

**. First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda**

November 24, 2019, 12:00 pm to 2:30 pm, Program Room, 2nd floor

Our Mission

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, unite to build a beloved community within and beyond our walls. Guided by individual conscience and wisdom from many sources, we gather in worship and service to nourish the spirit, work for justice, and celebrate the divine in all.

– Adopted by the congregation on March 18, 2019

Present: Dick Bailey, Rinda Bartley, Hester Green, Tara Noone, Steve Thomasberger, Dan Wright

Absent: Michael Rothhammer

Guests:

Timekeeper: Dick

Readings: Dan

Snacks: Tara

Time	Duration	Item	Name	Minutes (Motions in Blue)
12:00	20 min.	Open Comment Period	Members and Friends Up to 3 minutes each	Bev Smrha: “ I am so deeply grateful that the front door of our church is now truly accessible and welcome to all. To have our front door truly accessible to those who wheel in rather than walk in the front door. We now have the technology installed so that Stefan from home could talk to and see non church member guests at the front door and electronically open it so they are also welcome into our building when they come here. Our strong statement that everyone is indeed welcome is now real to our community partners. Thanks to the Board for your leadership.”

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				<p>Noemi announced she is attending as a process observer from JTW and the Board thanked her.</p> <p>Sherri Weston Vigil made a statement about the role of the people of color caucus. She witnessed a microaggression/cultural appropriation this week and wishes there was a process for addressing it. She drew a distinction between UU culture of learning about other cultures and traditions and disrespectful or presumptuous misuse of diverse traditions. She requested a Board action to create a process for addressing such events.</p> <p>Dick mentioned our planned “right relations” process and/or committee. Dan suggested a group which can be approached before an event to vet plans for inclusion and appropriateness.</p> <p>Pastor Theresa advised COSM is tasked with the health of the congregation and could be approached but not necessarily resolve such issues. They identified this as a pastoral issue that is within their portfolio and so Pastor Theresa should be approached.</p> <p>Hester asked if pastoral associates should be approached and Pastor Theresa clarified that such issues should go to them directly first as there are no PAs of color.</p> <p>Tara liked the idea of Right Relations being perhaps a more proactive than reactive body that vets events for inclusion and sensitivity in advance.</p> <p>Kate Lenhardt clarified that “Healthy Congregations” and “Right Relations” are interchangeable terms.</p> <p>Dick suggested we publish the totals from the collection plates so the congregation is aware.</p>
u	5 min.	Chalice Lighting and		Dan Wright read “We Hold Hope Close” from “Spilling the Light” by

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		Opening Reading		our own Pastor Theresa Soto.
12:25	5 min	Pass around Board Duties Chart Consent agenda (action) and actions taken since previous meeting	Rinda	Dan moved that we approve the consent agenda as is. Dick seconded the motion. (The report on records retention was moved to item #5 and not included in the consent agenda) Motion unanimously approved.
<i>Note: Board's six Priorities (Items should be put on the Board agenda (and time allocated) only if they need Board attention this month, as determined by the "Champion". If not, time will be ceded to other priorities, and information can be shared with the Board via a report to the Consent Agenda). Champions should request agenda time by the third Tuesday of the month by informing the Steering Team of the topic/s to be discussed or decisions to be made. Order of items will be rotated periodically.</i>				
12:30	15 min.	Minister's Report	Rev. Soto	<p>Pastor Theresa asked us to respond to the questions on page 8 of their report to keep the dialogue going. They advised we need to get a feedback loop going, noting that if we are not having these conversations this part of the work is not getting done.</p> <p>Pastor Theresa wants responses from the board about our Mission. Rinda suggests we respond to these questions perhaps by starting our Board meetings with them, and requested that questions or issues that need board response be recapped/listed within the report at the beginning or end, for greater clarity.</p> <p>Steve highlighted Rev. Theresa's question about how we know the board has taken up a concern and incorporated it in our work and noted we do not have a process for this.</p> <p>Steve asked about the feedback to the services and Pastor Theresa spoke to the two questions they ask with the worship team: What worked? What did we learn?</p> <p>Hester noted how challenging it can be to hear and act</p>

