

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Board of Trustees Minutes | Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Board Members: LeeAnn Back, Kevin Boeckholt, Jeremy Guenther, Crystal Loving, Kathryn Sutton and Natalie Mason, Heidi Lackmann, Walter Pearson

Staff: Interim Minister Rev. Meredith Garmon and Alice Stewart

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Board President Kevin Boekholdt.

Timekeeper & Process Observer: Jeremy Gunther

Checkin: Share whatever you'd like!

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Interim Minister's Report:

To hear next month: a description of your spiritual practice.

Executive Report:

Executive report was summarized; submitted with Board agenda & materials.

New Business

Article II — Congregant requests Board participation in the March 10 forum pertaining to the topic

1. On the annual meeting, request that we take a "straw poll vote" to measure the sentiment within the congregation on Article II
 - a. This is to inform delegates to General Assembly of what the congregation thinks/feels about Article II and can represent the congregation accurately then.
2. How do we want the Board to perform at the forum?
 - a. We'd need to connect with the leaders of the forum to coordinate
3. Jeremy, Kevin, Natalie volunteered to help participate and facilitate the forum

Ministerial Search

1. Feedback from forum:
 - a. After feedback from congregants on the direction for ministerial search, Kevin opened up a general discussion on potential directions we can go. Especially pertaining to a settled minister search vs. a developmental minister search.
 - b. From Rev. Garmon: We'd need policies and right relations in place to help ensure we'll be "nice to each other" going forward
 - i. On Feb. 4, there will be a forum for a covenant.
 - c. Concern expressed about whether we're ready for a settled minister.
 - d. Within that discussion, a couple Board members expressed concerns about a developmental minister; while some congregants expressed positive views/opinions about bringing on a developmental minister.
2. Options:
 - a. If we go with a settled minister route, we would need to begin the process in June. So, we have time to elaborate on this topic.
 - b. Rev. Pyle suggested 2 separate groups. One would explore a settled minister search committee; the other group would explore a developmental ministry, including what would make us require one and goals for that ministry. Present timelines, goals, options, etc.
 - c. It's possible there may be fewer ministers to do developmental ministry.
3. Discussion
 - a. Board is leaning on exploratory work to invite discussion, exploration, expression and collaboration within the congregation.
 - b. We're open to seeing where the process takes us.
 - c. We'd be able to bring in Sharon Dittmar from our district to participate in the process; either by consulting with these groups or providing input/guidance on the process and questions to ask.
 - d. Present findings at a future forum
4. Some resources:
 - a. <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/what-developmental-ministry>
 - b. [UUA: Transitional Ministry Handbook](#)
5. Action items:
 - a. Commit to a Forum date — tentatively February 4th
 - b. Contact Sharon Dittmar
 - c. Have a summary for the Intercom
 - d. At this time, we're not forming a committee; that may come out of the Forum if there's feedback.

Right Relations

1. Will be meeting on Wednesday to review policies with the committee
2. The Board might need to give some direction on where we'd like the Right Relations Committee proceed

Stewardship update — Kickoff event will take place January 21

Staffing, with Alice leaving

1. We are looking into hiring a bookkeeper and administrator in separate roles

Reaching out to Sally Merritt

1. Natalie will draft a letter to send to Sally saying we are sorry her feelings were hurt.

Tuesday, February 20 at 6:00 PM is the next board meeting.

Coffee with the Board, Sunday, February 4 at 8:30 AM

Meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM by Kevin Boeckholdt.

Submitted by Kathryn Sutton, Secretary