

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, February 1, 2023**

**Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference**

**Minutes – Approved**

**ATTENDEES**

Voting members: Michael Armstrong, Bill Brown, Pier 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: Victoria Bowen, Barbara & Patrick Cullinane, Michael DeWitt, Karen Elliott, Anne Greenwood, Lynn Hammond, Ann Harlow, Carolyn James, Albert Kueffner, Lonnie Moseley, Larry Nagel, Dave Rosales, Marta Tobey, Thomas Tripp, Grace Ulp

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Beth Pollard, president, at 7:23\_p.m. Cordell Sloan did the chalice lighting and reading, Elaine read the Board covenant, Lenore read the land acknowledgement, and Dave read the Widening the Circle Vision Statement.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- Approve agenda
- Approve Board Meeting minutes of January 4, 2023
- Accept monthly Executive Director’s report
- Accept monthly Treasurer’s report
- Ratify Lawrence Lecture Committee composition: Katie Lipka, Christina Creveling, David Rosales, Jack Duggan, and Jim Acock, and announce that more members can be added.

**INFORMATION ITEM**

- a. Minister’s Report  
Rev. Michelle reported that there has been no new information from Sonoma County regarding Freestone. The plan is to let the Senior Planner know that we need whatever

information she has at this point. Rev. Michelle also reported that she is working on interim projects including an interim appraisal.

b. Ministerial Search Committee – Report for the Congregational Meeting

The board noted that the MSC’s report for the congregational meeting was a very impressive and comprehensive report. The board expressed tremendous appreciation for the MSC’s work.

c. Endowment Capital Projects Committee – Report for the Congregational Meeting

Tom Tripp provided a preview of the presentation that will be shared at the 2/12 congregational meeting. Below are a few highlights:

- Per resolutions passed in 2018 & 2019, the committee is authorized to withdraw \$758K from the endowment for capital projects, with review by a 5 member oversight committee.
- The committee has withdrawn \$625K from the endowment, and would have been authorized to withdraw the balance of \$133. However, there are limitations on how much can be withdrawn due to current market conditions.
- They have completed almost \$700K worth of work; however due to 3 large targeted donations, the committee has only had to spend about \$517K.
- They were authorized to replace the heaters but the Building & Grounds Committee is recommending using heat pumps which would require an electric service upgrade.
- There is also required work to be done on the private sewer later.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS/LISTENING**

a. Board or staff announcements, Board Listening Presence

- There will be a Congregational Meeting on 2/12. It will be held in the sanctuary and streamed on Zoom. Flaming Chalice Awards will be presented to Selene Fabiano, Alice Lemieux, Greg Lemieux, and Cordell Sloan. Childcare will be provided until 1:30PM unless there it is determined that the childcare should be extended.
- Voting for board candidates (Kay Fairwell, David Rosales, and Helen Tinsley-Jones) has begun and will continue until the start of the congregational meeting on 2/12. The link to the online ballot is in The Week Ahead and on the website.
- 2/11 Love Songs & Chocolates event will be held on 2/11 at 7PM.

b. Congregants who wish to speak to the Board on agenda items or other matters:

Ann Harlow asked what food is needed before the congregational meeting. Beth indicated that she did not anticipate a long meeting and that some snacks should be adequate.

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

- a. Annual Certification of Membership, and information/discussion on membership and certification

In her presentation on Membership, Lonnie Moseley described the 5 pillars of the welcome process: arrival, attending, connecting, belonging, and building beloved community. She noted that membership is managing both people entering UUCB through the physical doors, as well as through the “virtual door” through UUCB’s website.

Lonnie outlined the following 4 requests Membership is making of the board:

1. When a person become a member they would receive in the mail a physical letter signed by the Minister and the Board President.
2. Four times a year the Board reserves 5 minutes at a board meeting to welcome and acknowledge new members. The goal is to familiarize new members with how UUCB operates and build a sense of ownership in the church.
3. Each board member creates a 1-minute video stating why they chose to be on the board. Purpose: help convey that the board is made up of everyday church members.
4. Invite Membership to come to a Board meeting twice a year to provide updates and share their ideas.

Lonnie thanked Victoria Bowen for her tremendous organizational skills, her calm presence, and her ability to assess what people need.

Questions from board:

1. Do you need money for marketing?

Answer: Membership takes care of people once they get to UUCB. A separate need for marketing and publicity is needed. However, Membership will be coming to the Board with a request for money for swag for new members.

2. How many new members have we had in the past few years?

A; During the period of 1/1/2020-2/1/23 (2 of these years were primarily online services and activities) there were 82 newcomers and 41 new members (1 lives in Vancouver & 1 lives in Florida). Seventeen of these members joined since 9/1/22. Lonnie predicts that remote membership is likely to grow.

