

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines
Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, January 19, 2023

In attendance via Zoom:

Board Members: LeeAnn Back, Reba Eagles, Andrea LeMeuse, Crystal Loving, Greg Nichols, Fern Stewart

Staff: Transitional Contract Minister Victoria Safford and Alice Stewart

Several church members were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Board President Reba Eagles. The chalice was presented. LeeAnn Back provided an opening. The check-in question was "How does this church make me better?" Trustees responded. It was moved by Andrea LeMeuse, seconded by Greg Nichols to approve the proposed agenda and the amended minutes from the December 22nd meeting. Motion approved.

Timekeeper: Greg Nichols

Process Observer: Greg Nichols

Minister's Report

Transitional Contract Minister Victoria Stafford stated Alice and Birch were preparing the annual UUA certification documents which includes membership numbers of around 345. The appraisal meeting from the UUA was optional, however it was a good exercise to reflect together on the goals we set. At that meeting Rev. Safford shared that this would be a one year contract ending June 30, 2023. She noted we would be better served with a proper, in residency interim minister. She stated she thought we were on the right track. It was requested to host additional community conversations in the near future because of Rev. Victoria's talent at hosting these events.

Discussion regarding posting of information included the use of Realm versus the website.

Director of Finance Report:

Alice Stewart, Director of Finance, provided highlights for the past month which included December revenue exceeding expenses by \$11,400.53. Snow removal, building maintenance issues include geo-thermal heat pump, and Waste Connections reduced bill by \$100. A request was made to have the snow removal team check the steps from the patio area for ice. The FOC recognized Alice for the very complete Summary of Restricted Funds report.

New Business

Mask Policy: There are no changes to the current mask policy. Masks are optional.

Human Resources Committee Charter: It was explained that the request was to remove “Item 10. Use performance evaluation instruments and ensure correlations with the Senior Minister regarding position descriptions.” The reason behind the request was it did not make sense for HR as they do not supervise and it would not be appropriate for us to do that. It was moved by Andrea LeMeuse to delete Line Item 10 from the Human Resources Committee Charter, seconded by Crystal Loving. Voted via Zoom and in person. Approved.

Governing Policy Updates: Bill Brauch explained the updates were designed to clean up the use of “Ends Statements” which had expired and are no longer relevant. The updates refer to replacement language using policy goals or goals adopted by the Board. For example, the entire first article was all about the ends, references to mission and vision statements that needed to reflect the current statements from 2019. The Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws will have a direct link from the Governance page. All references to the Ends removed, along with updated reference to Prairie Star District to UUA MidAmerica Region. In some instances stricken Ends policies were replaced with goals adopted by the Board or simply struck the Ends language where appropriate. It was moved by Crystal Loving, seconded by Andrea LeMeuse to approve the updates to the Governing Policy as presented. Voted via Zoom and in person. Approved.

Right Relations Team: The Right Relations Team and Rev. Safford met with Lisa Presley to discuss the two tasks before the team; the formation of a covenant and updating the Responsible Behavior Policy. It is the team’s recommendation to start with the formation of a covenant and work with the Board and Rev. Safford to set a schedule for announcing the intent, scheduling a workshop for interested church members with Ms. Presley and to consider member input for the initial draft. The board would review the initial draft, release and receive input from the congregation, create a second draft from member recommendations and repeat the process until it is complete. Once it appears final, a special meeting of the congregation would be held to adopt the covenant. Board approval is asked to begin the process. It was moved by Greg Nichols, seconded by Andrea LeMeuse to begin the Covenant process. Special thanks to the Team for all their work. Voted via Zoom and in person. Approved.

Transition Report: Greg Nichols reported the Board had met the previous weekend for the UUA mid-year review for interim ministry and at that time, Rev. Safford requested the Board let her transitional contract minister agreement expire on June 30, 2023. She

encouraged the Board to seek an in-residence, interim minister. Ministerial alternatives available were discussed but no action taken.

It was moved by Greg Nichols, seconded by Crystal Loving, whereas the current transitional contract minister's tenure at First Unitarian will end June 30, 2023, the Board approves preceding into the UUA interim minister search process, with the objective of obtaining an interim minister to begin their service later in the summer of 2023.

President Reba Eagles thanked the Board for the number of meetings held in the last few weeks. Greg Nichols suggested a review of the three options available: settled minister, interim minister and developmental minister on the UUA site.. Based on the process and timeline, it was recommended to seek an interim minister as we would be timely. Questions were posed regarding timing, focus of what we need/want and a five member search team appointed by the Board. The team would be complete in the next week and a half and available for input from the congregation. Haste is necessary due to the amount of work to get ready as well as the lack of available ministers compared to the demand for ministers. Clarification was made that the Board approves an interim minister, whereas the congregation votes on the settled minister. An e-blast will be sent tomorrow updating the congregation of the process and deadlines. Voted via Zoom and in person. Approved.

Budget Update: The document will be shared at the two meetings scheduled on January 21st and February 5th. It is an aspirational budget, we are looking for comments and suggestions at these meetings. The first budget was \$170,000 what our expected pledge would be, after a two hour meeting we reduced that number in half. It is the goal of the Board to be in the black this year. Greg Nichols explained after the initial meetings and we have input, the budget will be refined and at the Annual Stewardship Sunday event on March 26th we will have a better determination of our actual revenue, late April or early May the Board will be presenting a more specific document at the budget forums with a final draft to the Annual meeting in June. The budget to be shared on Saturday and February the 5th will include full committee budgets and the changes made by the Board. This puts us in a clearer position for the Stewardship Drive to understand the connection of our budgetary desires and our revenue raising. The information will be available at the meeting.

Other Business: A request was made to review the Nomination Committee, Board terms, Unsung Hero and Faith in Action nominees in a timely manner.

Kitchen Committee: Ann Mowrey provided an update stating cabinets were in, lighting in place, countertop measurements have been taken.

Announcements: The Lift project is nearing completion. City inspectors will sign off on January 5th.

The next Board meeting will be held Thursday, February 16, 2023.

LeeAnn Back provided the closing and the chalice was extinguished.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m., submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary