

**First Unitarian Church of Des Moines**  
Board of Trustees Minutes  
Wednesday, June 29, 2022

In attendance and via Zoom:

Board Members: LeeAnn Back, Scott Emison Clair, Reba Eagles, Chelsea Hayes, Andrea LeMeuse, Crystal Loving, Greg Nichols, Patty Notch, Fern Stewart

In-coming Board Members: Kevin Boeckholt, Crystal Loving (currently serving) and Sally Merritt

Staff: Alice Stewart

Several church members also were in attendance.

Timekeeper: Fern Stewart; Process Observer: Patty Notch

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board President Greg Nichols. The chalice was presented and a reflection was provided. The minutes from May 19, May 26, June 5, June 7 and June 20 were approved as presented. Personal check-ins were made.

**President's Report and Announcements**

Greg Nichols provided a forward and optimistic outlook for the upcoming year. He announced Rev. Victoria Safford had accepted a one year **transitional** minister position with an option to renew. Rev. Safford has been a UU minister for the past 30 plus years, most recently for 22 years in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Rev. Safford will be visiting the church mid-July and will begin as our minister in mid-August. She will remain living in St. Paul, Minnesota however between in-person and remote she will serve the church in a full-time capacity. This announcement and details will be provided to the congregation and posted on the website tomorrow morning. Special thanks were given to the UUA staff that helped facilitate this process. And, thanks were given to the Ministerial Transitions Advisory Committee members for their willingness to serve and be available during this process.

Rev. Safford joined the meeting remotely and was introduced to the Board members and individuals in the room and participated via Zoom. Rev. Safford explained it was the right move for her at this time, a very good transitional position. She emphasized gratitude and described our congregation as having fortitude, nimbleness and character. Welcome Rev. Stafford!

## **Committee Reports:**

Celebrant Team - Birch Spick was thanked for stepping in and leading the team. Birch asked for board members to volunteer to participate in the July 31st service with the theme, what this work and service means to us personally. It was confirmed that recorded pieces could be included for those not in town.

Adult RE Programming - Walter Pearson reviewed the Adult 2022 Fall offerings. He explained 130 congregants participated in the survey offered in February. The largest request was for small group ministry, an extension offered several years ago, knitting new members with established members. He explained it was beyond their committee's capacity to coordinate facilitators, offer training and needed organization. Discussion included staff members' involvement and which area it would be managing it. It was determined once the RE and membership staff positions have been filled and the minister is in place, discussion regarding coordination of the small group ministry could be determined. Reba Eagles will meet with Walter in the near future to discuss adult forums.

Kitchen Committee - Ann Mowery reported Waldinger had been hired to address the grease interceptor with great success as the smaller interceptor was approved by Waste Water Management. The bids for a general contractor are due Friday. She noted 97% of the kitchen pledges were in, with the additional due after July 1 for an approximate total of \$434,000. The board thanked the committee and Ann for their work.

Lift - Al Powers reported the lift needed replacement parts and those would be shipped when they were ready. Also, the auditorium door framing will be more extensive and he will be meeting with Jan Svec, Dana Sorenson and Alice Stewart to discuss costs and options. Many thanks to Al for working through this process.

Right Relations Group - Bill Bauch thanked Katherine Vance, Linda Lemons, Jean Rommes and Scott Emison Clair for agreeing to serve on the ministerial appointed committee. He explained the current policy was 25 years old and two generations removed from current UUA guideline and will need to be redrafted.. In the near future the committee will be meeting Lisa Presley from Midamerica UUA who has expertise in the area. They have met with individuals who have voiced concerns and will continue to do so. Another objective is the formation of a covenant that will address how they work together as a committee. The committee is available to work with the Board to develop a congregation-wide policy on how we work together as a people. He clarified we must treat each other, our staff and those coming through our doors with respect and dignity and to be a place where everyone feels safe. He requested the Board affirm the

existence of the committee once a name has been established. Rev. Stafford will be meeting with them. Greg Nichols thanked and affirmed the members for their efforts in the creation of the policy.

