

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

**Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference**

**Minutes – Approved**

**ATTENDEES**

Voting members: Michael Armstrong, Bill Brown, Pier Sun Ho, Randall Hudson, Elaine Miller, Beth Pollard, David Roberts, Cordell Sloan, Helen Tinsley-Jones

Absent: None

Ex officio members: Rev. Michelle Collins, Tess O’Riva (Executive Director), Selene Fabiano (Secretary), Lenore Ralston (Treasurer)

Visitors: Suzette Anderson Duggan, Jose Castrejon, Kensington Interim Fire Chief, Evelie Defino Sales Posch, Michael DeWitt, Karen Elliott, Lynn Hammond, Bill Hansell, Kensington Fire General Manager, Dorothy Herzberg, Sheldon Jones, Don Klose, David Lingenfelter, Ladie Malek, Lisa Maynard, Greg Lemieux, Lonnie Moseley, Frances Moulton, Lisa Maynard, Luana Pohlman, Sandy Portillo-Robbins, Melissa Rosales, Deborah Schmidt, Ariel Smith-Iyer, Marta Tobey, Grace Ulp, Heaven Walker

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Beth Pollard, president, at 7:05p.m. Dave Roberts did the chalice lighting and reading, Bill Brown read the Board covenant, and Pier Sun Ho read the land acknowledgement.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The following 2 items were removed from the consent agenda:

1. Monthly Executive Director’s report – removed because it was not submitted.
2. The minutes for the 5/4/22 Board Meeting to discuss a requested change.

**A motion for the following (M Helen \_\_\_/S\_Pier\_) passed unanimously:**

- Approve agenda
- Recommend Congregational Meeting minutes of May 22, 2022 for congregational approval
- Accept monthly Treasurer’s report
- Authorize Mechanics Bank account signatories: Beth Pollard, Anne Greenwood, Lenore Ralston, Rev. Michelle Collins, and Tess O’Riva; Remove: Elaine Miller, Larry Nagel, Kerry Simpson

### **Discussion re the May 4, 22 board meeting minutes**

Elaine asked for an amendment to the May meeting minutes to include the actual budget line item cost for insurance for Freestone and to remove the phrase “all other costs of Freestone are covered by the Freestone Committee” since we had since learned that Freestone’s property taxes were also paid out of the UUCB general budget. Beth stated that if the information regarding Freestone’s property taxes wasn’t stated at the May meeting, that change couldn’t be made to the May minutes but could be noted in these minutes. She suggested that financial information on what is spent on Freestone be included in an upcoming monthly financial report by the Executive Director or the Treasurer to the Board.

**Action:** Elaine made a motion to make an amendment to the 5/4/22 Board Meeting minutes to include the actual amount of the cost of insurance for Freestone in the 5-4-22 Board Meeting minutes; Pier seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Executive Director has reported that the annual amount is currently \$2,340.

### **INFORMATION ITEM**

#### **1. Kensington Fire Department Presentation re Temporary Use of UUCB’s north parking lot.**

Tess introduced Kensington Fire Protection General Manager Bill Hansell and Jose Castrejon, Kensington Interim Fire Chief, to talk about the Kensington Fire Department’s request for temporary use of UUCB’s north parking lot. Here are the main points from their presentation and response to questions:

- The Kensington Public Safety Building at 217 Arlington has needed major renovations related to seismic deficiencies, safety standards, and space needs since the late 1990’s. Smaller renovation efforts have not fixed the problem. Given rising costs and the need for a seismically safe building, it’s very important for this work to go forward and to be able to continue operating while renovations are being done.
- Two structures would be placed in the UUCB parking lot: 1. A 30’ x 50’ carport to house 2 fire engines, firefighting gear, and exercise equipment. 2. A 24’ x 60’ modular building containing kitchen, office, bedrooms, and workspace for firefighters on shift.
- A rolling high fence will be put in at the Craft Street entrance to the parking lot to keep the buildings/equipment secure.

