

First Unitarian Church of Oakland BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES September 26, 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. <i>Adopted by the congregation on March 18, 2019</i>
--	---

Present: Nicole Fitzhugh, President Evalyn Seidman, Vice Pres. Dennis Rowcliffe, Treasurer Marilyn McMahon, Secretary	Judith Hunt Bev Smrha	Guests: Bill Blakely Dave Ruede Rev. Laurel Liefert
--	--------------------------	---

6:45 pm Open comment period (15 min) No comments.	<i>Congregation</i>
7:00 pm Chalice lighting and opening reading (3 min)	<i>Bev</i>
Welcome and preview of meeting (2 min)	<i>Nicole</i>
Consent agenda (10 min) A. Updates on Board activity and reporting actions taken since previous meeting. <i>Updates:</i> The bill for the services we have received so far from the Hope For Us Conflict Engagement Team was, unbeknownst to us at the time, paid by the UUA's Pacific Western Region (PWR) office. We are grateful to the PWR for supporting our congregation's recuperation in this way. Hope for Us held a day-long in-person-only workshop for the congregation on September 16. It was the first interaction of our congregation en masse with them, and it gave those who attended an understanding of their approach to this work. Response was very positive. Attendees said the day was very meaningful and left them more hopeful for our congregations's future and looking forward to the coming year of work with our four Hope For Us coaches (Rev. Sam, Rev. Jami, Rev. Connie, and Jacques). The workshop will be offered again in a zoom-only format for those who could not attend. And some who did attend the first workshop are also planning to attend the zoom one. Date and details not yet available. <i>Action taken:</i> The minutes of August Board meeting were approved online. B. Quick action items (An item may be moved to "For the Good of the Order" if more discussion is needed.) The Board is considering two requests by Kevin Mann and will take them up separately. We will discuss his request for ministerial affiliation within the next two weeks online, and his stipend request at our October board meeting.	<i>Nicole</i>

<p>Minister's report (10 min)</p> <p>Rev. Laurel reiterated that her first priority is trust. In that vein, she shared that during her tenure with her Colorado church, after a conflict with some other UU ministers, she was suspended from the UUMA (UU Ministers Association). After doing some continuing education, she was reinstated and is in good standing. This has no impact on her work at FUCO but she wants to be open with us. She had already shared this history with the hiring committee.</p> <p>Rev. Laurel will lead three worship services in October (on the 1st, 8th, and 22nd of the month). The 10/22 service will include the ingathering of new FUCO members.</p> <p>She and Pat St. Onge may together offer an adult spirituality class that was given here in 2019 by Rev. Mary Foran and Pat.</p> <p>Rev. Laurel is planning out the rest of the worship calendar and continues to work with and train the Worship Associates.</p>	<p><i>Rev. Laurel</i></p>
<p>Operations Team report (10 min)</p> <p>The switch of internet service providers is underway. Hardware has been installed, and technicians will come to ensure that it is working well with our wifi and door-locking system.</p> <p>The front exterior of the church will be powerwashed this week. (The contract requires the workers to remove the Black Lives Matter banner beforehand and put it back up afterwards.)</p> <p>We need to schedule a "Church Spiffing Day."</p> <p>Bill and Clark want to consolidate the many components of our tech system.</p> <p>Bill will attend a seminar on year-round stewardship.</p> <p>The Board set Saturday, October 21 for cleaning the church interior.</p>	<p><i>Bill Blakely</i></p>
<p>Hiring (5 min)</p> <p>The hiring team (Sharon Dolan, Gary Facente, and Emily Stoper) screened candidates by phone and chose three to invite to interview in person. Marilyn and Dennis joined them in conducting the interviews. The team chose to get references for two of the candidates; for both, the references were strong. Another application arrived and the team will interview that person this week and meet immediately afterward. A decision to extend an offer may be near.</p> <p>Nicole: Check with the hiring team to make sure "all ducks are in a row" for hiring. For example, when do we need to have the contract ready? Ask the Finance Team what needs to be done. And check the onboarding task list sent by the UUA.</p>	<p><i>Marilyn</i></p>
<p>Church calendar (5 min.)</p> <p>Discussion about possibly changing fiscal year (currently the calendar year) and program year currently like school year) to both begin July 1. Significant benefits of aligning them.</p> <p>But our current calendar may work better when calling a minister, which happens in the spring. On our current calendar, stewardship campaign is in the fall and new budget starts in January, just before the minister hiring process. Also, perhaps it's better to wait on a calendar change till our situation is more stable, we have core staff in place, etc.</p> <p>Decided: Wait a year or two, then reconsider calendar change.</p>	<p><i>Nicole</i></p>

Commented [MM1]:

<p>Stewardship (15 min)</p> <p>Stewardship campaign will run from October 8 through November 12, with testimonials each Sunday. Followup phone calls will begin thereafter. Our goal is \$350,000 (pending a final check with the finance team confirming that the 2024 budget adequately covers everything we are planning).</p> <p>Dave asked, what differences will increased pledges make? (Why should we give more?) Nicole: Personnel, personnel, personnel! We want to sustain a full-time administrator who will raise awareness of FUCO as an event venue and generate more rental income, improve and maintain our website, and improve our membership process. Hiring a second part-time sexton would support more events and upkeep of our facility. Increasing DRE hours would allow us to rebuild the RE program and root ourselves in order to expand our presence in the city community. Strengthening our programs for families and children is key to growing our membership.</p> <p>Team will print flyers that communicate this, and are developing a Breeze form for pledges. They will clarify what a “sustaining pledge” is. Board members and the stewardship team are strongly urged to update their pledges as soon as the form is available.</p>	<p><i>Dave Ruede</i></p>
<p>Pastoral care planning (5 min)</p> <p>A “summit” meeting is planned for October to determine the congregation’s pastoral care needs, how to publicize what’s available, and related finances.</p> <p>Judith: Until a few years ago, we functioned well with a Pastoral Associates team (volunteers) providing pastoral services, overseen by the minister. We didn’t pay for a minister to provide pastoral care. I’m disturbed by our seeming to shift away from the model of volunteer-provided pastoral care. Nicole: We need to rebuild Pastoral Associates program, and in the interim we need cover pastoral care.</p>	<p><i>Nicole</i></p>
<p>BREAK (5 min)</p>	
<p>Board management of staff (5 min)</p> <p>Board will talk with each staff member by December 31. We will hold a Board retreat first to adapt the form in the employee handbook to focus just on goals and needs. We can consult Melissa James for more guidance.</p>	<p><i>Nicole</i></p>
<p>“For the good of the order” (5 min)</p> <p>(Questions, brief planning, spontaneous items, or pulled from consent agenda)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board thank-you’s This month we will thank Clark for his above-and-beyond work on our ISP transition (Judith); all who worked on/at our booth at Oakland Pride (Nicole); and Ron for putting out Chalice Chatter each week for months (Bev). Review rotating tasks chart Readings at board meeting: Evalyn; Chalice Chatter Oct.: Nicole, Nov: Marilyn. 	<p><i>Nicole</i></p>
<p>END OF PUBLIC MEETING</p>	

8:20	Executive session: Personnel matters	Nicole
8:55	Extinguish chalice & closing reading (5 min)	Bev
9:00	END OF EXECUTIVE SESSION	

=====

BIKE RACK

- Kevin Mann’s requests

