

First Unitarian Church of Oakland Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

April 27, 2021, 6:45-9:00 pm, Zoom

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: Dan Wright, Debby Kaplan, Claudia Morgan, Daisy Quan, Meri Lane Absent: Kathy Radez, Lucia Savage Guests: Janet McFarland, Noemi de Guzman, Bev Smrha, Hester Green, Sarah Letson (on behalf of Cowsm)	
Meeting Chair: Dan Timekeeper: Dan Process Monitor: Janet McFarland RACI chart: Claudia	Readings: Debby Communications Facilitator: Daisy

Time	Duration	Item	Name
6:45	15 min	Open Comment Period All members and friends welcome. 3 minutes per speaker.	<i>Meri</i>
Noemi de Guzman offers 3 comments: 1) does agenda reference to board “partner” represent a model differing from prior board “liaison”?; 2) where will conversation between board and program council occur on moving together toward learning goal, e.g., will board provide guiding communications for program leaders?; 3) congratulations to Pastor Theresa and our Congregation on our installation and covenantal relationship. Bev Smhra: recommends that board members read <i>The Nested Bowls</i> by Laura Park on the promise and practice of good governance. It is less than 100 pages, inspiring and would help us be more successful. Hester Green: although no longer on board, she continues on Finance Team and as former church treasurer offers to meet with new treasurer Debby if desired.			
7:00	5 min	Chalice Lighting and Reading	<i>Debby</i>
Reading from Lucille Clifton, <i>Won't you celebrate with me?</i>			
7:05	10 min	Welcome and Preview of Meeting Agenda and Process <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Introductions- Meeting roles and process- Goals for tonight	<i>Dan</i>

7:15	5 min	Consent Agenda (action) and reporting actions taken since previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - March 2021 minutes (approved via Basecamp) - 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes (approved via Basecamp) - Received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operations Report - Minister's Report - Financial Clarity & Health Narrative - April 27, 2021 meeting Re-Opening discussion homework - UUA PWR nwsltr excerpt ReOpening - Discussion by Operations Team (April 7, 2021) on re-opening questions - Program Council Report April 2021 - Motion in Support of 8th Principle - Copy of Board Partner Role - Stewardship Report 04.24.21 - Stewardship report to the OT Regarding Stewardship 'back-office' needs 4/17/2021 - JTW Liaison Report April 2021 - 2021.4.18 Bd Mini Retreat Learning Goal Proposal <p>Board member(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May "pull" a doc from consent agenda if they believe further discussion (not already on agenda) should occur during "For the Good of the Order"; • Moves to approve the consent agenda and receive April reports. 	ALL
<p>Motion to approve consent agenda and receive documents, moved by Claudia, seconded by Daisy. Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Per Daisy's suggestion, Meri will distinguish on the agenda going forward reports that are and are not already on agenda in order to expedite determinations whether to "pull" docs for further discussion.</p>			
		Ministers Report	Rev. Soto
<p>Pastor Theresa is unable to attend this meeting and requests that the board make note of any questions to which they will respond. No discussion.</p>			
		Operations Report	Steve
<p>Steve Thomasberger is not present at the meeting. No discussion.</p>			
7:20	30 min	Financial Clarity and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance update 	Debby

Debby outlines general approach as treasurer: Focus will be to identify policy issues and matters that require board attention, as well as to provide info needed to make board decisions.

Question re 2020 books: discrepancies about whether 2020 books are closed, but Finance Team chair Jodie Mathies indicates they are mostly done. Debby will forward them at the end of the meeting and we will discuss more at Sat. retreat. Q1 numbers not yet available.

Problems w/ our existing third party bookkeeping contractor Shining Star Consulting. Current bookkeeper assigned to FUCO is leaving and Shining Star hasn't found a replacement. Debby is concerned, because we really need numbers this year to fulfill board commitment to monitor our budget regularly based on actual performance. Debby has requested that her concern be conveyed to Shining Star.