Speed bumps on the Craft Street entrance will be removed to reduce wear and tear on the fire engines, and will be coordinated with related drainage improvements.

- Expected time in which the UUCB parking area would be used: October 2022- March 2024 (i.e 18 months) is the time schedule they are asking bidding contractors but the ultimate timeline will depend on when the plans are approved by El Cerrito and if a contractor can begin work in October 2022. Once the work is done, they anticipate it may take an additional month at the end to coordinate moving out.

- Daily schedule of KFD firefighting crew. There are usually 3 firefighters on shift; four on red-flag days. One shift begins at 7AM (crew arrive around 6:45AM). Do morning check at 9AM. They average about 2 calls/day. On red-flag days there will be more activity due to more frequent patrols. Crews leave the property twice a day to train at a Richmond training facility.
- Concerns re noise. The KFD crew are used to working in residential areas and try to reduce noise as much as possible, including not using their sirens on quiet residential streets. The regularly-used fire engines are relatively new and pretty quiet; however, if one of these engines needs to be repaired, an older, noisier fire engine is used while the newer one is being repaired.
- Trees. They will need to trim some branches off 2 of the trees on the church property in order to move the fire engines in and out of the lot and will consult with an arborist. They don't anticipate having to cut down any trees.
- Possible engagement/educational sessions for UUCB community. They have a dedicated emergency preparedness coordinator and they are used to doing events for children and adults. Now that the pandemic is more under control, they are beginning to do more community events and will engage with the church community as much as the church would like.
- Is UUCB indemnified if unhappy neighbors sue? Bill Hansell stated that the Fire Dept takes responsibility for its operations and use. Tess reported that UUCB' legal counsel has reviewed the lease. Kensington FD has been having public meetings for the past 18 months.
- Overdue need for resurfacing the parking lot. Once the fire dept. vacates, they will resurface the UUCB parking lot.

## **2. Minister's Report: Rev Michelle**

Freestone process continues. The Freestone Committee decided to postpone the "Freestone Dialogue Day" to August or September in order to give the church community time to visit Freestone.

Heaven Walker, new Director of Family Ministry. Rev. Michelle introduced Heaven. Heaven: reported that she has already planned some youth events and is very excited to be at UUCB.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT/LISTENING**

## **Announcements – Board Listening Presence & other Board Members, Minister, Executive Director**

The Board President thanked everyone who helped with the first multi-platform congregational meeting.

**Report from Board listening presence:** No one approached the Board listening presence this month.

**Congregants who wish to speak to the Board:** None

### **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **a. Vaccination Policy**

The Board President summarized the Opening Task Force’s recommendation to discontinue the Board policy requiring vaccination verification for large events (including Sunday worship), and instead to use a vaccination affirmation/honor system for all events regardless of size, with the understanding that the verification requirement may be reinstated if warranted by area infection rates. (Tabled from 5/4)

Lisa Maynard from the Opening Task Force (OTF) shared:

- There is no change in the OTF’s view regarding the importance of vaccination.
- UUCB will continue to require check-ins at Sunday service so contact tracing can be done.
- There have been a few occasions when a regular church-goer brought to church a friend or grandchild who forgot/didn’t realize they needed to bring proof of their vaccination. Lisa shared that it felt very unwelcoming to turn these people away.
- There have been no instances in which someone has come to UUCB saying they were not vaccinated and wanted to enter anyway.

Tess reported that 280 people are “cleared” (i.e. have shown proof of vaccination) in the Breeze system.

Discussion:

- Board members thanked the OTF and UUCB staff for all their work related to this issue.
- Using the honor system can prevent vaccinated people who can’t access their vaccination cards from being turned away.
- For now, when new people come they will be asked to verbally affirm that they have been vaccinated.
- It might help to have a written statement for new people to review and affirm that they have been vaccinated, have not tested positive for COVID in the past 5 days, are currently symptom-free, and agree to remain masked while at UUCB.

