

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines
Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, May 18, 2023

Board Members: LeeAnn Back, Kevin Boeckholt, Reba Eagles, Sally Merritt, Greg Nichols, Fern Stewart

Staff: Transitional Contract Minister Victoria Safford and Alice Stewart

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m. by Board President Reba Eagles. The chalice was presented. LeeAnn Back provided a reading.

Timekeeper and Process Observer: Sally Merritt

It was moved by LeeAnn Back, seconded by Sally Merritt to approve the agenda and minutes from the April 20, 2023 meeting. Motion approved.

Public Comment: No comments.

Minister's Report

Transitional Contract Minister Victoria Stafford stated her written report was included in the packet most of which concentrated on closing out the year and clean up tasks. Rev. Victoria's last working day will be June 15th.

Director of Finance Report:

Alice Stewart, Director of Finance, reported the April revenue results as being down a bit with expenses about the same with a shortfall of \$6,000. She noted with the removal of the mortgage payoff donation, we are behind about \$21,000. We averaged \$11,000 a week at the beginning of the year and this spring averaged \$9,000, which means we are about two weeks behind in revenue. In May, with the Food Fair income included, all fundraising events equaled over \$18,000, with expenses for fundraising only \$75 to \$100, resulting in revenue of \$10,680. Expenses included slight overages in line items which were sent to committees going forward. Operating expenses will balance out in the next two weeks and should end in the black by the end of May.

New Business

Transition Report: Reba Eagles, along with Scott Emison Clair, reported things were going well and more information would be shared on Sunday. We do have a candidate we are following up, a video will be provided at the annual meeting and posted on the

website as a kick-off welcome. The Board thanked the Interim Search Team for their efforts and success.

Covenant Meeting: Bill Brauch, Right Relations, was unable to attend and Reba Eagles provided a summation. Meeting was held on May 6th with approximately 20 members who participated. A good cross section of members with Lisa Presley from the UUA will be leading this first step in the process of creating a church-wide covenant. She reviewed what a covenant means, why we need to form one with a number of exercises in small groups. Define culture, our rules, our explicit messages and implicit messages and what we could cause issues. The Right Relations Team kept the records, will review the notes and prepare a draft. The next step is scheduling an additional workshop to fine tune the initial feedback and get additional information from a larger group workshop. The point of consensus is to be sure everyone gets to weigh in on how we want to be together. It will be a slow, thoughtful process to have explicit conversations of how we want to be together.

Stewardship Update: Mike Merritt thanked Rev. Victoria for her efforts on behalf of the stewardship drive during the last year. They are developing a plan to move forward and determine next year's drive. He provided updated figures reporting a 65% return rate and \$482,441 pledged. He noted the proposed change in the By-Laws should assist in cleaning up data for next year's campaign. The Board and Rev. Victoria thanked Mike and his team for their efforts and upcoming plans for the stewardship drive.

By-Law Proposal: Mike Merritt thanked Margaret Schultz for the updated proposed changes to the by-laws which would be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting. Along with the changes, a Pastoral Exemption Operating Policy was developed which will not be part of the by-law revision and not require congregational approval.

Annual Meeting: The Board reviewed various roles the Board needed to facilitate the meeting which included check-in table, monitoring of Zoom participants, portable microphone and paper ballots. An update to the agenda included the addition of the new minister's video. A printed ballot will be available for Faith in Action. The votes are taken via voice, however if it is close, a show of hands determines the vote. The Kitchen Report will be posted to Realm, along with other committee updates, and not included in the Annual Meeting packet. The reports will be available wherever the Annual Meeting packet is posted. Discussion included the determination the Kitchen Project was a congregational project as it was approved by, and funded by the congregation and the congregational vote to allocate Endowment Funds.

It was moved by Sally Merritt, seconded by LeeAnn Back to go into Executive Session at 6:54 p.m. for the purpose of financial discussion. Motion approved.

It was moved by LeeAnn Back, seconded by Sally Merritt to come out of Executive Session at 7:29 p.m.

LeeAnn Back provided the closing and the chalice was extinguished.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.,

Submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary

