

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Congregational Meeting
Sunday, February 23, 2025

Meeting Conducted In-Person and via Livestream

Minutes – Draft.

1. Call to Order

Co-president Helen Tinsley-Jones called the meeting to order at 12:50PM.

2. Convene

a. Quorum Count (39 members required). A count of voting members was taken. Sixty-six voting members were present and a quorum was established.

b. Michael Armstrong shared a chalice-lighting reading. The chalice was lit by Jack Duggan and Suzette Duggan-Anderson. Lisa Maynard read the Widening the Circle Statement. Beth Pollard led the congregation in reciting our Covenant; and Michael Armstrong read the Land Acknowledgment statement.

3. Consent Agenda:

a. Adoption of Agenda May 19, September 15, 2024, and January 19, 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the consent agenda (M- Jean Gleason; S-Larry Nagel) passed unanimously.

4. Staff Recognition and Appreciation

Rev. Marcus expressed appreciation for the UUCB's staff and shared a PowerPoint showing the names and faces of many of staff. He introduced Interim Executive Director, Sharon Dolan, who started at UUCB this month.

5. Presentation of Flaming Chalice Awards for Extraordinary Service:

Michael Armstrong provided a brief explanation of how the Flaming Chalice awardees are chosen. The following individuals were the 2025 award recipients:

Awardee	Presenter
Natalie Campbell	Sheldon Jones
Julie Rogers	Lonnie Moseley (by video)
Karen Tripp (in absentia)	Lisa Maynard

6. Reports:

a. Stewardship Committee – Stewardship Co-Chairs Greg Lemieux and Ariel Iyer-Smith provided a brief overview of the “Cultivating our Expressions of Love” 2025 Stewardship theme. This year’s Stewardship goal is \$525,000, an increase of 5% from last year.

b. Freestone Oversight Committee (FOC) – Beth Pollard, co-chair of the FOC, reviewed the March 2023 resolution that pertained to the Freestone property. The congregation’s 2023 resolution called for funding to be raised for repairs and improvements to Freestone within specified timelines, called milestones. This fundraising and improvement work itself is being carried out by the Freestone Committee.

The first milestone was to raise \$250,000 by December 1, 2024. A first phase of repairs and improvements are to have County building permits by June 1 of this year, and be completed by June 1 of next year. A second phase of repairs and improvements are to be completed by June 1, 2027. Additionally, ongoing Freestone costs are not to exceed \$10,000 a year starting this July 1, unless otherwise authorized by the Board. The resolution called for the Board to list the entire property for sale if milestones were not met.

In December, the FOC recommended and the Board authorized allowing until April 1, 2025 for the \$250,000 to be raised, primarily due to the pending drilling of a well that - if successful would allow the sale of Lots 1 & 2 to generate the required funds. That drilling has not yet taken place, making the chances to meet the April 1 deadline very slim.

The Freestone Oversight Committee will make the recommendation at the Board's March meeting that the April 1 deadline, and other milestones, remain in place unless extended through approval of the congregation.

Without raising \$250,000 by April 1 or without approval of one or more milestone extensions – which the Oversight Committee recommends can only be authorized by the congregation, the entire Freestone property will be listed for sale in April.

The Freestone Oversight Committee emphasized their respect for variety in perspectives about the Freestone property and respect for the investments of time, talent, and treasure made by the Freestone Committee and other church members into this retreat property. They also strive to uphold the integrity of the congregation's direction in its March 2023 resolution that was crafted through a year-long deliberative process.

7. Board of Trustees:

a. Call for General Assembly Delegates. Pier shared information about General Assembly 2025 and encouraged congregants to consider attending. Anyone who is interested in being considered for a delegate for UUCB should contact Rev. Jane Ramsey.

b. Recognition of outgoing Board of Trustee members: Helen Toy, on behalf of the board, expressed tremendous appreciation to Michael Armstrong and Beth Pollard for their exceptional service.

c. Results of Board of Trustees Election - Board Candidates Carla McCasland and Kristen Jensen were elected by a quorum.

d. Installation of Board of Trustees - Rev. Marcus installed the new board

8. Benediction – Rev. Marcus provided a benediction.

9. Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 1:49PM.

There was a brief Board of Trustees meeting immediately afterward to elect Board officers