

Unitarian Universalist Congregation (UUC) Board Meeting Minutes

August 14, 2025

Location: UUC, Blacksburg, VA

In attendance: Cassy Kost (Zoom), Helen Renqvist, Wayne Neu, Rachel Craine, Rev. Pam Philips, Joe Cooley

Recorder: Carolyn Kogan

Chris called the meeting to order. Chalice Lighting, Reading: "Yesterday, Tomorrow, Today"

Check-in

Review and Accept Agenda

- Everyone had the opportunity to read the consent agenda ahead of time.
- Wayne will talk in detail later about treasurer report
- Chris asked about "letter to the board" due date for Jenny - August 17th, can come later if Jenny is aware that something is coming
- Chris moved to approve the agenda. Carolyn seconded the motion. Unanimous to approve the meeting agenda.

Member Forum

- No one came to speak

Consent Agenda

- Chris made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Wayne. Unanimous to approve consent agenda which included the following:
 - Minister's Report
 - Administrator's Report
 - Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report
 - Previous Meeting Minutes
 - Treasurer's Report

Old Business

- New LFD Assistant Jocelyn Hildebrand
 - Rachel is pleased with Jocelyn's work thus far.
- Helen said that Marilyn Dupont sent an email to request email to get minutes out faster to be posted.
- Wayne - post minutes after they have been approved, the process needs to be explained better. This was discussed last year to speed up the process but did not change since typical turnaround is a month because minutes are approved at subsequent board meetings. The board would communicate with someone from the member forum if

something was brought up at a particular meeting– to eliminate the one month turnaround.

Board "Retreat"

- Icebreakers- "Where do you stand?"
- Basics of the Board
 - What are we doing as a board
 - Operations and purpose
 - Roles
 - President - set agenda and execute meeting
 - President elect - assisting president to learn role
 - Secretary - meeting minutes
 - Treasurer - financial advising
 - Members at large - voting member- voice for congregation
 - minister / dlfd - no voting rights, here to guide - advisory
 - No special voting powers of any role - all here with same weighted vote
 - Meeting minutes - recorded in some form - keep it vague to protect members
 - Executive session - excludes everyone on board, and removed from meeting minutes- eliminates something personal
 - Basics of a motion
 - Mechanics of a motion
 - Room for discussion
 - Favor, not in favor, etc.
 - Minutes record numbers for each vote
 - Send email to president to contribute to the agenda
 - Pres, pres elect, minister, secretary set the agenda
 - Topics to be considered can be raised to them
 - Building Belonging - first month theme of sermons
 - Helen requested clarification–should requests be funneled to the agenda making group
 - Chris is the face of the board
 - Pam - good for all board members to be ears to the congregation
 - If congregation is not comfortable approaching Chris, members can forward on someone's behalf
 - Member forum
 - Request for individuals want to bring a topic forth in person
 - Read all documents in advance on Drive folder
 - Each month has a folder
 - Bookmark the board file folder
 - Agenda has hyperlinked reports and Zoom meeting

- Chris will send an agenda in advance for members to review prior to meeting. Reports should be included by Tuesday before Thursday's meeting.
- “We speak with one voice” Once the board has a decision, it is the board's decision.
- Safety and scams - being a member of the board - perceived as having power; possibilities of scammers impersonating Pam or Chris. If there is a request that is strange or urgent - confirm via a different path, i.e. if you receive an email, verify through phone, etc.
 - Chris email: chrisjlong@gmail.com
 - Chris phone: 540-315-6861 (Call if it's urgent)
 - Never open the attachment
- Wayne discussed how to read financial documents:
 - P&L 2025 (profit and loss)
 - Purpose: Record income and outgo
 - 1st column - spent up to date (by previous month)
 - 2nd column - Annual budget
 - 3rd column - under or over budget
 - 4th column - percent of budget
 - Only mortgage interest shows up in P&L
 - Paving bill should not be facilities and escrow line. Needs to be moved
 - VG includes investments in stocks and bonds - change in market value to give net income
 - Balance sheet with assets and liabilities
 - Current assets, including money in vanguard, checking account
 - Endowment fund - updated monthly
 - Fixed assets - land, building - amount doesn't change
 - Lark Lane includes Peacock Meadow
 - Current liabilities
 - Payments due
 - Withholding taxes
 - PT contributions (pass through contributions)
 - Mortgage Principal appears in balance sheet
 - 600 k balance on mortgage
 - Temp restricted net assets (TRNA) (included in Assets)
 - Earmarked monies - set aside
 - Pre paid pledges - paid in advance of fiscal year - amount gets transferred to P&L once fiscal year changes
 - Facilities Maintenance Escrow i.e. parking lot paving; HVAC
 - Held in a number of places - i.e. checking, vanguard
 - FYI: Line for Net Income in balance sheet does not match P&L because of mortgage

