



First Unitarian Church of Rochester  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Monday, March 13, 2023  
6:30 pm on Zoom

Attendance: Ken Buckle, Emily Clasper, John Farrell, Barbara Gawinski, Jon Horne, Lynn Kinsman, Robert Lyubomirsky, Gregory North, Carl Olsen, Anne Perry, Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz, Elise Wall, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan.

Guests: Annie McQuilken, Jenny Gaul

Absent:

1. Establish a Quorum and Call Meeting to Order at 6:32 pm — Gregory North
2. Chalice lighting – Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan  
Centering Reading by John Farrell. Words by Sai Baba, from BLUU Notes, An Anthology of Love, Justice & Liberation: “Hands that serve are holier than lips that pray.”
3. Consent Agenda [*Note: consent agenda includes items that are distributed before the Board meeting and are voted on without discussion. Any Board member can request that an item be removed so that it can be discussed.*]
  - February 6, 2023, Board minutes
  - Investment Committee Update to accept Judy Oaks’ resignation and approve John Randall as a member.

Approved

4. Investment Committee Report – Annie McQuilken, Chair
  - a. At the end of 2022, the value in the Endowment Fund was \$7.6 million. While the value dropped 15.48% in 2022, over three years, the value increased 2.85%.
  - b. Policy on fossil free investments: “As cost-effective investment vehicles become available that closely match other investment criteria that are spelled out in this policy, investment funds will shift toward sustainable investments and away from fossil fuels.” Fossil free investments as a percent of total equities is 77.06%. Since the previous report to the Board, international fossil free and ESG funds have been added.
  - c. Recent updates to policy
    - i. Set the target draw at no more than 5% of the 20-quarter average balance (instead of 12-quarters);
      1. Accomplished in one year
      2. Draw for upcoming fiscal year at 5%: \$335,534.25
      3. Draw has increased 10%
      4. CPI rose 6.5% in 2022
      5. Switching to 20 quarters, means the draw can go up even when the market is down due to “smoothing”.

- 6. Over past 10 years, average draw is 6.2%, not including roof. 5 year average 5.7%. Had been as high as 8.0%, but long term average is going down.
    - ii. Set a maximum draw for the operating budget at no more than 30% of the operating budget;
      - 1. Budget of \$1,118,447.50 or more keeps it under 30%.
  - d. Banking concerns
    - i. Silicon Valley Bank (SIVB) - Situation was especially risky; other banks with high risk profiles are paying the price, but the overall banking system is sound.
    - ii. M&T Bank has excellent capitalization/risk profile compared to SIVB.
    - iii. It would be prudent to move cash to utilize multiple banks and/or our brokerage firm to minimize risk.
    - iv. We will investigate risk profiles of banks that invest in underserved areas of Rochester to see if that is an option.
5. Membership Roll Update  
**MOTION:** To accept the list of members to be removed, as revised.  
 Moved: John Farrell Second: Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz  
 Motion approved
6. Leadership Nominating Committee Report – Jenny Gaul
- a. Board of Trustees – 3-year positions:
    - i. Keith Abel
    - i. Erin Collier
    - ii. David Pinto
  - b. Board of Trustees – 2-year position: Craig Lending
  - c. Leadership Nominating Committee
    - i. Gabe Siftar
    - ii. Nicole Delgrosso
  - d. President – 1-year position nominated by the Board: Lynn Kinsman
  - e. Clerk – 2-year position nominated by the Board: Emily Clasper
  - f. Meet the Candidates will be held on Sunday, May 21, during Connections time, in-person (masked) and on zoom.
7. Linkage/Monitoring. Emily Clasper, Barbara Gawinski, John Farrell, Jon Horne, Gregory North, Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz, Elise Wall  
 Kudos to Barbara for creating the slide show.
- a. Focus Group Design and Execution:
    - i. Overall worked well. Good format (thanks, Barbara!) and facilitation.
    - ii. Questions need to be clear (e.g. what do we mean by “challenged.”) Difficulty in answering some questions due to confusing semantics.
    - iii. Important to provide advance notice and announce in service. Helps to invite/engage specific groups (e.g. Young Adult)
  - b. Participants expressed:

- i. Gratitude for opportunity to meet! Thoughtful responses to questions.
  - ii. Deep gratitude for some programming for spiritual development.
  - iii. Clear requests in specific areas of growth.
- c. Areas of Strength
  - i. Connections!
  - ii. Connecting/development spaces
  - iii. Soul Matters, COA, Worship Associates
  - iv. Programs that engage the congregation like R3
- d. Areas for Growth
  - i. Communications / Awareness / Invitation
  - ii. Clear call to action/Invitations to engage, especially in SJ
  - iii. Opportunities for RE Parents outside supporting RE
- e. Recommendations:
  - i. Make Focus Groups a regular part of our Monitoring/Linkage work.
  - ii. Continue on to End 4, learning from our End 3 experience, tweaking as needed.
  - iii. Pause on Congregational Survey, consider less frequent or revised approach.
- f. Questions for linkage team to consider:
  - i. how does this help us to understand whether we are meeting / progressing toward our ends?
  - ii. Pandemic changed people's need to learn how to communicate & connect but this didn't show up in survey. How do we address this?
  - iii. Are we more or less engaged in spiritual development through inspirational services. This may not be possible to measure quantitatively.
  - iv. Anecdotal expression from individual conversations isn't sufficient. Need some formalization of concepts.
- g. Additional ideas for consideration:
  - i. Concern among young adult group about what happens when they 'age out'? People know that in Religious Education (RE), youth does Coming of Age (COA) and then youth group and then Young Adult group that takes them to age 35. Then what?
  - ii. Propose to build a new survey based at least partly on the focus group results. Building a baseline of engagement helps us to figure out what to ask in the survey.
  - iii. Pausing on the survey while we do focus groups on End 4.
  - iv. How do we know, what method is used whether we are doing better, worse or no change. This is how our framework will be modified.
  - v. Know that there will be a survey . . . but expect it will be changed significantly to help us know where the congregation is.
  - vi. There are about a dozen goals embedded in the Ends. Board and Rev. Shari could negotiate goals and celebrate achievements. There should probably be one goal per End.
- h. Three goal areas identified:
  - i. communication
  - ii. social justice and

