

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday July 8, 2026
Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference
Approved Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Co-President Selene Fabiano at 7:17 pm.

Voting members: Peter Boland, Ryan Devine, Selene Fabiano, Kristen Jensen, Beth Jerde, Carla McCasland, David Rosales, Pier Sun Ho, and Helen Toy. Voting members not present: None

Ex officio members: Beth Pollard (Secretary), Lisa Maynard (Treasurer), Janae Heard (Operations Director); Ex-officio member not present: Rev. Marcus Leifert. Ministerial Intern Liesl Dees was present.

2. CHALICE LIGHTING:

Beth Jerde shared artwork by Corita Kent and a quotation from Albert Camus: *"I should like to be able to love my country and still love justice."*

3. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM:

a. Receive Freestone Discernment Task Force Report:

Following the November 16, 2025 congregational vote to sell or donate UUCB's Freestone property, a Discernment Task Force was established by the Minister and Board. Its first stage was to listen to and begin healing around the feelings of members from the congregation vote; that stage was completed March 22, 2026 with a verbal report to the congregation.

Its second stage was outreach and engagement with church groups and as many members of congregation as were interested on the question:

What is a vision for releasing the church's stewardship of Freestone that honors the legacy of dedication to a sacred retreat and equips the current and future generations of church members to live our values in community with one another and the earth?

The Task Force has submitted a written report to the Board on what it heard on the question, along with recommendations from its discernment of those comments.

The input is summarized in a Google Doc of 70+ comments input lines, with a tally included in the report. At its June 12, 2026 meeting, the Task Force formulated these recommendations to the Board:

1) That the Board sell the entire property, without restrictions. About four people wanted to donate the property, though without naming who to donate to, and 65 wanted to sell; of those, most wanted to sell on the open market.

2) That the Board postpone deciding what to do with the sale proceeds. This is a more complex question, and there presumably is time before a sale can go through to consider this

question. There were views expressed by congregants about use of proceeds, which were included with the report.

b. Discuss report from the Freestone Discernment Task Force on its findings and recommendations from its outreach and engagement with the congregation.

Co-President Pier invited questions and comments about the report from Board members and the congregants present.

Congregant Larry Nagel raised concern about overgrown vegetation on the property that needs to be cleared for fire safety reasons; time is of the essence for UUCB to get this clearance work done, especially during this high-risk fire season. Janae reported that it was on her to-do list and invited information on who has performed the work in the past.

M/S, Selene/Kristen, that the brush removal be a top priority for Janae's to-do list. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Member and Discernment Task Force Chair Kristen noted that the task force's report was not meant to be treated like scientific data or as specific direction from the congregation, but rather a general compilation of and reflection on ideas it received. The task force endeavored to capture as many comments as possible from congregants, while recognizing it was not possible to be exhaustively inclusive of everything expressed.

David expressed his view of the report as being information and data for the Board to consider and discuss, but to not be limited by its contents.

c. Determine next steps and/or take action on whether to sell or donate the Freestone property, per the November 16, 2025 congregational vote.

The Board discussed the Discernment Task Force recommendation to sell the entire Freestone property. Trustees considered advantage of listing all three parcels together and agreed that engaging a qualified real estate professional would provide an appropriate and transparent process in a sale. The Board also discussed maintaining flexibility in evaluating purchase offers so that decisions could take into account the congregation's values as well as financial considerations.

M/S, Selene/Helen, to list all three Freestone parcels for sale and engage a realtor to work with UUCB on the listing. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board designated Co-Presidents Selene and Pier as its primary point of contact and coordination with the realtor, and to communicate with the Board throughout the listing and sale process. David will reestablish the Board Slack workspace to facilitate timely communication among Trustees about minor matters during the listing and sale process. Board decision-making on a purchase offer shall be conducted in an Executive Session meeting, rather than open session per the bylaws.

d. Discuss and consider direction on any role(s) of the Task Force and Board going forward regarding the sale or donation, and for honoring the Freestone legacy

It was the consensus of the Board that it would deliberate and decide after the property is sold the question of what to do with the sale proceeds, and that the Discernment Task Force need not be involved in that deliberation.

Treasurer Lisa offered to advise the Board on options, and their pros/cons, for where sale proceeds could be deposited and held while final disposition is being determined. David noted that outcomes from the Board's strategic planning work underway could inform priorities around the use of sale proceeds.

The only remaining potential area for continued Discernment Task Force work is planning and carrying out UUCB's honoring of the Freestone legacy; Kristen will contact Rev. Marcus for guidance on whether the task force would continue and help with that honoring.

It was the consensus of the Board to express appreciation to all the members of the Discernment Task Force for their work. Carla said she would write individual thank you notes on behalf of the Board if given a list of names and standout moments.

4. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Pollard, Secretary