- Pledge collection running well below what is normally. We are about 7k short of pledges for FY 24-25
- Goal setting for 2025-2026
 - Congregation requested fleshing out the strategic plan
 - Last year - increasing member engagement - how does this get measured
 - Prompt: "How will we know if we have been successful as a board in June 2026?"
 - Rev Pam shared on meeting about board retreats: "10 Things that Great Boards Do"
 - Leading congregation in foundational documents
 - Statement of purpose, vision, etc.
 - Leading congregation in 5-7 year strategic plan
 - Last done in 2021
 - Structuring organizational chart review
 - How do teams/ committees related to one another
 - Transferring institutional knowledge
 - Engage in creative budgeting - does our budget reflect our values
 - Alignment, work - are we all headed toward the same vision/mission in regard to committees?
 - Create long-term staffing plan
 - How to make this a great place to work?
 - Reviewing policies, procedures and bi-laws. Updating the policy manual (2023).
 - Building committee needs to be described in the policy manual
 - Conduct compliance audits
 - Linkage - being transparent and accessible. Keeping the congregation connected to things happening on the board.
 - Cassy agreed about a strategic plan to measure goals with quantitative and qualitative measures.
 - Wayne wants to add a financial strategic plan - including when, amounts, and fundraising possibilities
 - Chris added deciding on whether to grow as a congregation or not--assessing the congregation's desire to possibly grow.
 - Discussion of two services, satellite locations
 - Cassy mentioned last year's goal to get an elevator (old business) could we get a grant for an elevator or get a shower in the building? Or possibly a chair lift. If it becomes a major part of the budget, it needs to be voted by the congregation (above 36 k - 10% of budget). Importance of congregational buy-in for big changes.
 - Safety committee discussed additional exit from sanctuary
 - Chalice lighters - UUA program - congregation has discrete financial need that can be addressed by other congregations.
- Board Covenant

- Chris read covenant
- Covenant will be finalized at next meeting

New Business

Chris brought forward new business

- [Blood Drive Request](#)
 - New member organized blood drives in former congregation in NJ
 - Rev Pam and Rachel asked if this request could be given to the Community Services Committee or Social Justice? Member can pitch it to coordinate with committee. Coordinate building use with Jenny—an outside group coming in, i.e. The Red Cross.
 - Chris will respond to Rob to give the ok and direct him to staff for coordination.
- [Group Identifiers](#)
 - Email from Graham - ways to denote what committee folks are on. Wayne mentioned jewels on the name tag to denote board members.
 - Communications committee can talk about this to determine what way to identify is best with name tags, etc.
- [100% Voting Congregation](#)
 - Courtney Roberts - are we willing to become a 100% voting congregation this year? There is no privacy concern in the requirements. Only action needed is to fill out pledge online.
 - Pam read the requirements aloud to the board.
 - Wayne made a motion to become a 100 percent voting congregation. Cassy seconded motion. Unanimous agreement.
 - Pam can complete the online pledge.
- Excess donation transfer (Wayne)
 - Half plate owed line on balance sheet
 - Large amount that doesn't reflect accurately. We have been paying recipients.
 - Past administrator tracking led to a slight ambiguity on the records of the ½ plate recipients. The board, treasurer, and staff continue to review and amend any missed ½ plate recipients if any.
 - Balance is approx 4k.
 - Wayne proposed that we take the 3600 to P&L as miscellaneous donation and we can start over with clean slate, ensuring that this will be recorded in a proper fashion. Tracking from 2022.
 - Pam proposed that it was an error of bookkeeping and not that organizations did not get paid.
 - "Half plate" will now be termed "Shared Offering"
 - Wayne made a motion to move the 3600 into miscellaneous donation. Chris seconded the motion. Unanimous agreement.

Upcoming meetings or special events

- Connections committee will have a newcomer's orientation this fall. Pam will send the date to Chris to share.
- Cassy will do reading next board meeting

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant? YES!