

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Minutes of meeting held on
October 25, 2022, 6:45 - 9:00pm

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.

Present: Barbara North
Debby Kaplan
Nicole Fitzhugh
Claudine Tong
Marilyn McMahon
Rev. Ninán Soto
Absent: Zia Swim

Guests: Noemi de Guzman
Claudia Morgan
Lucia Savage
Jody Mathies
Rinda Bartley
Bill Blakely

Meeting Chair: Barbara North
Readings: Nicole
Process Monitor: Dennis Rowcliffe
Board Officers 2022-2023
President: Barbara North
Vice President: Zia Swim
Treasurer: Debby Kaplan
Secretary: Marilyn McMahon

6:45 pm **Open comment period**
No comments

Congregation

7:00 Board Meeting began.

Chalice lighting and opening reading

Nicole

Welcome and preview of meeting

Nicole

Nicole began the meeting, chairing until Barbara arrived a few minutes in.

Consent Agenda

Barbara

- **MOTION to approve Sep 2022 minutes. (Debby; 2nd Marilyn. PASSED)**

Operations Team report

Noemi

Noemi summarized her written report.

Minister's report

Rev. Soto

With Rev. Soto at a meeting of the new Alameda County sheriff, Nicole read the minister's report.

Finance Report

Debby

Three-quarters through the year, the church's financial situation is pretty good. Both income and expenses are lower than expected. For the year, a small deficit is projected—much smaller than expected. It was noted that we have not paid the UUA the amount they want.

For next year, important decisions will be how much to give to the UUA and how much to take from the corpus of the endowments.

Discussion: The Board has not raised the \$10K it committed to, but we don't want to undercut the stewardship campaign so we'll wait.

Outreach results so far

Barbara

Main themes from the outreach conversations we have had with congregants are: (1) Many people have moved out of the area. (2) A lot of people are still avoiding in-person gatherings due to pandemic concerns. (3) Glad to hear from the church and planning to return when pandemic risks are lower.

7:36 **BREAK**

7:45 Pastor Ninán and Steve Thomasberger arrived.

Stewardship report

Rinda

Five stewardship gatherings have been held, and three more are scheduled. Attendance has been lower than expected. The committee has started the phone campaign early because pledges are running lower than other years at this time. They are phoning all “pledging units” who pledged this year or in a recent year, plus a few people who gave one-time donations. More callers are needed; contact the Stewardship Committee if you can help.

Discussion: (1) Would be helpful to have an event for people who have attended for a few years but have not donated. We don’t track attendance, though. (2) Debby commented, with regard to members who have moved away, that when she was away for ten years, she would have probably donated *if the church had asked her to*. (3) We need Stewardship work to continue throughout the year (but not necessarily the pledge campaign). Perhaps reconsider plan to have stewardship events year-round, though. (4) Of three board members who spoke, two had yet to pledge for 2023. (Perhaps a good sign that others also intend to but have delayed?)

Board meeting schedule for holiday season

Barbara

We will reschedule the November and December board meetings earlier, due to holidays. Barbara to send out survey.

“For the Good of the Order”

Barbara

● Board staffing of committees

Personnel committee: This committee has not been assembled yet. Pastor Ninán suggested that until we have a standing committee, we handle specific needs *ad hoc*.

● Agenda items to bring to our quarterly board/OT meeting

- Personnel handbook
- Establish a process for defining membership

Discussion: Membership number affects what we need to contribute to UUA and what UUA will provide us, as well as many other implications, so it’s important to start soon. Changing the definition involves changing the bylaws. Some churches have online-only members who pledge. We will explore ways to broaden participation for our online attendees. Pastor Ninán purchased an “owl camera,” which can turn 360 degrees and follows the action in the room.

● Music program transition

Listening circles about the transition to be held soon.

● Board thank-yous

To Jef and Nicole for Secret Buddies (Barbara); to Ron for poetry activities (Marilyn); COWSM members at the listening circles (Barbara); Stewardship (Marilyn); Hospitality (Nicole will get list of names and then we’ll divvy up); the Persisters (Pastor Ninán).

● Review RACI chart

Because RACI chart has not been working for us, we’ll discuss alternatives at next monthly meeting.

Process monitoring comments*Dennis*

Observations about Board members' conduct of the meeting and our interactions. The Board appreciates receiving this feedback at each meeting.

Closing reading*Nicole*

Meeting ended at 8:58 p.m.

“BIKE RACK”

- Discuss our obligations around staffing open committee roles