

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, February 2, 2022**

Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference

Minutes – Approved

ATTENDEES

Voting members: Bill Brown, Randall Hudson, Elaine Miller, Beth Pollard, David Roberts, Kerry Simpson, Cordell Sloan, Helen Tinsley-Jones

Absent: Ariel Smith-Iyer

Ex officio members: Rev. Michelle Collins, Tess O'Riva (Executive Director), Ann Harlow (Secretary), Lenore Ralston (Treasurer)

Visitors: Pier Sun Ho, Selene Fabiano, Don Klose, Anne Greenwood, Jane Lundin, Terry Stokes & Ann Riley, Marta Tobey, David Lingenfelter, Larry Nagel, Michael DeWitt, Anita Mermel, Michael Armstrong, Melissa James, Jean Gleason, Lynn Hammond, Alan Davis, Dave Wemmer

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Beth Pollard, president, at 7:03 p.m. Kerry did the chalice lighting and reading, we checked in, David read the Board covenant, and Ann read the land acknowledgment.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion for the following (M Helen/S David) passed unanimously:

- Approve agenda
- Approve Board Meeting minutes of January 5, 2021
- Acknowledgment of annual UUA Certification
- Accept monthly Treasurer's report
- Accept update on Endowment Committee membership: Co-Chairs Dick Sherman and Anita Mermel; member Jason Russell; member Ira Nelken terming out; Lenore Ralston moving from Chair to advisor, and widening the search for diversity in filling three seats

INFORMATION ITEM

Ministerial Search: Melissa James, UUA/Pacific Western Region, gave a presentation. Observers were invited to write questions in the Chat. Melissa said she and the UUA Transitions Office will be available to support us through the journey of selecting our next minister. She reviewed the types of ministry: contract, interim, developmental and settled. There's been a change lately to more churches hiring full-time, not just part-time, contract ministers. It's done on an annual basis. Developmental ministers are hired to address specific systemic needs prior to a search for a settled minister. Only settled ministers are voted on by the whole congregation, and the understanding is it will be a long-term commitment. She introduced the Transitions

Office website and the resources therein. The Board's role is 1) to begin the process with UUA staff and 2) to create the search committee (may be in collaboration with Nominating Committee). The interim minister's role emphasizes pastoral support as well as being a resource for information and a potential reference for candidates. There is an 11-step process for selecting the search committee (same as in past).

Q&A: There's no strict rule against search committees including spouses of board members, but it can present some issues. This is a tough time with a tight field of candidates. We will be best served by being clear on what our needs and priorities are; have a solid, competitive, sustainable compensation package; and be really honest in our materials. If there is not a match in the first round, there are various options. She will check on cost differences between contract and settled minister compensation. We would be starting the process now for a minister who would start in August 2023. Congregational records "go live" Dec. 1; candidates' names appear Jan. 1; candidates are narrowed down and a selection should be made of a final candidate by April 1. Going for a contract minister with the possibility of them becoming the settled minister can be a mixed blessing. In her experience, people realize things are changing since the pandemic, but the conversation about "reshaping ministry" is just beginning. We can choose any minister we want (not necessarily a member of the UU Ministers Association), but the UUA highly discourages going outside of the UUA system with its higher level of accountability and its UUA support if issues arise. And we need to think about what kind of minister (including how experienced) will serve our congregation best. The reality across denominations is that there is lower supply of ministers than demand, but she thinks a lot of things about UUCB are attractive. Keep in mind we are "being watched" and "there's a lot of information people have access to." She will check on whether other churches offer help with home down-payments like we do. She knows some offer some sort of housing assistance. Interim ministers are not eligible to become the settled minister.

Beth said we will decide at our March meeting whether we want to search for a settled minister so the process can begin.

Minister's Report: Rev. Michelle said the Opening Task Force is still working on what will be a reasonable time to go back to in-Sanctuary services. She is very pleased that an external financial audit is taking place. It should help rebuild the trust of the congregation following the financial "pickle" of several years back. She thinks having had a thorough audit will reflect well on us in the packet for ministerial candidates. Chalice Circles are starting up. She's pleased with the current board and looking forward to working with the new board members.

LISTENING

Announcements:

Michelle said voting for board candidates is now open, to conclude Feb. 13.

Tess reported that she will present a preliminary operations budget next month, so be sure to get requests in. The deadline for having all our documents in for the audit is 8 a.m. Feb. 3. The virtual video tour of UUCB is scheduled for March 3 to simplify showing our space to potential renters. A new HVAC control system is going in. Four tons of metal will soon be removed from the boiler room/shed so it can become a workshop. All parking lot lights are now LED, but timers aren't working yet. The OWL grades 7-9 sex ed class, jointly offered with Epworth

Church, has 10 students and is going well. She has some new applicants for the facilities assistant position. We now have 3 Girl Scout troops meeting at UUCB for free and recently hosted an emergency preparedness event.

Report from Board listening presence: January listener Kerry and February listener Elaine each had a phone call from Kris Homme regarding her strong concerns about the vaccination policy.

Congregants who wish to speak to the Board: Jane Lundin was curious about who the next Board secretary will be; Beth said that would be decided just following the congregational meeting and Ann said a volunteer has been lined up.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

Freestone: Adoption of goals, process and 2022 timeline for the congregation to determine the future of UUCB's Freestone Retreat Property

Michelle presented the proposed timeline. She is aware that there are feelings of broken relationships and hurt feelings in the congregation through previous discussions about Freestone. She hopes the process will provide for both decision making and healing. The process she presented is one that is useful in congregations that are deeply conflicted over an issue, which she doesn't see as the case here but she recommends it as a healthy process anyway. Rushing a process with a lot of feelings involved usually doesn't turn out well. The Freestone Committee had already signed off on the timeline, adding a few suggestions that she incorporated. The church is paying some experts for up-to-date written reports.

David suggested the information-gathering phase should include a cost-benefit analysis and balancing of risks and rewards. Several board members praised the proposal and expressed appreciation to all involved.

Kerry moved and Helen seconded approval of the proposed timeline, and the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE/LIAISON REPORTS

Helen expressed great thanks to the Nominating Committee for coming up with an outstanding slate. The Widening the Circle Committee is still accepting applications to join—check website.

Dave reported Patrick Cullinane is chairing Stewardship. They've decided on a theme and created some visuals. Early pledge event to be Sat. Feb. 26, about an hour long. He noted that Patrick is a past Board president.

OUTGOING COMMENTS

Beth expressed appreciation to outgoing Board members Kerry Simpson, Ann Harlow, and Ariel Smith-Iyer, followed by comments from others.

Beth adjourned the meeting at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Harlow, Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS AND BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

February Listening Presence: Elaine
March Beacon article (due Jan. 15): Beth
March Listening Presence: Bill
Next Board meeting: March 2, 7 p.m.