### **Executive Reports:**

Executive Report: Alice Stewart thanked everyone coming onto the Board, the various committee members coming in this year, and encouraged them to contact her should assistance be needed. She noted the Executive Reports deadline from committees was the first week of the month and that due to workload expectations, reminders would not be sent. Alice gave a shout out to Caring Ministry, especially Jude Cigrand, for the excellent response to a caring ministry crisis while Rev. Amy was on vacation. Our caring ministry was there for the community as well as the congregation. Completing the report, attendance numbers for May was fairly standard, and it is anticipated June attendance will be lower. The executive report will be posted to the website tomorrow.

Alice Stewart recognized staff beginning with Emily for cleaning the church for the month of June. and a thank you to church members volunteering the past week. Emily and Hannah took over the PowerPoint order of service for Sundays, replaced the sound system for Zoom meetings and, with the help of Teresa Miller, rescued thirteen feral cats from the church grounds. They provided tech support at the annual meeting. They transferred all Zoom links, after Rev. Amy's departure, which involved completely redoing and then communicated to all. They supported additional technological and logistical meetings and forums due to ministerial transitions and finally all staff attended the Stine Barn stewardship meeting providing support and public speaking. The board thanked the staff.

Financial Report: Alice Stewart reported May's charitable income was the fourth strongest of the fiscal year. The Food Fair brought in \$12,742. Income exceeded expenditures by \$7,324.13. With the exception of the payroll, every expense subsection was lower in May than in April. Addressing the large coffee/kitchen expense, it was noted it was due to the kitchen project and was covered by funds released from restriction as an unbudgeted expense. She predicted revenues would remain strong in June. She explained the DFA and DRE compensation expenses would continue to remain high through June due to Charlie and Devon having PTO through that month.

In reviewing the reports and analysis for the fiscal year end the following items were over the budgeted amount: pledge income over 102%, total income is over 118%. Expenses included higher Pest Control costs due to beaver infestation, technology higher due to pandemic needs. Expenses under the amount budgeted include: total

compensation for all staff is well under 100%, faith formation under 50% due to pandemic most likely. The year end finalization is looking good and we may be within or under the budget for the fiscal year.

### **New Business:**

It was moved by Patty Notch, seconded by Andrea LeMeuse to ratify the following initial board committees and initial appointments for upcoming church year:

**Leadership** - Sally Boeckholt (2025), Bill Brauch (2024), Katie Allen (2024), Liz Bredesen (2023), Shelly Kaldenberg (2023, Sally Merritt (board 2023)

**Communications** - Liz Bredesen (2023), Louise Alcorn (2023), Barb Royal (2023), Diedre Fudge (2023), Fern Stewart (board 2023)

**Membership and Congregational Life** - Ellen Taylor (2023), Sally Boeckholt (2023), Shelley Kaldenberg (2023), Terry Meek (2023), Dash Back (2023), (1 board member TBD, 2023)

**Stewardship** - Mike Merritt (2023), Sally Boeckholt (2023), Margaret Schultz (2023), Adrian Stamper (2023), Greg Nichols (board 2023)

**Governance** - Bill Brauch (2023), Bruce Martin (2025), Up to three additional member appointments, Crystal Loving (board 2023), Andrea LeMeuse (board 2023)

**Financial Oversight** - Eileen Jackson (2024), Margaret Schultz (2023), Megan Klee (2024), Lisa Houchins (2025), Kevin Boeckholt (board, 2023), Greg Nichols (board, 2023)

**Human Resources** - Reba Eagles (board, 2023), Sally Merritt (board, 2023), LeeAnn Back (board, 2023)

**Nominating** - Pam Backstrom (2023), Ken McCann (2023), 1 member position TBD, Chelsea Hayes (board, 2023), Fern Stewart (board, 2023)

**Ministerial Review** - TBD

Approved via in-person and Zoom votes.

**2022-2023 Board of Trustees Organizations/Selection of Officers** - President Reba Eagles, Vice President Sally Merritt and Secretary Fern Stewart appointed by acclamation.

### **Announcements:**

Next Board of Trustees meeting - Thursday, July 14

Special thanks to outgoing members Scott Emison Clair and Patty Notch for their leadership, knowledge and friendship. And, welcome to Sally Merritt, Kevin Boeckholt and Crystal Loving as we begin a new year with new opportunities. And thanks to Greg

Nichols, our outgoing President, for steadfast leadership, wisdom and setting an excellent example of living a UU life.

LeeAnn Back provided the closing and the chalice was extinguished.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m., submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary