



First Unitarian Church of Rochester
Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, January 13, 2025
6:30 pm
Location: Zoom

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 6:34pm — Lynn Kinsman
Timekeeper: Lynette Blake
Process Observer: Mariane Randall
2. Chalice lighting and opening reading - Lynn Kinsman reading from *UU World Magazine*: “Create Something New” by Alix Klingenberg
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:
 - [Dec 09, 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes](#)

Consent Agenda passed by Unanimous vote

4. Positions to be filled
 - Emily Clasper is resigning from her duties as Clerk whenever a replacement can be found. She is willing to continue on as a Trustee through the end of the church year.
 - Mariane Randall is willing to step in to complete Emily’s term as Clerk through 6/30/2025. Mariane’s Trustee term ends in 2027.

Motion: to accept Emily Clasper’s resignation from Clerk duties and per bylaw Section 6.7 for vacancies in the duties of Clerk, we appoint Mariane Randall as Clerk through 6/30/2025.

Moved: Lynn Kinsman

Seconded: Keith Abel

Motion Approved.

Motion: to appoint Emily Clasper as Trustee to fill Mariane Randall’s Trustee position through 6/30/2025 in accordance with bylaws Section 5.3 for a Trustee vacancy.

Moved: Lynn Kinsman

Seconded: Craig Lending

Motion Approved.

- According to Bylaws Section 6.7 as revised in 2023: “The clerk notifies the Leadership Nominating Committee, in a timely manner, of the number and terms of open positions and the number of years each current trustee and officer has served.”
 - The Leadership Nominating Committee is asked to provide candidates for the following positions:
 - One Trustee-3-year term-to replace Elise Wall (term ends 2025)
 - One Trustee-3-year term-to replace Carl Olsen (term ends 2025)
 - One Trustee-3-year term to replace Ernesto Michelucci (term ends 2025, serving the remainder of Craig Lending's term, secondary to Craig becoming Treasurer.)
 - One Trustee-1-year term-to replace David Pinto (term ends 2026; David is expected to be the board's nominee for President of the congregation (beginning 7/1/25))
 - One Trustee-2-year term-to replace Emily Clasper (term ends 2025)
 - Emily Clasper resigned as Clerk Jan, 2025 and Mariane Randall(current trustee) replaced Emily as Clerk. Emily is filling Mariane’s trustee position through June 2025.
 - If Mariane Randall is nominated as Clerk for a full 2-year term, a new Trustee will be sought to serve the remaining 2 years of her original Trustee term
 - If Mariane Randall does not continue as Clerk, she may be re-elected to finish the last two years of her original term.
 - Short discussion of Trustee “Job Description”
5. Land acknowledgments and relationship with Seneca Nation
- The Board has received a suggestion to consider additional ways to honor our relationship with the Seneca Nation, in addition to a verbal Land Acknowledgement.
 - The Board discussed best practices in this area and the existing financial and interpersonal relationships between the congregation and the Seneca Nation, specifically the Friends of Ganondagan.
6. Policy Governance Committee Report
- Progress on gifts-to-endowment discussions
 - Feedback still being collected. A written summary will be forthcoming once all of the conversations are complete.
 - Initial findings are that isolating the Bylaws change in our communications may be leading to the impression that this is the only thing that the Board wants to do to shore up operating expenses, which is not the case. Do we need to expand our messaging so it doesn't seem like this is the only thing being done?
 - Policy change will also be necessary in addition to a bylaws change, but this isn't within the scope of the current conversation.
 - The Investment Committee will be providing feedback
 - Policy Governance annual educational forum set for Feb 16 during Connections (in person and Zoom)

7. Linkage Committee Report

- Debrief of congregational meeting, collating of data
 - Review of top vote-getters for “Things the Church Should Do” and “Things the Church Shouldn’t Do”
 - The committee is still evaluating the notes taken by the group scribes.
 - The general impression is that the conversations were valuable, and the social/interpersonal connection element was important as well.
- Simplified Ends next steps
 - One person offered feedback on this after the Congregational meeting. We still need more input.

8. Personnel Committee

- Plans for minister evaluation
 - Rev. Shari submitted Job Description.
 - The personnel committee will begin the evaluation this week.
- Plans for staff survey
 - Committee will be working on the Staff survey shortly.
 - No additional staff interviews are planned, unless requested on the survey
 - Staff appreciation potluck was a success!

9. Treasurer's Report

- November Report
 - Income
 - Pledge Income YTD Giving was **63.19% of Full Year Budget (FYB), \$11.7k more than Prior Year YTD.**
 - Other Ops Generated Income Monthly result was **\$9.8k more than PY month's and \$11.0k more than PY YTD.**
 - This is primarily due to receiving the rent check from New Horizons in November rather than receiving it in December in the prior year.
 - Transfer from Restricted Fund Category was **\$30,425** during November and **\$197,960k YTD.** It is **\$19.2k more than PY YTD** due to change in transfer schedule.
 - YTD Total Income is **56.57%** of the FYB. It is **\$41.9k more** than PY YTD.
 - Expenses
 - Full year Expenses are **36.06% of FYB (Full Year Budget).** YTD Expense total is **\$442.7k (vs. PY YTD \$454.7k),** i.e. decrease in spending by \$12.0k.
 - This is primarily due to the delay in hiring an Administrative Assistant for Pastoral and Membership programming and the vacancy in the Communications Specialist position
 - Net Income

- The month's Net Income (NI) was **\$51.4k** vs. PY Month's NI of (\$3.9k), while YTD NI was **\$251.8k** vs. PY YTD \$197.8k, i.e. **YOY increase \$53.9k.**
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- Balance Sheet
 - The month's YTD Balance Sheet Financial Asset values has **increased \$645.9k** due to market performance of investment fund.
- Board Restricted Funds
 - **Performance Net = (\$32,645.58)**
 - Income Endowment Fund – (\$28,925.58)
 - \$1,500.00 Memorial Gift
 - (\$30,425.58) Monthly Income Endowment Draw
 - Operating Cash Reserve – (\$3,720.00) due to Planning Center/CRM implementation project
 - Building Maintenance Fund – \$0
 - Property Maintenance and Improvement Fund – \$0
- Donor Restricted Funds
 - **Performance Net = \$61,304.36**
 - Greater Good Project - \$1,590.00
 - Landscape Fund - \$59,714.36 * New fund created with monies transferred from Memorial Garden Fund
 - Plate for Wider Community
 - Receipts \$2,876.48
 - Disbursement (\$2,876.48)
 1. \$12.50 for Susan B Anthony House on 10/27/24 (late gifts)
 2. \$1,354.55 for The Compassionate Friends on 11/3 & 11/17/24
 3. \$1,509.43 for Climate Solutions Accelerator 11/10 & 11/24/24

10. Minister's Report

- Annual review of operational metrics dashboard
 - Membership 671
 - Children and Youth - general decline, somewhat consistent with population trends in Rochester, but an area for growth
 - A significant drop in RE enrollment
 - Attendance at Sunday service for youth a slight drop
 - Holiday season performance
 - Greater Good giving down a little
 - No personal appeal from organizations during service
 - No letter from Senior Minister
 - Christmas Attendance was up

- Family service was very well attended
- Other services increased from last year
- Soul Matters Enrollment
 - Increase in enrollment from 2022
- Data is expected to improve with move to Church Center
- Could we collect data on attendance at Connections programming? This is planned for the Fall.
- All staff except Lead Minister were given a small Holiday Bonus
- Minimum wage has raised to \$15.50, and pay for RE staff has been raised accordingly
- Update on Stewardship campaign plans/timing
 - Campaign officially launches February 23
 - Preliminary engagement is already underway
 - Lots of stewards needed - much support will be needed, especially as this coincides with move to Church Center and many people will need to re-enter their information
- Update on Church Center conversion progress and plans for training/adoption
 - Soft launch of congregation-facing features February 16th
 - Efforts are being made to move forward with social and communication functions
 - Volunteer leaders will get training. The interface for most users is somewhat intuitive, but volunteers may need to guide some congregants to connect and navigate the interface the first time. A Connections program may help as well.
- Rev. Shari will be away Feb 7-18 - attending the Senior Ministers of Large UU Congregations conference

11. Reminders

- Next member book signing is Feb 22 4-5 pm
- Rev. Shari will be absent from the Feb. board meeting due to study leave

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

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

- Good meeting, time was kept reasonably well, and we are making progress on important issues. Metrics were interesting, topics wide ranging, valuable conversations. We are getting well-balanced conversations on Zoom, getting a lot done. Sometimes it is hard to engage in conversations with no concrete conclusions.

14. Process Observer Comments

- Impressed with the discussions, taking turns. Zoom prevents cross-talk and removes the need to pass the microphone. We were focused on our vision.

15. Adjourn. With no objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:02pm

16. Chalice Extinguishing (Rev. Shari)

APPROVED