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				responsively to the feedback, especially if it is not obvious what follow up action should be. Pastor Theresa reminded us they are there to help..
12:45	10 min	Priority # 2, Ministerial Transition (*See report)	<i>Tara, Champion</i>	Rinda reminded Board of the evaluation process for Rev. Theresa and the documents she attached for this meeting. Rev. Theresa answered Dan's question that we will start planning in January and will then determine which of the reporting dates named in the documentation will work for us.
12:55	10 min	Break / Snacks		
1:05	10 min	Priority # 4, Stewardship (*See report) -Update	<i>Hester, Champion</i>	<p>Total pledges \$345,750 so far, which is 65% of our audacious goal and 69% of our conservative goal. Those who have pledged so far have increased their pledge by an average of 13% over 2019. Slightly more than half the congregation (98/182 pledging units) have pledged so far. Hester's conservative analysis shows that based on outstanding pledges at this point, \$460,000 is our likely final total. Hester emailed a spreadsheet to the Board of congregants who need to be contacted regarding their 2020 pledges. Susan Keiter Emily Stoper and Joyce Cutler will be sending out thank yous. Dan asked if the Board are the only ones asked to make follow up calls and Hester advised she's also asking Finance Team members.</p> <p>We passed around a list and Board members each chose 5 people to call or email and get responses by December 13, 2019.</p> <p>Pastor Theresa asked us all to give Hester and Bill Blakely a round of applause, which we enthusiastically did!</p>
1:15	20 min	Priority # 1, Financial Clarity and Health - DRAFT BUDGET	<i>Hester, Champion</i> <i>Steve,</i>	Hester thanked the Financial Team for work on the 2020 budget and streamlining the chart of accounts.

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		<i>REVIEW - Main Topic</i>	<i>Operations Team</i>	<p>The Board reviewed “High Level Proposed 2020 Budget” which Hester identified as still as estimated because we are still waiting for some data and the completion of the pledge process..</p> <p>Revenue: The document is based on a conservative estimate for pledges. The Clara Bell Hamilton fund is being treated separately from the other endowment payouts listed in this report.</p> <p>Expenses: includes 3% COLA increases and wish list contractor expenses.</p> <p>The Finance Team hopes to have a detailed budget to vote on for the December 2019 meeting.</p> <p>The Finance Team requests questions from us. Here they are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Rinda: the only changes visible so far are increases. Will there be any decreases based on funds not used in previous budgets? 2) Rinda: Are we looking at realistic numbers now based on 2019 actuals? 3) Rinda: Will we hear explanations for the extra requests such as for extra custodial help, office help, extra bookkeeper? 4) Dan: who is making sure requests that go straight to the Finance team are vetted with oversight to ensure these line items are appropriate for our church’s needs, size, mission? 5) Dan opposes the program council making funding decisions for committees of the Board such as JTW. Dick understands that the Board retains responsibility for approving funding for Board committees. 6) Dick: How granular does this get? Is the Board line-item approvers or approvers of categories of expense? He thinks some approvals do belong to the Program Council. Rinda agreed that our approvals are pretty high level and we ask
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				<p>the finance team to bring us a balanced budget unless there are moral or policy problems that get in the way of a balanced budget in which case it is the Board's job to make a decision. She agrees that Program Requests (not board committee requests) should go to the Program Council for program fund distribution.</p> <p>7) Rinda: About carry-over. In reconciliation from one FY to another, can we bring unspent money into the next budget and consider it <i>not</i> to be deficit spending?</p> <p>8) Steve asked what extra money we have in the bank account that could be used as not deficit spending: per Hester, approximately \$150,000.</p> <p>9) Steve asked for slightly more detail in terms of facility expenses.</p> <p>10) Dan: Do we give away half the collection plate every week? Who decides?</p> <p>11) Dan: Doesn't the minister approve requests to pay someone during worship? Steve clarified that requests come in via many channels to various "approvers" but we can redirect to proper channels and refine and enforce policy and process.</p> <p>Balanced budget will be distributed to the Board with enough time to review before the December 17th meeting. <i>If the Operations Team and Finance Team need a special meeting with the Board in advance of the regular December Board meeting, they need to request it.</i></p> <p>UUA Endowment fund is showing an 8% rate of return.</p>
1:35	<i>NO TIME requested</i>	<i>Priority # 3, JTW Assessment (exact title TBD) - (*See report)</i>	<i>Dan, Champion</i>	