iii. RE parents

8. Congregational Salary Program Background – Lynn Kinsman

In preparation for the April Board meeting, please watch 40-minute presentation where Jan Gartner, UUA Compensation and Staffing Practices Manager and member of our congregation, and Sean Griffin UUA Compensation and Benefits Specialist, explain the goals of the revised guidelines and how to access them on the UUA website. Jan will attend April Board to go over this. First Unitarian is in the largest church category on the chart. Our compensation structure references the UUA but also uses other sources.

9. Stewardship Campaign Update – Elise Wall, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan, Robert Lyubomirsky, Anne Perry

a. Board Engagement

- i. Stewards – Spring & Fall. Thanks to Board of Trustees members who signed up as well as to all others
- ii. March 18<sup>th</sup> Stewardship Nurturing Community Event, 4-5:30. Connections, appetizers, and kid's activities 4-4:30. Program in sanctuary with music and messages 4:30-5. Song circle in Susan B. Anthony Lounge as well as cupcakes and chocolate fountain in Williams Gallery 5-5:30.
- iii. Board members – Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan asks the Board members to please complete financial commitment right away.

10. Policy Governance – Ken Buckle, Emily Clasper, Lynn Kinsman, Anne Perry

Report on February 26 Forum – during connections. Had 15 attendance in person and another 15 online. Follow up: to make the slides available on the website.

11. Ministers Report

- a. Staffing changes – Youth Group Coordinator Nina Lutz and Coming of Age Coordinator/Children's Worship Musician Jared Wentrick have resigned effective April 16, 2023. They had expected to be here through the end of the church year but have to leave earlier than anticipated to be eligible for a residency in the UK.
- b. Discussion of grants panels involving possible changes to charters that could include having a single grants panel for three chartered funds and the possibility of multi-year awards.

**MOTION:** To affirm the Gilbert Spirit Fund panel's authority to proceed as they have proposed.

Moved: Ken Buckle Second: John Farrell

Motion approved.

12. Treasurer's Update – Robert Lyubomirsky

*Please note: At the February meeting, there was an in-depth review of December 31, 2022, financials. This was a more extensive report following the quarter end and projected year end results. At the March Board meeting, there is a brief update covering January 2023 month and year-to-date results.*

- a. Financial Results Updates:

- i. Financial January performance: Also see January Full Year '22-23 Treasury Report.
- ii. Pledge Income YTD 75.28% of Full Year Budget (FYB), resulting in \$10.3k increase year over year (YOY). This is predominantly due to an increase in pre-paid Pledges. Reminder: Florence Jessup last month shared with us bottoms-up 6+6 Outlook, expressing her confidence in meeting Full Year Budget. Total Income is 76.8% of the FYB, this is \$49.2k more than Prior Year YTD
- iii. YTD Expense was 54.24%/on par with Prior Year YTD. Keep monitoring the slightly increasing run-rate, but Good Job overall on expense management.
- b. Update February: Net Income is continuing to be positive YOY, but as expected to decrease later in Church Year.
- c. Board Motion Status – Open Projects (status as end of December)
  - i. Technology Training, consulting & contracting services, \$3.87k remaining (out of \$10k)
  - ii. Critical Building Updates, \$119.8 remaining (out of \$250k)
  - iii. Future planning process, \$25k (has not started)
  - iv. Church Lobby, \$2.82k remaining (out of \$18k)
  - v. Wi-Fi & Firewall fix, ~\$15.2k (out of \$20k)
  - vi. 3-Yr Strategic Commitment, \$110K (has not started)
  - vii. Repair of HVAC \$15k (out of \$15k)

13. Other Business –

- a. In person gatherings in March/April
  - i. Social gathering at Carl's house. Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 5:30. *[Note: Canceled owing to COVID.]*
  - ii. In person board meeting Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> (Susan B. Anthony or 110). Dinner at 6; meeting 6:30-9.
- b. Budget meeting – Thursday, April 27, 7:00 pm

14. Board self-evaluation

Good meeting – we had good discussion, have a lot to think about and got a lot done. Very comprehensive – jam packed. Still learning. Fruitful especially the focus groups discussion. Positive that Robert spoke up when he had questions about next steps. It's super unusual that we went over time for the first time (6 minutes!).

15. Adjourn. With no objection, meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

16. Chalice Extinguishing

April centering reading will be from John Farrell; May centering reading will be from Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz.