6/7

Board Volunteers for Annual Meeting : Chris Marietti agreed to order bagels. Michelle Zechner will take notes. Joseph Goldfedder and David Thomas will assist with checking people in and counting the votes. Wendy Stasolla agreed to be the online monitor and send instructions in the meeting.

Noted that there is a Budget Meeting on 5/31 and a board member is needed. Wendy agreed to represent the board at this meeting.

Board Vacancy Discussion: The group discussed filling three open seats on the board for next year, with several members having already declined. One member has agreed. Rev. Kim is in active discussion with two members now about possibly serving on the board. The group agreed to consider additional members as needed. There is also a need to find a representative for the Endowment committee, with a decision to review this at the July meeting.

Safety Task Force Update: David Thomas provided an update to the board on the progress of the Safety Task Force, which includes implementing security measures like cameras and lights, developing an immigration enforcement policy, and establishing a response plan for active events. They are working on training staff and recruiting a building safety team, with plans for a fire drill on May 31st. The task force also discussed updating the congregation's communication strategy by streamlining the weekly newsletter and potentially phasing out separate email updates. There is a need for a Building Safety Committee. Discussed the use of a phone app for communication with police and local communities in the event of an “active” safety situation in the community and how to respond. The church will be adopting this app with a training to be held in August. There will be a fire drill on 5/31 during the service.

Additionally, it was noted that Julie Rigano, Director of Family Ministry, has been leading the “Safe Congregation” training and preparing members to work with children at the church. There is a need for a new “Safe Congregation” team at the church, which could potentially be combined with the Safety Task Force.

Open Forum & check-out: Bob noted that the Communications Committee is looking to revise timing of the newsletter and developing a weekly newsletter, and stopping a monthly overview to streamline communication initiatives. Bob noted that temporary banners with the church principles are on order. Rev. Kim noted that there will be a new TV monitor which will share information with the congregation. Bob noted he will write a summary of board accomplishments for this year for Cross Currents.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Zechner

Secretary, Board of Trustees

Appendix: Executive, Staff and Treasurer Reports

Executive Report

Executive Meeting May 7, 2026

Attendees: Rev. Kim, Bob Alt, Michelle Zechner, Karen Kent.

- Annual meeting agenda - June 7
 - Packet
 - Agenda
 - Financial statement
 - Proposed FY26/27 budget
 - Proposed slate of leadership
 - Leadership acknowledgements
 - Biographies of incoming Board members
 - Agenda
 - Chalice lighting
 - Welcome (Bob Alt, check script with Wendy)
 - Executive staff report (Rev. Kim)
 - Executive Board report (Bob Alt)
 - Facilities
 - Task Force updates (Safety, Communications, Strategic Planning, Financial Health)
 - Strategic Planning Task Force summary (Martha, Pam, Joe)
 - Congregational Engagement (Martha Bell, Pam Shadzik)
 - Endowment Grants (David Schumann)
 - Financial report (Denny Rodgers)
 - Will cover specifics about Financial Health and Endowment
 - Presentation of budget and vote (Denny Rodgers)
 - Presentation of slate and vote (Bob Alt)
 - Service awards (Karent Kent)
 - Leadership acknowledgement (Rev. Kim)
 - Recognition of outgoing members (Bob Alt)
 - Wendy Stasolla
 - Bob Bush
 - David Thomas
 - Closing (Rev. Kim)
- Board recruitment update
 - Recruiting for 3 openings on the board. David Thomas has agreed to stay on if needed, but would prefer not to extend his term by one year.
 - Reached out to 6-9 members; no acceptances yet. One person has confirmed
- Board Minute - Discussed continued water remediation issues, another Stewardship Thank You, Annual Meeting & Budget Meeting reminders

- Bob to provide on Sunday, 5/17. Remind people of budget listening circle that same day.
- UU Princeton Intern & UUCWC possible partnership
 - Princeton has a new intern starting in the Fall. She needs experience in other congregations. Will invite her to preach at UUCWC a few times. Will sit in on some Board and staff meetings from October - May.
- Communications Committee update
 - This committee includes: Rab and Martha Bell, Justin Roth, Carmen Dix Pinto, Rev. Kim, Marilyn.
 - Team will focus on internal communications before external communications.
 - Will need a separate team to look at the external communications part; a lot for one team to do both.
 - The work has begun and has focused so far on creating a covenant, clear goals, and developing a shared leadership model.

Report from Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildzewski

Friends, tis the season at UUCWC when I need to offer a brief board report.

I am spending most of my time focused on finishing the fiscal year up with strength and continued vision: Marilyn and I are working diligently to get the annual meeting packet and meeting ready (from leadership recognition to worship tech volunteers, and much more in between). Rachel Hansen continues to grow in her new administrative tasks that are helping to restructure how we welcome and integrate visitors; this also requires my own reorganizing and visioning work regarding membership and congregational engagement. I continue to be grateful for Congregational Engagement's partnership, creative commitment, and persistence in this season.

The Communications Task Force (which has naturally evolved into a Committee) continues to hone in on its immediate purpose, the congregational needs (as we understand them), and staff and volunteer capacity. We are focussed on internal communication and I will very likely need to create a parallel external team, as the work is too large and competing. I am grateful for the many conversations and trials that will be leading to some significant overhaul of our website, the weekly email, and other communications this summer.

Erin Bush and Silas Irvine both have their contracts set for July through December, and August through December, respectively.

I continue to recruit for the Board positions, and am thrilled that Jess Tavlaris has agreed to join us beginning in July. Hopefully there will be more updates in the days to come.

Thank you to Karen Kent, Wendy Stasolla and Bob Busch for moving the service awards forward and making sure more / different people receive praise for their work in the congregation.

This last month I:

- Participated in a UUA webinar on the diverse ways to reconsider how we do religious education, specifically "Whole Church RE".
- Completed my two-year Spiritual Direction certification out of Meadville-Lombard Seminary.
- Met with the incoming Intern Minister for UU Princeton, Patricia Hennigan, who will be auditing some of our Board, staff and council meetings this upcoming year, to round out her experience in UU congregations. You will meet Patricia when she preaches for us on July 12th.

Please check out the pre-read entitled Interfaith Invitation to read about an upcoming Interfaith Prayer for Peace event that I am leading at the Hopewell (Pennington) Library later this month.

Perhaps most excitingly and important: I am planning a "rethink church" conversation with 20 members of the congregation with a range of experience, skills and time in the congregation, but leaning heavily on our newest members. I am asking them to consider two main questions:

1. Given the staff and volunteer limits, What is essential? What needs to be sustained or nurtured in order for UUCWC to be who we say we are, and who we want to be? What can we let go of thoughtfully and intentionally?

2. The recent elementary school redistricting has and will reshape the direct communities around UUCWC. Can we be the church home for these new families? Is there some way for us to serve as connective tissue for the children who will now be separated from their Bear Tavern (Titusville) friends?

I am holding this meeting in large part to be in creative conversation with members, but also as a means of creating investment, commitment, and informal power with (many) folks who would otherwise not move into leadership positions and offer their wisdom, or become known.

Lastly, unending congratulations and thanks to the Auction leadership for once again creating an incredible evening - and week - that will help our operating budget move forward with health.

Looking forward to being with you Wednesday evening,

Rev. Kim