**Action:** Michael moved to adopt OTF recommendation and update the vaccination policy; Helen seconded. The motion passed with one abstention (Cordell).

**b. Widening the Circle Committee recommendations**

Lonnie highlighted the following 4 recommendations for the WTCOC committee: i) An abridged version of the WTCOC vision statement will be read aloud at the beginning of every BoT meeting and will be continuously published (evergreen) in “This Week Ahead” and the “The Beacon”; ii) Make the following 2 revisions to the WTCOC vision: a. Add the phrase “and religious oppression, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia” to the list of forms of oppression; and b. Add the sentence “We also commit to following the lead of our children and youth, as they are often closer to the growing-edge of new practices for inclusion; iii) The WTCOC committee is hosting 2 sharing sessions via Zoom for congregation participation: Weds. June 15 & 29, 7-8:30 pm; iv) The WTCOC has committed to financially support reps to UUA GA through the WTC Scholarship Fund.

Discussion:

1. Important to do outreach re the sharing sessions.
2. A question was raised whether the WTCOC revised statement could be incorporated into a shortened board covenant; however there was a strong opinion that the WTCOC vision statement will have more impact if its read as a stand-alone statement.
3. There was a reminder that the WTCOC vision statement is a statement that the Board is adopting it and that it can be revisited and changed in the future, and that the BOT will invite the WTOCO to a Board meeting if they are going to consider making a change to this statement.

**Action:** Elaine made a motion to accept the following WTCOC recommendations: 1. The WTCOC’s abridged vision statement will be read aloud at every Board of Trustee’s meeting and it will be continuously published in the Beacon and The Week Ahead (evergreen); and 2. Make the two suggested revisions to full vision statement.) Randall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**c. Ministerial Search Committee (MSC):** The MSC was asked to attend the Board meeting for an initial discussion with the Board on the Committee’s work.

Vice President Helen Tinsley-Jones temporarily facilitated the discussion while President Beth Pollard stepped out for about five minutes for technical reasons.

On behalf of the MSC, Deborah Schmidt shared the following information:

- Greg Lemieux is the MSC’s liaison to the BoT.

- Ariel Smith-Iyer has agreed to reach out to Christine Purcell, the Transitions Program Manager on the UUA Congregational Life field staff.
- Committee members have reviewed the Settlement Handbook
- Ladie will be leading the committee in some exercises to help them get to know one another.
- Due to how the search calendar works, the MSC will take some steps needed to pursue a settled minister before they make a decision whether to pursue a settled or contract minister.
- The committee asked the board for their opinions regarding the difference between contract and settled ministers, as well as perceived advantages of hiring a contract minister.

#### Discussion Points:

- In response to questions, Rev. Michelle explained the difference between contract ministers and settled ministers. She also shared that this year most UU congregations looking for a settled minister successfully hired a minister; whereas, most congregations looking for a contract minister did not.
- It's important to widen the pool of possible ministers in order to get the best minister for UU; however there are concerns that if we may not find a minister if we don't look for a settled minister.
- Looking for a contract minister allows us to go outside the usual UUA structure, but it also means that there wouldn't be any help from the UUA if there was a significant problem with a minister hired outside the UUA process.
- It's not clear if it's possible to concurrently search for a settled minister and a contract minister. Ladie will ask Christine Purcell about this.
- It's important to engage and include the congregation in the discussion/decision re what kind of a minister would be best for UUCB.

The Board thanked the committee for the work they have done thus far as well as their future work.

#### **BOARD COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE/LIAISON REPORTS**

Beth asked for a board member to volunteer to act as the liaison to the MSC. Cordell and Helen volunteered to be co-liaisons.

Board members and Rev Michelle noted that we all need to remind people at church to keep their masks on.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene Fabiano, Secretary

**UPCOMING EVENTS AND BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

**July Listening Presence:** Cordell Sloan

**Next Board Mtg:** July 6, 2022