Clark Sanford reported at the Finance Team meeting that FUCO needs a new software management system due to lack of coordination among existing, siloed systems. Clark wants the board to clearly state support for better software management systems. Debby supports authorizing OT to evaluate and recommend new software systems and believes that OT will not do so without clear direction from board.

Discussion that simple majority constitutes quorum and that vote by simple majority of trustees present is sufficient for board action.

Motion in support of Operations Team's efforts to find a data management system that would integrate stewardship and financial systems. Motion made by Claudia. Seconded by Dan. Motion passed unanimously.

7:52	24 min	Re-opening guidelines Board and OT should speak with one voice on the principles for re-opening	Debby
<p>OT has asked the Board to articulate values and principles important in reopening plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debbie: Value: safety in balance with other values. - Dan: concern for one another, that each of us has an element of personal responsibility for safety of others - Meri: Transformation Beyond: We will consider how to balance safety while extending welcome to our neighborhood and newcomers - Daisy and Claudia: Value: to retain the benefits of online access. Can we find ways to provide online access to persons who may not be able to attend in persons due to challenges with disabilities, transportation, distance, etc. - Debby: Accessibility: Everything we do must be accessible to everybody - Daisy: Interaction among people. How to connect people remotely participating? Can we use parks to connect with people in our neighborhood? <p>Meri to upload doc with notes and links to relevant materials; Dan will review and assess how this can serve in conversation with OT on reopening.</p>			
8:16	5 min	Break	
8:21	12 min	Motion on 8th Principle	Debby and Dan

Motion By Dan Wright: I move that the Board support a Congregational vote advocating the adoption of an 8th principle, articulating a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy, within the stated principles of our faith. To this end, that the Board encourage all Congregants to engage in the activities involving learning about and discussing the proposed UUA 8th principle. Seconded by Claudia

Due to the importance of this motion and the absence of two board members, we will not vote on the motion at tonight's meeting. We will instead discuss the motion online via Basecamp and either vote on Basecamp or wait until next board meeting.

8:33	15 min	Learning Goal Proposal	<i>Debby</i>
Proposal is to focus on Transformation Among as a learning goal. Discussion of Lucia's suggestion that we spend 5 minutes per board meeting to reflect observations on how our end of Transformation Among is addressed in everything church does. This would be a dedication of time, not a requirement, and observations could be made in writing or orally. Dan intends to add 5 minutes for this purpose to next agenda.			
8:48	10 min	Moving Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operations Team - Program Council - Journey Toward Wholeness 	<i>Dan</i>
Daisy will serve as Board Partner for Program Council and will discuss with Lucia her interest in sharing that role. We have yet to identify a board partner for the Operations Team, an especially important role given Steve's need to step back from the Operations Team due to health reasons.			
8:58	1 min	For the Good of the Order (questions, brief planning, spontaneous items, items pulled from consent agenda) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review Church Calendar for major events that deserve / need Board presence (Dan in Kathy's absence) - Review RACI Chart (Claudia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RACI indicates who is Responsible, Accountable, to be Consulted, to be Informed - Retreat Dates & Times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May 1: 2:00 - 3:30pm - May 15: 2:30 - 4:00pm - Next BoT meeting May 25 - Agenda Items (Dan in Kathy's absence) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly Board Tasks 	<i>ALL</i>
Will do RACI chart and other business above on Basecamp			
8:59	3 min	Process monitoring	<i>Janet McFarland</i>
9:02	5 min	Closing Reading and Adjourn	<i>Debby</i>

Ground rules:

- Phones on vibrate,
- One person speaks at a time (stack process to be used),
- No side conversations,
- Start on time and if a need develops to go beyond 9:00, check with the group.
- Stick to the agenda: items that run long will either be tabled for the next meeting or, if agreed to by the group, to stay late or table other agenda items.

Bike Rack:

- Leadership development (see 2021 annual report update)
- Technology team (see 2021 annual report update)
- Board Policy Review and Revision: (investment portfolio requirements; CoSM references, old CoSM charter . . .)