



First Unitarian Church of Rochester  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Monday, October 14, 2024  
6:30 pm  
Location: Gallery

**Attendance:** Keith Abel, Lynette Blake, Emily Clasper, Erin Collier, Lynn Kinsman, Craig Lending, Ernesto Michelucci, Carl Olsen, David Pinto, Mariane Randall, Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz, Elise Wall, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan

**Absent:**

**Guests:**

1. Establish a Quorum and Call Meeting to Order at 6:36pm — Lynn Kinsman  
Timekeeper: Keith Abel  
Process Observer: Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz
2. Chalice lighting and opening reading – Lynette Blake
3. Consent Agenda [*Note: The 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.*] accepted as stated below:
  - [September Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes](#)

**Consent Agenda passed by Unanimous vote**

4. [Greater Good recipient proposals](#)

**Motion:** To approve the proposed organizations for the 2024-2025 Children’s Vote.

  - i. San Jose Partners
  - ii. Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services
  - iii. Refugees Helping Refugees

**Moved:** Lynn Kinsman **Seconded:** David Pinto  
**Motion Approved.**
5. Linkage Committee report (Keith Abel)
  - [Simplified Ends statements](#)
    - Connections event Oct. 13 - discussion of proposed rewording to simplify the Ends statements
    - Feedback from Board members has been positive - these changes make sense and retain the spirit of the Ends while presenting them in a simpler way.
    - Additional wording options were offered, especially in the wording of Ends 2 and 3.
    - One more feedback meeting is scheduled.
  - Second congregational meeting for vision-building (Dec 15)

- This meeting will be oriented toward a discussion of Social Justice

6. Personnel committee report (Erin Collier)

- The committee met to discuss the Minister's evaluation
- Rev. Shari will provide a job description and goals for this month on which to base the evaluation. The committee will convene once they have this and return to the Board.
- Staff appreciation event in conjunction with Solstice Service like last year - December 21st. Erin will send out a sign-up for things to bring. Suggestions for gifts?

7. Minister's Report

- Steps to Membership Curriculum changes
  - Rev Shari presented a proposal for changing the membership
    - Bylaws require a course of study for membership.
    - The former course was UU 101, UU 201, and Starting Point. This has become less effective in recent years. Retention rates, especially in marginalized demographics, input from the Dallas UU congregations, and current staffing levels informed the new proposal.
    - Inquirer Series - 9 sessions during Connections. Not all sessions are required.
      - a. This program spreads the responsibility across several people instead of one staff member.
      - b. Starting Point is now shortened because some of the former content is included in the 9 sessions.
    - Newcomers are introduced to this course of study because it is ongoing during Connections and the Welcome Desk will direct them to the sessions.
    - New groups of members will be joining by signing the book approximately every season (every two months). This will provide a cohort of new members without making the wait too long. Recognition of new members will still occur in the services twice a year.
    - This model has been in use since August.
    - Rev. Shari will send the curriculum to the Board.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed changes to the Membership Curriculum with the membership module of the "Inquirers" course of study and a revised "Starting Point" class.

**Moved:** Lynn Kinsman **Seconded:** Lynette Blake

**Motion Approved.**

- Staffing updates
  - In the process of adding to Administrative staff and hiring a Communication Specialist
  - A number of staff have been out sick recently.
  - Rev. Shari is in conversation regarding securing a sabbatical minister and will come to the Board with a Proposal.
- Sabbatical team formation
  - The current team is only two members. Two more are needed.

## 8. Treasurer's Report - August 2024

- Much of the reported activity reflects the current timeline for the Stewardship campaign and the various end-of-year processes. They do not necessarily indicate a serious downward trend in the long-term. Income is expected to catch up with expenses as the Fall Stewardship Campaign progresses.
  - Income:
    - Pledge Income YTD Giving was 32.13% of Full Year Budget (FYB), (\$33.7k) less than Prior Year YTD.
    - Other Ops Generated Income Monthly result was (\$0.07k) less than PY month's and (\$2.3k) less than PY YTD.
    - Transfer from Restricted Fund Category was \$30.42k during August and is \$106.7k YTD. It is \$11.76k more than PY YTD.
    - YTD Total Income is 27.54% of the FYB. It is (\$24.28k) less than PY YTD.
  - Expenses
    - Full year Expenses are 14.30% of FYB (Full Year Budget). YTD Expense total is \$175.6k (vs. PY YTD \$171.4k), i.e. increase in spending by \$4.2k.
  - Net Income
    - The month's Net Income (NI) was (\$234) vs. PY Month's NI of \$19k, while YTD NI was \$162.5k vs. PY YTD \$191.0k, i.e. YOY decrease (\$28.5k).
  - Balance Sheet
    - The month's YTD Balance Sheet Financial Asset values have decreased (\$6.6k).
- The Treasurer is working with the ChurchCenter software to explore its features and capabilities. Financial reporting from this software may result in updates to the Treasurer's monthly reports to the Board.
- There is a need for a data analyst to help parse some of the data that may help with Church decision-making.

## 9. Generative discussion - Working towards a Social Justice shared vision

- What does Social Justice mean to this congregation?
- How is Social Justice functioning in our congregation right now?
- As we build our social justice program:
  - Is it more important to have SJ efforts that many people participate in, or that has a greater impact?
  - What would be **NOT OK** to risk in pursuit of Social Justice in this congregation?
- This discussion will continue leading up to the December 15th Congregational Meeting

## 10. Announcements and Reminders

- Next Board of Trustees meeting: Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day)
- Time to think about next year's board positions - The Nominating Committee needs to know by January.

## 11. Action Register - Board members reviewed the in-progress tasks and upcoming deliverables

12. Check out - How did the meeting go for you?

- Remote participants - Good meeting after we stopped talking over one another. Earbuds were a help
- In-person participants - Hybrid model worked. Some jumping in, need more adherence to being called on. Fruitful discussion of Social Justice. Thanks to our process observer for enforcing the covenant. Positivity about the hybrid first. Excitement for what's something up. Thanks to timekeeper for keeping us on track. Gratefulness for everyone's openness. Use a ball to help us know who is speaking?

13. Process Observer Comments

- Thanks for listening when they mentioned us not taking turns, Lots of enthusiasm for the topics causes some cross-talk very connected to our vision.
- Did we link our discussions to our vision?
- Did we live into our covenant?

14. Chalice Extinguishing (Rev. Shari)

15. Adjourn. With no objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:09pm

APPROVED