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1:35	10 minutes	<p><i>Priority # 5, Policy Governance transition (*See report on "Policies")</i></p> <p><i>-Board Process Agreements check in</i></p> <p><i>-(Please review in advance)</i></p>	<p><i>Rinda and Steve, Champions</i></p>	<p>The Board reviewed the draft Records Retention policy. Steve wants to move this plan forward, a plan based on best practices from other nonprofits.</p> <p>Plans for electronic files will be taken up at a different time as they are stored in various locations with few having access to all in order to administer them.</p> <p>Steve moved that we approve the proposal for retention of paper files. Dan seconded. (After discussion below) Board voted unanimously to pass the motion.</p> <p>Rinda has many questions about electronic files but knowing this will be taken up later in detail makes her comfortable to approve the timelines Steve presented.</p> <p>Dick asked what the difference between records and archives. Dan proposed we distinguish things we need to keep in perpetuity for institutional memory and those records that actually should be destroyed at proper intervals. Pastor Theresa said there is not a policy and should be for retaining materials that are important to the material culture of the congregation. She distinguished between administrative records and souvenir records and reminded us Rev. Sheri is a historian and can help with this distinction..</p>
1:35	NO TIME requested	<p><i>Priority # 6, Strategic Planning (See Report)</i></p>	<p><i>Rinda, Champion</i></p>	
1:35	10 min	<p><i>For the Good of the Order</i> (questions, brief planning, items outside of the 6 Goals, spontaneous</p>		

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		items, items pulled from consent)		
1:45	10 min	Housekeeping -RACI review (Steve) -Next meeting agenda items (Rinda) -Calendar review - duties/events for Board participation in the coming month	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board is asked to call their 5 congregants about their pledges ASAP. Hester will send us some talking points to assist with that. Next Sunday service is the thank you for the MSC. Board members will come to next service with their thank you notes for the MSC. Thank you's written for Bill and Janet for celebration Sunday and Jody for Stewardship house parties. <p>Steve reviewed RACI chart.</p>
1:55	5 min.	Process monitoring		<p>Noemi de Guzman thanked the Board for continuing to make space for process monitoring. She reported that the Board had one absence noted in advance, continues to be represented by people who self-identify as white and we have a minister of color. We had guests who identify as people of color and as white.</p> <p>She observed most of the speaking time was used by treasurer, consistent with agenda, followed by President who was facilitating the meeting. There was equitable access to the microphone, which was not used consistently but there did not appear to be a problem. Looks like we might need more practice using the mic effectively. The agenda does not always identify the objective of the topic or what level of discussion is expected. There was no reference made to the agenda until after the guest period. One of the guests did not know what the process was and no one offered guidance.</p> <p>There was identification of roles and it was mentioned that no one listens to the time keeper, though in truth there was attention to the time, with flexibility, which is good given white supremacy is driven by the clock vs relationships.</p>

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				<p>There was an opportunity missed in discussion about follow up calls, to prepare for congregants who cannot afford to pledge this year. There was a missed opportunity to discuss sharing the plate within the community to live into our mission and vision.</p> <p>Participation: the note taker mentioned they could not participate while taking notes. Past boards have had a scribe.</p> <p>The convivial atmosphere was lovely and thanks were given after ever agenda item to people both in an outside of the room.</p> <p>The minister offered much valued feedback about our structure and process.</p>
2:00	5 min.	Closing Reading and Adjournment		Dan Wright and sang "We're Gonna Keep on Moving Forward."
Next Board meeting Tuesday, December 17, 7:00-9:00pm (moved up one week due to holiday)				

* Indicates an item for which additional documents are to be filed on Team Drives / Board of Trustees / Meeting Materials/...

Bike Rack Items

- ☐ Record Retention
- ☐ Plate sharing policy - review and rewrite (Operations Team create draft?)
- ☐ Name change proposal
- ☐ Professional/Office duties vs. Volunteer duties
- ☐ Public Comment as part of Board meeting (Not currently in Bylaws)

