

Minutes

Board of Trustees: August 21, 2024

First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Board Members Attending: Brian Junker, President (2026); Jim Pashek, Vice President (2027); Kyle Gracey (2027), Treasurer (2026); Nicholas Izzo, Secretary (2025); Raeann Olander (2025); ; Jean Schmidt (2026); Christine Milcarek (2025); Maria Lauro (2027), Richard Dum (2027)

Absent Members:

Ex Officio Member: Rev Kate Walker

Others: Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

Visitors: Mac Perkins-High, Intern Minister

Call to Order (Brian) (7:00) (Zoom)

1. **Opening Words (Jim)**
2. **Welcoming Guests (Brian)** none noted
3. **Announcements (Jim)**
 - a. Next Board meeting: Wed., Sept 18, 2024 @ 7 pm on Zoom
 - b. August Opening Words: Brian
 - c. Committee reports due in Sept: Stewardship, COSM, Finance, Safety
4. **Consent Agenda (Brian) (Documents)**
 - a. Minutes from July board meeting. Motion to accept (with edits) by Brian, Motion carries with 8 in favor, 1 absent.
 - b. Minister's Report.
 - c. LRED Report
 - d. Board Priorities
 - e. Treasurers' report:
 - i. Covered as part of the quarterly financial review
 - f. Committee Reports:
 - i. Stewardship
 - ii. Building
 - iii. Finance
 - iv. Investments

5. **Investment Report (Kyle)**

Concerning the placement of the Investment Report, the board was generally agreeable to keeping it on the consent agenda instead of the discussion agenda going forward, except that the first investment report of the year will remain on the discussion agenda.

Regarding question from Richard on fees being paid on investment instruments, Kyle replied that funds are largely invested in social impact or environmental impact funds, many low fee funds are invested in the endowment. Kyle will discuss the fee costs with the investment committee in future meeting.

6. **Board help with canvass (Maria)**

October 6th Commitment Sunday- need board help on a couple items

Need a testimonial on that day

Need assistance with contact calls from board members - 5 per person

Jean noted that since Canvass started contacting $\frac{1}{3}$ of congregation a year two years ago, and now the entire congregation will have been contacted personally.

7. **Issue with Solar Panels (Richard)**

Report placed in discussion folder to compare church's solar array output to Richards house.

- A. Richard compares 71 church panels to production of 43 people
- B. Envinity company replaced connector, made 2 service connection repairs
- C. No clear days since indicate lack of comparable data so far, but anticipate more power production
- D. Jean - thanks Richard, wants to put report in permanent location in documents
- E. Kyle - Envinity may owe us something on this, Kyle will check on this with Envinity
- F. Who is the intended audience for this documentation? Jean suggests the working documents folder.
- G. Rev Kate - where is the contract location? Maybe put it into a property and grounds folder?
- H. Kyle - word documents are best for board meetings
- I. Nick - why was this not caught by utility company? We do have a working folder, can add a technical issues folder for the record.
- J. Richard - another rip in the roof, but it may be the cedar tree by the entrance
- K. Kyle - appreciative that Richard will continue to check-in, Nick to recommend to buildings and grounds to review solar panel performance over their life
- L. Brian - appreciates Nick's folder structure attention
- M. Jim - building committee is looking into removing the cedar tree which partially shades the panels.

8. **In-person board meetings for the year**

Brian - proposes to have 3 in person/hybrid board meetings

Kyle notes hybrid/in person meeting designation indicates hybrid of in person and virtual meetings and not in person only

Nick – to reserve Priestly Room and check into AV options in that room

9. **VIM Draft of Strategic Plan (Jean)**

1. Communicate resources VIM used to produce a report this year

- a. COSM report
- b. Annual report of congregation
- c. Discernment results from targeted froups
 - i. Young adults
 - ii. RE parents

d. Environmental task force, LRED (Erica) prior year accomplishments

2. 2024-2027 Strategic Plan

1. Two Main Goals:

- a. Diversify and grow membership
 - b. Create long lasting and meaningful partnerships advancing racial and environmental justice
2. Added two new sections, 3 & 4 describing prior year progress, and update to goals table
 3. Most items fall under 2024-2025 goals, highlighted RE issues and recovery from COVID
 4. Hiring goals are placed in 2025-2026 and later to support families

3. Next steps for VIM committee

1. After receiving feedback from the board, finalize strategic plan based on input in early September, after Sept board meeting, will ask board to give guidance for advancing priorities
2. VIM will take input and develop open questions and a discernment plan for 2025
3. VIM is an instrument of the board
4. Questions: no questions, just appreciates rolling nature of the plan including incremental updates, may need to incorporate way to have a larger picture overhaul

10. **Congregational “buy-in” on 1) Article 2 Values & 2) Banner (Rev Kate)**

1. Change from Principles to Values

- a. Very important to congregation, on the website, and reciting the principles has been in the liturgy for at least 30 years

2. Banner reached the end of its life

- a. Would like a process to determine the desired result, with buy in from congregation

3. Would we take both issues to a congregational meeting and vote?

Kyle - agrees this should be a congregational decision, appreciates sensitivity,

Connie's efforts to articulate principles for example were not as successful,

Kate - shared her prior congregational covenant, may be in consideration

Brian - buy-in process for each item may be somewhat different

Transition from principles to values may require an alternation or blend, but neither one is a covenant, which may need to be incorporated

Richard - do we have the bandwidth to reach consensus as a congregation?

Jean - we are aware of different processes

Kate - 3 opportunities for folks to discuss different processes, first to review what they are, followed by what decisions to make. People recognize the principles in the values, but values are too long for recitation, Sunday after church is the best time

Maria - different process for a new banner vs values

Kate - cannot change UU bylaws, not likely to change soon

11. **Nest Steps for Board Assessment (Kyle) and Brian**

The UUA, through Rev Sunshine, was in the process of doing an assessment of our Board. Since their move to a new position, we need to pick up the ball on this, want to develop an assessment to give to the congregation to return to board to give feedback to the board

Brian - do we have access to the questions, prompts or data from Sunshine?

Kyle - yes, can ask about the backend data collected

12. **Ingathering Sept 8/Board Installation Sept 15 (Raeann)**

Clarification of separate dates for two activities

Added board support for in-gathering

Coffee hour was an intention last year

Board provides beverages for a potluck

More Cleanup is needed

In house activities may be needed

Kyle: will volunteer to help with a potluck

Brian - is there a planning document to distribute?

Ingathering Potluck

13. **Board Activity Day Sept 15 (Brian)**

Board Activity Day - do not host coffee hour, but organize some activities for the board

“Smorgasbord Activity”

Committees to Include:

Personnel

COSM

VIM

Finance

Investment

Stewardship

Building and Grounds

Gardening

Memorial Garden??

Marketing and Communications

Nominating

Safety

Program Endowments

Difficult to do coffee hour and teach RE!

Cleaning is what takes the time

14. **Future Business**

- Kyle will need decent chunk of time at next meeting to review the budget
- Jean will need 30 minutes for feedback on open question topics for the year ahead

- Chris M - many organizations need a criminal background check, but we could check back on this

15. Appreciations and Aspirations (All)

Brian: Appreciation to Richard and Mac!

Jean: looking forward to a board bonding experience with Rev Kate

Raeann: great job to Brian!

Brian: great thanks to Kyle

Kyle: many thanks for thoughtful reports

Richard: thank you to all members

16. Adjourn (Brian) (9:00)

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: September 18, 2024

Nick Izzo, Secretary