

<p>First Unitarian Church of Oakland BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES September 29, 2024 1:15 - 3:30 pm Vista Room, Lake Park Senior Living 1850 Alice St., Oakland</p>	<p>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></p>
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<p>Present in person: Dave Ruede, <i>President</i> Dennis Rowcliffe, <i>Treasurer</i> (chalice and readings) Evalyn Seidman, <i>Vice President</i> (task lister) Janet McFarland (timekeeper & comms. facilitator) Judith Hunt Nicole Fitzhugh Marilyn McMahon, <i>Secretary</i> Patsy Wood Present virtually: Debby Kaplan</p>	<p>Guests attending in person: Rev. Laurel Liefert, <i>contract minister</i> Jef Melcher, <i>DRE</i> Bill Blakely Guests attending virtually: Hester Green Kate Lenhardt</p>
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<p>Open comment period No comments were offered. The Board and Rev. Laurel noted the need to check with the UUA (through Melissa James) about permission to use the UUA’s new “Love” diagram.</p>	<p><i>Congregation</i></p>
<p>Chalice lighting and opening reading</p>	<p><i>Dennis</i></p>
<p>Welcome and preview of meeting</p>	<p><i>Dave</i></p>
<p>Consent agenda A. Updates on Board activity and reporting actions taken since previous meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rev. Laurel has agreed to extend her contract ministry through 2025-26 ● Nicole will join the Budget Team ● Judith will be Board liaison to staff meetings <p>B. Quick action items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board approved last month’s minutes by voice vote: MOTION to approve the August 2024 Board meeting minutes (Marilyn, 2nd Nicole) - PASSED. ● Discussion of Janet’s reformatted and lightly edited version of the Operations Team charter; decided that the Board will approve that version by email. 	<p><i>Dave</i></p>

<p>Minister’s report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In her first year with us, Rev. Laurel’s goal was to engender the congregation’s trust in her and in each other. This year, her goal is re-establishing the Program Council. Every church group should know how it supports our Mission. Though she is paid for a 20-hr work week with responsibility for Worship, she will continue to volunteer her time in other areas. She considers pastoral care “a must.” ● In her third year (2025-26 program year), she aims to gradually “move out of the circle,” leaving the congregation independent in all our activities when her contract ends. ● She reiterated her strong desire to sync our fiscal year with our program year (June through May). The timing of the stewardship pledge campaign would shift too. Kate will investigate the repercussions for accounting. Suggestions were made to make the change in March or in July 2025. ● She would like to have 15-minute “deep chair discussions” with the Board at each monthly meeting, just after the chalice lighting. They would center on a “common read,” and one chapter would be discussed each month. She recommends <i>Blessing the World: What Can Save Us Now</i>, by Rebecca Parker. The Board agreed to this plan, and the discussions will begin in November. 	<p><i>Rev. Laurel</i></p>
<p>Administrator’s report</p> <p>Jorim could not attend. The Board will just read the written administrator’s report.</p>	
<p>Treasurer’s report</p> <p>Summary analysis of the August profit & loss document: We’re pretty close to the income and expenses we budgeted for. By the end of the year, we will probably come out ahead (because some income has been higher than expected and some planned staffing did not occur).</p> <p>The Reinhardt Social Justice Endowment has now reached the threshold where we can make withdrawals from it. So we need to determine our priorities and criteria for what we will fund, and first, to decide <i>who</i> should determine them.</p> <p>About the purposes of the various endowments: Their purposes were set when each endowment was established. If any wording is ambiguous, we can interpret it. The Board is referred to the 2021 Endowment Policy & Endowment Committee Charter. Also, Kate and Hester will provide a “road map” to all of the funds, including endowments</p> <p>Nicole added that the Board decides what percentage we will withdraw from each endowment each year.</p>	<p><i>Debby</i></p>
<p>Religious Education report</p> <p>(Note: There is much more information in the Sep 2024 RE report and the proposed 2025 RE Budget.)</p> <p>Jef has hired a student assistant, Ella Jensen. Esther continues as a nursery care provider. The Spark team supports the DRE’s work. It has been functioning for a couple years and is now moving toward becoming an official committee. It is still defining its goals and values.</p> <p>Next Sunday (and the first Sunday of each month) there will be a Family RE potluck breakfast at 8:30. At 9:30 Ella and Esther take the children to play and the parents have a meeting. The</p>	<p><i>Jef</i></p>

