

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, February 7, 2024**

**Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference**

**Minutes – Approved**

**ATTENDEES**

Voting members: Michael Armstrong, Bill Brown, Kay Fairwell, Pier Ho, Randall Hudson, Beth Pollard, David Rosales, Cordell Sloan, Helen Tinsley-Jones

Absent: No voting members were absent.

Ex officio members: Rev. Marcus Liefert, Tess O’Riva (Executive Director), Selene Fabiano (Secretary)

Visitors: Michael DeWitt, Jean Gleason, Anne Greenwood, Lynn Hammond, Ann Harlow, Albert Kueffner, Larry Nagel, Marta Tobey, Helen Toy

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Helen Tinsley-Jones, co-president, at 7:20\_\_p.m. Cordell did the chalice lighting and reading, Michael read the Board covenant, Selene read the land acknowledgement, and David read the Widening the Circle Vision Statement.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- Approve agenda
- Approve January 2024 Board Meeting minutes
- Accept monthly Executive Director report
- Accept monthly Treasurer’s report
- Accept monthly Freestone Oversight Committee report
- Approve revisions to the February Congregational Meeting agenda

**MINISTER’S REPORT**

Heaven Walker will leave her position as Director Family Ministry and Lifelong Learning at the end of June to pursue becoming a chaplain. Reverend Marcus has scheduled a meeting next week for the people most involved with Family Ministry. By the end of February, Reverend Marcus plans to have put together a hiring team, the composition of which he will share at the

March Board meeting. March is the right time to get search for a new FM Director since this is the time when religious professionals are most likely to be looking for new positions.

Update on the installation: The following previous UUCB ministers will be in attendance: Barbara & Bill Hamilton-Holway, and Chris Holton Jablonski.

The Stewardship kick-off is on Sunday March 3rd.

Tess and Rev. Marcus have begun working on the budget for FY24-25. They reviewed staff salaries in the context of UUA's salary guidelines. UUCB has some catching up to do for some positions.

Networking with local clergy is one of Reverend Marcus' goals. Toward that end, he attended a "Faith and Justice" which brings progressive faith leaders together. In addition, UUCB will host GRIP's annual meeting next month, providing another opportunity to connect. Marcus was invited to be the chaplain for a trip to Tijuana in early April with other congregations. The goal of the trip will be to build a home in a few days.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS/LISTENING**

### **Board or Staff Announcements:**

- Congregational Meeting Sunday, February 11, 2024. Staff will be introduced for the first time.
- Board of Trustees election has begun -Voting will close just before the start of the 2/11/24 congregational meeting. Please vote.

### **Report from Board listening presence:**

One congregant expressed interest in changing UUCB's name to Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Berkeley.

### **Congregants who wish to speak to the Board:**

Lynn Hammond expressed gratitude for the current board.

Michael Dewitt reported 50 people came to the Freestone Committee's film and dinner fundraiser. He also proposed the idea of using the UUCB church parking lot as a distribution center for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

## **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Annual Report – Tess Snook O'Riva

Tess postponed sharing Annual report with the Board until the March Board meeting after it has been reviewed by the Finance Committee. The Annual Report is an internally-developed document and communication to the congregation and community. Tess's goal is to present future annual reports in the fall.

- b. Governance Manual Task Force: Approval of updated Governance Manual – Beth

Pollard and Kay Fairwell

Kay shared three additional proposed revisions. These proposed revisions are in addition to the revisions presented at the January Board meeting. The 3 additional revisions are as follows: 1. Clarifying language regarding endowment provisions. 2. Stated that employees may use the grievance process for termination actions. 3. Added policy language supporting the Good Neighbor donation practice and Christmas Eve plate donations going to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. Kay and Beth reminded us that the Governance Manual is a living document and can be updated at any time.

**Motion:** Pier made a motion to approve the revisions to the Governance Manual as submitted in the board packet. Michael seconded. The **motion passed** unanimously.

c. Board Process for New Members – Helen Tinsley-Jones and Pier Sun Ho

At a previous Board Meeting, the Membership Co-Chairs, Lonnie Moseley and Victoria Bowen, requested the following actions to help welcome new UUCB members and introduce them to the Board of Trustees:

1. A Certificate of Membership be mailed to each new member. UUCB Administrator Janae has begun doing this.
2. Every 6 months, the Board would invite new members to a Board Meeting where they would be introduced and welcomed by the Board. Selene agreed to send the email invites. We will begin this tradition at the March 6, 2024 Board Meeting

Discussion:

Several members stated they thought it was a good idea.

There was a suggestion that board members reach out by phone to new members to welcome them. Each new member would be assigned to an individual board member. There is currently a backlog of new members, since we are going to start with welcoming all the new members since January 1, 2023, but in the future, it is anticipated that there would usually be no more than one new member for each board member to call. This task would need to be added as a standing discussion item in order to assign new members. There was discussion regarding creating a list of "talking points" including mentioning ways the new member could become more involved. Michael will reach out to Victoria to see what Membership already shares with new members. Rev. Marcus stated that he and Charis recently created a brochure that outlines church programs and activities.

d. Transylvania Partner Church Meetings – Anne Greenwood

Anne Greenwood provided a report on the January 20, 2024 meeting with the Church Council of UUCB's partner church in Transylvania, Reverend Marcus along with some members of the Partner Church Committee, and representative members of the UUCB Board of Trustees. Anne's written report will be included in the March Beacon and next week's "The Week Ahead." Anne is planning a trip to Transylvania and encouraged all interested parties to join her. Anne is interested in establishing quarterly calls with the Church Council of our Partner Church, as well as the possibility of bringing their minister and some members to Berkeley to visit. Anne will work with Marta to have more information about our Partner Church program shared with the Program Council.

Question: Is there still a Balázs scholar from Transylvania?

Answer: The Balázs scholar program ended due to changes in Starr King, as well as changes in the building that had housed the visiting scholars. There is still work being done on the archives but the visiting minister program has stopped.

e. Beacon Article – Pier Sun Ho

Will set up a new rotation for board tasks starting March 2024.

**BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBER/LIAISON REPORTS**

Kay reported that \$120 was given to each UUCB staff member as part of our Staff Appreciation effort. Helen, Pier, and Kay went to the staff meeting to present the financial gifts and to express appreciation.

Awards Committee – Michael A. reported that the Schweitzer recipients have been chosen.

Stewardship Committee – Selene and Kay encourage board members to pledge early.

**CLOSING COMMENTS**

Appreciation and thanks were extended to Bill, Cordell, and Randall who will complete their terms on February 11<sup>th</sup>. All three board members shared that serving on the board had been a positive experience for them.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Selene Fabiano, Secretary