Amendments to the Bylaws

Bylaw amendments approved by the Board of Trustees to be proposed at the Annual Meeting.

Amend the Bylaws as follows:

1. [The following amendment is offered to enhance readability.]

   Amend Article II, so that the text of the “Bond of Union” does not appear in all capital letters.

2. [The following amendment is offered to strengthen the “no creedal test” message by having it be the lead idea in the section and to clarify that membership comes through completing a process and no longer via a request to a specified church staff member.]

   Amend Art. III, Sect. 1, as follows:

   “There shall be no creedal test, explicit or implied, for membership. Individuals who are 16 years of age or older may obtain membership status by ascribing to the purpose set forth by Article II (The Bond of Union) and completing the following steps:

   a. Submit a written request for membership to the Director of Congregational Life Participate in the path to membership process;
   b. File a pledge and pay the first installment of the pledge; and,
   c. Sign the Membership Book in the presence of an active member.

   There shall be no creedal test, explicit or implied, for membership. The Senior Minister will report the names of new members to the Board of Trustees on a periodic basis.”

3. [The following amendment deletes references to a specific arithmetic formula and to a minimum pledge required to maintain membership and replaces it with the concept of remaining in covenant with the church and making an annual financial contribution of record.]

   Amend Art. III, Sect. 2, as follows:

   “a. Membership continues as long as the member remains in covenant and has made a financial contribution of record during the year (or has been granted a waiver). A member is in covenant who honors our shared values (the Seven UU Principles and our Bond of Union) in our relationships with one another; an annual financial payment in excess of the minimum cost of annual membership is made. The cost of membership is equal to the cost of UUA and PSD annual assessments plus the reasonable cost of supporting a member by the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines. The Board prior to the each annual pledge campaign will define this cost."
b. The Board of Trustees may, temporarily waive the requirement listed above for individual members of the congregation.

4. [The following amendment is intended to provide flexibility in recognizing that someone who leaves our church membership rolls may not necessarily do so in writing. ]

   Amend Art. III, Sect. 4, as follows:

   “A member may resign at any time by submitting a written resignation notice to the church office.”

5. [The following amendment is intended to clarify that the Board of Trustees has the authority on its own to propose a resolution for consideration at the Annual Meeting, consistent with past practice.]

   Amend Art. IV, Sect. 3, preceding subparaph “a”, as follows:

   “Resolutions A resolution can be proposed by the Board, or subject to the following conditions, can be proposed by members and placed on the agenda of an Annual Meeting or Special Meeting if the resolution:”

6. [The following amendment is intended to consolidate current Bylaw references to the selection of Board members at the Annual Meeting.]

   Amend Art. IV, Sect. 4, as follows:

   “Notice of each annual and or special meeting shall be given by mailing notices to active members at least two weeks before a meeting. The notice shall include:
   a. The time, place and purpose of the meeting;
   b. The proposed agenda;
   c. The text of any resolution duly presented to the secretary; and
   d. Candidates presented by the Nominating Committee (annual meeting only). At the annual congregational meeting, the names of candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee and the name of any Board member whom the Board selected to fill a vacancy on the Board since the last annual meeting (as provided in Art. V, Section 3).”

7. [The following amendment is intended to correct a reference to a Committee name.]

   Amend Art. IV, Sect. 6, by deleting the word “Development” in “Endowment Development Committee.”

8. [The following amendment is intended to correct a typographical error.]

   Amend Art. IV, Sect. 7, by making “meetings” singular (“meeting”).
9. [The following amendment deletes language rendered unnecessary by the amendments offered in action 6, above.]

Amend Art. V, Sect. 1, by deleting the second sentence, as follows:

The membership shall also vote on any vacancies that have been filled by the board since the last annual meeting.

10. [The following amendment is intended to clarify that the Board may meet more than once per month, that Board members may participate by virtual or telephonic means, and that church members have a right to attend Board meetings, other than those required to be closed. Finally, it strikes a superfluous reference to keeping the membership informed as that language appears in Article V, Section 6 – section action 12 below.]

Amend Art. V, Section 4, as follows:

“The Board of Trustees shall hold an open meeting at least once each month at a time and place it determines. The Board may allow virtual or telephonic Board member participation. Notice of the regular time and place of such meeting shall be published to the membership at the start of each fiscal year and whenever the regular time or place is changed. At such meeting five (5) Trustees shall constitute a quorum. Board meetings shall be open to all members except for an annual Board retreat and any portion of a meeting held in executive session. The membership shall be informed through the monthly church newsletter of significant actions taken by the Board at their meetings.

11. [The following amendment is intended to provide definition as to how Special Board meetings may be called and conducted, and to maintain membership right to notice and attendance.]

Amend Art. V, Sect. 5, as follows:

“Any two members of the Board may call a Special Board meeting, which shall be scheduled for a date and time sufficient to provide reasonable advance notice to Board members and the Membership. A Special Board meeting may be held via virtual or telephonic means without in-person participation. Notice of Special Board meetings shall include a proposed meeting agenda and a reasonable means for the membership to attend a meeting that is held virtually or via telephone. Special meetings or virtual meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by any two (2) members of the Board for the transaction of business.”
12. [The following amendment is intended to give the Board flexibility in determining how to communicate its decisions and actions to the membership and to broaden what must be reported so that it is not limited to “significant” actions.]

Amend Art. V, Sect. 6, second sentence, as follows:

“The membership shall be informed, through publicly available church communication, of significant actions taken by the board at their meetings. The Board shall keep the membership informed of the Board’s decisions and actions.”

13. [The following amendment is intended to correct unclear language and to ensure the language reflects actual qualifications for officer election.]

Amend Art. VI, Sect. 1, paragraph “b,” as follows:

“The officers of the congregation to be chosen shall be current Board members and shall include: President, Vice President, and Secretary. The offices of congregational president, Vice President, and Secretary shall be filled by members previously elected to the Board.”

14. [The following amendment is intended to maintain consistency in the appearance of the word, “Board,” throughout the Bylaws.]

Amend Art. VI, Sect. 2, by capitalizing the first letter in all references therein to “board.”

15. [The following amendment is intended to clarify that the role of the Secretary is to not only to maintain minutes, but to create them.]

Amend Art. VI, Sect. 4, paragraph “a,” as follows:

“a. The creation and preservation of the minutes of all meetings of the membership and of the Board of Trustees.”

16. [The following amendment is intended to remove an errant comma.]

Amend Art. VII, Sect. 2, by deleting the comma after the word, “Church.”

17. [The following amendment is intended to clarify how the members of the Nominating Committee are appointed.]

Amend Art. IX, Sect. 2, paragraph “a” as follows:
(Amended Bylaws Cont’d)

“a. Nominating Committee. Shall consist of five (5) members, two of whom shall be members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute the Nominating Committee for new members of the Board of Trustees and shall appoint and three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the Board members from the active membership to complete the nominating committee.”

18. [The following amendment is intended to update the reference as the Prairie Star District of the UUA no longer exists and that our church is a “member” and not an “affiliate” of the Unitarian Universalist Association.]

Amend Art. XII as follows:

“This church shall be an affiliate a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Prairie Star District of the UUA.”