<p>church membership book will be there – an informal opportunity for parents to become members. At 10:20, the kids sing and dance with Joyful Noise, and there will be family involvement in the worship service.</p> <p>On the second and fourth Sundays of each month, the Youth Group will meet.</p> <p>Questions from the Board: Is this plan for three Sundays a month sustainable? Will parents come regularly? Are we discontinuing the plan to have RE for the kids <i>during</i> service three times a month and an All Ages service once a month?</p>	
<p>RE proposal</p> <p>Jef stepped up to meet pressing needs of the church after Rev. Soto’s departure. At the Board president’s request, he assumed leadership of several areas beyond his role as Director of RE. But he was paid at his usual rate, which was not commensurate with the extra work he was doing. He requests financial recognition in the form of a \$3000 honorarium for shouldering so much responsibility in the first half of 2023. The Personnel Committee (Rinda) recommends and supports this.</p> <p>MOTION to pay Jef a \$3000 honorarium for his extra and higher-level work in December 2022 through June 2023, as recommended by the Personnel Committee (Nicole, 2nd Janet) – PASSED.</p>	<p><i>Jef</i></p>
<p>BREAK</p>	
<p>Stewardship pledge campaign</p> <p>We have handed out and are mailing pledge forms, but more is needed to reach everyone (namely, phone calls). A number of people have volunteered to make some of those calls, so each of us may only have to make about five calls. Pledge totals won’t be announced at worship until two weeks from now. There will be a few testimonials. The campaign won’t end before December (later than initially hoped). The pledge web page is up and running – huge thanks to Michael Fitzhugh.</p>	<p><i>Dave</i></p>
<p>2025 budget and priorities</p> <p>Our priorities are a COLA for staff, an additional sexton or increase in custodial services, RE (to the extent it doesn’t fund itself), and facilities needs. To this Dave adds contracting for tech services for our website. It’s too much work to rely on volunteers.</p> <p>Also, hardware: Jorim’s computer is very slow because very old. Rev. Laurel pleaded for a member directory that we could hand to new members. Bill Blakely said that Breeze can do a lot more than what we use it for, so we could make better use of it. Debby agreed it is worthwhile to pay for tech expertise and is concerned about our lack of strategic plans which means we handle everything ad hoc.</p> <p>And <i>if</i> we want to increase our rental income, we need more personnel because Jorim and Frank are already at/near capacity.</p>	<p><i>Dave</i></p>
<p>Building and occupant safety</p> <p>The vestry exit is blocked (partly for security reasons); this must be corrected. We need to reinstitute the Safety Committee. And we should train all ushers and greeters in the emergency protocols.</p>	<p><i>Dave</i></p>

<p>Action-planning task forces</p> <p>We plan to set up three task forces (short-term working groups with a specific task), one for each of the major themes identified by the ad hoc follow-up team after our Hope for Us process came to a close. (The full charges of these task forces are found in the draft list of task forces.)</p> <p>We need to figure out who will have responsibility for each.</p> <p>Shared Ministry - <i>Charged with canvassing the congregation (members, attendees, friends) about definitions/understandings of the term “shared ministry.”</i></p> <p>Suzanne Van Houten said that COSM is already working on this with Rev. Laurel.</p> <p>Conflict Engagement - <i>Charged with developing a congregational method and structure for resolving conflicts between any and all stakeholders in the congregation,</i></p> <p>COSM? Or is this too much for COSM? Rev. Laurel will talk with Laila about it. Patsy volunteers to be on the Conflict Engagement task force.</p> <p>Anti-racism/ Anti-oppression/ Multiculturalism (ARAOMC) - <i>Charged with recommending ways that UU Oakland can grow our knowledge and practices toward our goal of being an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural congregation.</i></p> <p>We need people to step up to this task force. The Board does not know who to ask. The idea was floated that the Board would have to do it, but after discussion it was agreed that it is imperative that the congregation leads. So the Board will create the opportunity for people to step forward and form this task force. If the congregation really wants to move toward its ARAOMC goals, some people will step up.</p> <p>The Board plan is to set up meetings on three different Sundays in October (one for each task force) and to arrange childcare, tech setup, and availability of the owl camera. Those interested in each task force are to meet and take on their particular charge. The Board’s role will be to kick off the task forces by organizing the first meeting; after that, it is up to congregants to carry the torch.</p> <p>The task forces are to produce reports, which the Board will review in February, preparing resolutions for the congregation to vote on at the annual meeting March 16.</p> <p>Nicole will prepare an announcement about the task forces for the Chalice Chatter.</p>	<p>Nicole, Dave</p>
<p>Staff evaluations</p> <p>Jef will handle evaluations of London, Esther, and Ella. COSM has performed an evaluation of Rev. Laurel. Patsy volunteers to work with Rinda on evaluating Frank, Zach, Susan, and Renee.</p>	<p>Dave</p>
<p>Zoom sound/video of worship services</p> <p>The sound over zoom has been problematic. Judith says that today everything was coming through but at quite low volume. Worship Associates needs to meet with Zach to solve this. Also, it might be helpful to talk with Mt. Diablo UU, who zooms services successfully. Rev. Laurel will talk with WA.</p>	<p>Dave</p>
<p>“For the good of the order” (Questions, brief planning, spontaneous items, or pulled from consent agenda)</p>	<p>Dave, Evalyn</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board thank-you's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Michael Fitzhugh for Stewardship web page (Nicole); Laila for meeting with Frank (Dave); Katrinca for her work on Pride Day (Janet) ○ We have overdone our thank-you's in recent months, past our capacity, so we will do fewer from now on, and find other ways to recognize outstanding volunteers, especially for sustained or perpetual efforts. ● Review task commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review task commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Janet will ask Jorim to print photos of board members again for bulletin board ● Marilyn will order copies of <i>Blessing This World</i> by Rebecca Parker ■ Check rotating tasks signups & worship welcome signups 	
<p>Extinguish chalice & closing reading</p>	<p><i>Dennis</i></p>
<p>END OF MEETING</p>	

BIKE RACK (Topics saved for future meeting)

- Program Council
- Posting Board agendas and minutes
- Website maintenance