

# First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Board of Trustees Minutes | Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

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**Board Members:**, Kathryn Sutton, Natalie Mason, Walter Pearson, Ann Mowery, Elaine Imlau, James Williams

**Excused absence:** Kerry George, Kevin Boeckholt

**Staff:** Tracy Aukes, Rev. Meredith Garmon

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

**Timekeeper & Process Observer:** Elaine Imlau

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## Public comment

- Eileen Jackson is present to check in on MSC and candidate week.
- Candidate week proposed from April 27th to May 3rd
- Board is on board with the proposed dates
- FFFF may have to be pushed back in the calendar a week earlier in April
- Search party facilitators
  - Shooting for 20 facilitators
  - No issue with Board members volunteering or gaining the vantage point
  - A separate 1:1 conversation with the Board may take place
- Email Sally at [bookkeeper@ucdsm.org](mailto:bookkeeper@ucdsm.org) to sign up

## Minister's Report

- Focusing on monthly themes; encouraging leadership to include monthly themes to our leadership
- Be clear on what to say if congregant feedback during the search is "Can't we keep Meredith?"
  - Potential response: "Interim ministers are not eligible to continue into a called settled ministry."
- Encouragement for the Board to take on the role as a spiritual leader; attend services, be available to people in a spiritual leadership, pastoral or prophetic way.

## Administrator's Report

- Signed a wedding rental for May 2025 - \$1500 future income
- Updated policies will be posted shortly
- Working with MSC to provide documents / documentation for the candidate to review

- Exploring a texting platform in addition to emails & snail mail
- Faith formation & congregational life kicks off this Sunday
- Faith will embark on Realm training

## Financial Report

- Financials are up-to-date and look great!
- \$67k leftover from last June (\$50k of which is unused salary)
- Dues & social justice line item — need to get status from Sally on the invoices we're paying (DMARC and Interfaith Alliance)
  - We didn't pay these 2 orgs last year

## New Business

- Unitarian Universalist Organizations Retirement Plan
  - UUA is restating the retirement policy that the Board has to approve and adopt
  - Motion:

Whereas the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines is committed to assisting all of its employees 18 years and older prepare for their retirement years, and;

Whereas the Unitarian Universalist Organizations Retirement Plan (the "Plan") is the retirement plan sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association, therefore;

Be It Resolved that the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines hereby adopts the 2025 Restatement of the Unitarian Universalist Organizations Retirement Plan with an implementation date of January 1, 2025 and commits to complying with all the provisions of the Plan and the elections made by First Unitarian Church of Des Moines in the 2025 Employer Participation Agreement that we submit to the UUA Retirement Plan Committee and they acknowledge receipt and approve via counter signature of same.

*Motion by Natalie Mason was seconded*

*Motion passed with Ann Mowery abstain*

- **FOC New Members**
  - Still reaching out to potential new members to put forward to the Board

- Potential nominees: Vicki Scott & Eric Hayes
  - Motion to approve the nominees for FOC
  - Motion was seconded and passed unanimously
- **Community Faire**
  - Board has a table Saturday, September 28
  - Would also represent the committees of the Board
- **Coffee with the Board**
  - Discussed with the congregation in Griffin Hall during coffee hour
  - Considering rotating who's on duty
  - Considering hosting CwB in the conference room
  - First Sunday of the month — October 6th would be the first one
- **Capital Campaign**
  - Projecting projects and goals
  - Focusing on making the building more welcoming, environmentally friendly and accessible; would impact priorities
  - Mentoring young people to be a part of a capital campaign
  - Ann to start meeting with the coordinating committee in October
- **Other New Business**
  - Board Policies
    - 3 spots where Walt needs help or to make changes
    - Board made tweaks collaboratively with Walt on final edits
  - Ministerial evaluation
    - Should be a regularly scheduled part of our work that takes place every year
    - We need to research precedents
  - Status of HR committee and ministerial review
  - Scour & remove board “ends statements” and change to “board goals”

## Checkout & Assignments

- Kathryn & Ann to work on a message from the Board that would include the capital campaign exploration. Also include
  - Board decisions & updates
  - Coffee with the Board
- Walt will attempt to move the updated policies to closure
- Natalie will check in on the status of the HR committee and ministerial review process / documentation
  - Elaine Imlau will help
- James will reach out to Eric & Vicky to get them added to FOC
- Ann will keep on working on the capital campaign

- Tracy will follow up with Sally on Walt's financial questions
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## **Announcements**

Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 15th 6:00 PM (Elaine & Rev. Garmon will be out)  
September 28 — Community Faire / potluck, church-wide event. The Board will have a tablet at the event.

Coffee with the Board: Sunday, October 6th after service in the Conference Room

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Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM by Natalie Mason.

Submitted by Kathryn Sutton, Secretary