

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

March 28, 2023 6:45 - 9:00 pm

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: Barbara North, President (<i>chair</i>) Nicole Fitzhugh, Treasurer Marilyn McMahon, Secretary Debby Kaplan	Dennis Rowcliffe Judith Hunt Bev Smrha Evalyn Seidman	Guests: Claudia Morgan Bill Blakely Jef Melcher Dick Bailey Ron Weisberg
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Public comment period Dick B. offered to help the board when needed. He also requested that the Zoom waiting room <i>not</i> be used for board meetings. [Marilyn agreed it should be off. She was unable to disable it, so will consult Clark about the problem.] Steve T., in an emailed comment read aloud by Marilyn, offered his board experience and knowledge to new board members, and recommended more orientation for new members. He urged continuation of the listening circles and a forum for airing of what happened leading up to Rev. Soto's resignation, in order to stop rumors and innuendo.	
Chalice lighting and opening reading	Nicole
Welcome and introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcoming new members: Judith Hunt, Dennis Rowcliffe, Evalyn Seidman, Bev Smrha. Continuing members are Nicole Fitzhugh, Marilyn McMahon, and Barbara North. Debby Kaplan attended most of this meeting to help with transition of her role as Treasurer, which ends today. Introductions 	Barbara
Election of officers: President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer Barbara will be stepping off the board at the end of May. Barbara is willing to continue as president, and Marilyn as secretary, until the May board meeting. MOTION to postpone the election of president, vice president, and secretary until the May board meeting. (Judith, 2nd Nicole) PASSED MOTION to elect Nicole Fitzhugh as Treasurer. (Dennis; 2nd Judith) PASSED	Barbara

<p>New member onboarding & orientation</p> <p>Orientation sessions for new board members will be held on Zoom on April 8 from 9 am to 1 pm, and on April 16 from 1 pm to 5 pm.</p>	<p>Marilyn/Nicole</p>
<p>Budget: Next steps</p> <p>Nicole met with the Finance Team, who aim to submit a proposed budget in time for the Board to review it before the April board meeting. "A budget is a vision." The church is operating just fine without an approved budget.</p> <p>Debby concurred and added that even if the board had passed a budget for this year, given the transition the church unexpectedly is in, we would already have had to modify it. And many lines of the budget will be identical to last year's, so we don't lack guidelines.</p> <p>Debby strongly wants funding assured for two current projects: (1) seeking a federal grant, with other churches, for environmental upgrades (e.g. heat pump); and (2) seeking a California grant, with Interfaith Power and Light, for solar panels. She also requests a 10-minute standing agenda slot for her to report on these projects.</p>	
<p>BREAK</p>	
<p>Operations Team Report</p> <p>Stefan has suggested hiring Zach Gamble to manage rentals and events, if the Board approves splitting off those duties from the facilities management part of Stefan's job. Zach knows the church building and is in the stagehand union, so he would be a good fit, and he is interested in the position.</p> <p>Dennis asked whether our hiring policies preclude hiring a church member. Nicole: Our policies are somewhat undefined: our personnel handbook is out of date. And let's not let the perfect be the enemy of the good in this case.</p> <p>Does the Board approve splitting off the rentals and events duties from the facilities manager job? Board members had no objections.</p> <p>Volunteer staffing</p> <p>Next steps for staffing Hiring Team</p> <p>We now have three volunteers for the team to hire an administrator. To begin their work, we will give them the job description used in hiring Noemi.</p> <p>Next steps for staffing Operations Team</p> <p>Supporting Bill Blakely</p> <p>The board asks Bill Blakely to report at the April meeting on his administrative work, and to let the board know what support he needs.</p> <p>Need for A/V tech for worship services</p> <p>Vincent has done his last Sunday producing the hybrid worship services (and other events). We need someone to step up to this role. Clark is training to use Vincent's system, but we will need several people rotating in this role. We expect to have a few technically rough Sundays, which hopefully will inspire more people to volunteer.</p>	<p>Nicole</p>

<p>Engagement of ‘Hope for Us’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals, expectations • Process <p>The Hope for Us team specializes in helping a church in crisis to work through conflict and find their way forward. Hope for Us partners with the church in defining goals. Their personnel coach church leaders and the congregation.</p> <p>We would contract with them for an initial 20 hours of coaching at a cost of \$5000. We have sufficient funds budgeted for this purpose. Grant money from the UUA may be available if more is needed.</p> <p>The “old” board members were in agreement that engaging Hope for Us would be good for our church at this time.</p> <p>New board members want more information about Hope for Us. Barbara will send out some materials, and the board will vote by email whether to retain their services.</p>	<p>Barbara</p>
<p>Options for ministry next year</p> <p>Our options to cover our ministry needs for next program year (fall 2023 - spring 2024) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire an interim <u>worship</u> minister (for one year only) • Lay-led worship <p>The congregation may decide to hire a developmental minister, but that is not an option right now because it is too late to hire one for the fall. Even hiring an interim minister for the fall may be difficult, but Rev. Carlton Smith has some ideas.</p> <p>Bev: An interim minister is <i>very</i> different from a developmental minister, who has very specialized skills. A developmental minister is very important for a congregation like ours.</p> <p>Nicole: Clear expectations need to be set with an interim minister, that their role is not that of a “proto-developmental minister”, but just to do worship services. [Dennis later added: I believe there is lots more to the role of an Interim Minister.]</p> <p>Barbara will set up a meeting for us with Rev. Carlton to discuss the possibility of an interim.</p>	<p>Barbara</p>
<p>“For the Good of the Order” (10 min.)</p> <p>Delegates to General Assembly</p> <p>Marilyn: Five people have requested to be delegates to GA, which is in June. Also, Donna and George have requested funds for their airfare and housing to attend in person (in Pittsburgh). They need a decision promptly so that they can make travel plans.</p> <p>Discussion: Donna roughly estimated a cost of about \$900. The church can afford this. Donna and George are longtime and committed church members. They would be fine delegates for our congregation. Decisions: The Board approved Donna and George as delegates to GA and financial assistance to cover their airfare and accommodations, and decided to wait till May to appoint other delegates.</p> <p>Board sign-ups (worship welcome, rotating tasks)</p> <p>All board members are urged to sign up for (1) Sundays to give the welcome and announcements; and the monthly rotating tasks of (2) opening and closing readings at the board meeting and (3) writing a board report for the Chalice Chatter during the month.</p> <p>Board thank-yous</p>	

This month, the board will thank all those who helped with the annual congregational meeting. We will take a few minutes at the beginning of the first board orientation session to write thank-you cards.	
Process monitoring comments No monitor attended today.	
Closing: Extinguish chalice, reading	Nicole
EXECUTIVE SESSION	

Bike Rack

- Ordinations
- Repair of sump pump by October