3. How many members do we have currently?

A: Per Lonnie, there are 330 members, 56 supporting friends, and 68 active attendees.

4. Was there a recent audit of the membership requirements? Is 330 the actual # of certified members?

A. Rev Michelle reported that a full membership review had not been done since the pandemic and during the past 3 years there have been many minister waivers for financial hardship. Recently a full membership review was done with a lot of care, compassion and grace. A list of people who hadn't made a contribution of record during the past 2 or 3 years was created. Members of the Membership and Pastoral Care committees looked at the list to determine who should be approached in what way. Some people will receive calls from pastoral care. Some people will receive a gentle inquiry letter acknowledging the pandemic has been difficult and asking what relationship they want with the church. A different letter will be sent to people who have moved out of the area to find out if they wish to continue their membership. Another group will receive personalized calls from Stewardship explaining how pledging helps UUCB and encouraging them to pledge. The process was human and comprehensive and included several different perspectives.

5. What draws people to UUCB?

A: Spiritual depth, connection, family ministry, community, and social justice. Reverend Michelle reported that the primary reasons people go to church across denominations are pastoral care, they like the messages there, and religious freedom. The primary reasons why people stay is friends and community. This is why Chalice Circles are so important.

6. How do people learn about UUCB?

A: Recommendations from friends & family, grandparents moving here to be near grandchildren, google searches on the internet, and UU's who have relocated to the East Bay. Per Rev Michelle, word of mouth is the main way people hear about UU congregations (i.e. talking about UU & inviting people to events/services).

7. How is the connections coordinator supporting you? Are you getting the support you need?

A: The Connections Coordinator provides valuable technical and behind-the-scenes support. We also need a Connections Committee to help link people with their interests.

### **Discussion**

We need to be honest about our membership.

Membership is not equated with contribution.

The board had no objections to pursuing Membership's four asks and will follow up with Membership.

Many thanks to Lonnie & Victoria for their longstanding commitment.

b. Mid-year budget/financial report

Tess provided the following information.

**Fiscal Year 7/1/21-6/30/22**

Had budgeted for a shortfall but actually had a surplus at the end of the year.

We were helped by the \$107K PPP loan and had savings on salary due to the loss of our Family Minister Catherine Boyle and the retirement of Alissa and Yao. Additional expenses for consultants and new computers.

Questions:

1. Was there a deficit in 21-22?

A: No. Even if you take out the PPP grant, we still ended above our projections.

2. Are the contributions to non-profits a past-through?

A: Yes.

3. What is bequest income and can it be predicted?

A: Bequest income comes from donations for member memorials, donations given in honor of someone else, and sometimes UUCB is included in someone's will. For budgeting, the average bequest income from the past 5 years. Another option would be to not budget for any bequest income and then have it as a bonus if it comes.

**Year-to-Date report for Current Year (FY22-23)**

On-track with paid pledges. Need \$180K more to fulfill the total pledge. They often see an uptick in pledges in the month of March. On track with community use revenue. Overall: we are \$108K positive going into the last half of the year and doing better financially than expected.

Q: Why are we over budget on building supplies & maintenance?

A. We spent 50 hours of staff time and \$2500 on the new Black Lives Matter sign. This was an unexpected cost and in line with our values. This also reflects monies spent on deferred maintenance projects, but the impact to the general fund is offset by funds from temporarily restricted and earmarked accounts.

Board Comments:

- We now have good data that is organized in a way that we can more easily understand. This will make it easier for all of us who are involved in church finances to have a grasp on how we're raising & spending money.
- Big appreciation to the Finance Committee
- Thanks to Larry Nagel for helping us see that UUCB needed a new accounting firm.

**BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBER/LIAISON REPORTS**

a. Stewardship Committee

Please pledge early! If you can increase your pledge, please do.

b. Other reports from Board Liaisons/Board members of Board committees

There will be a special Black History service on 2/19 with special music and spoken word, followed by special food.

Music Committee. Love Songs & Chocolates on 2/11 – tuneful romance & delectable desserts

Family Ministry 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade OWL for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders has started with 13 youth, including some from other congregations. Youth groups are continuing to meet. Family Ministry is looking for more childcare workers to address the childcare shortage. Coming of Age youth have started meeting with their mentors.

Program Council – There are 85 distinct groups. Need a process for documenting what each group does so that it becomes part of our institutional knowledge. It would be good to have information about the groups online to increase engagement and lower the barriers to volunteering.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

Gratitude to outgoing Board Members Dave Roberts, Elaine Miller, and Treasurer Lenore Ralston for their wonderful service. There will be an official appreciation at the 2/12 Congregational Meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

We adjourned at 9:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Selene Fabiano, Secretary

## **UPCOMING EVENTS AND BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

February Listening Presence: Randall  
March Listening Presence: \_\_\_\_\_  
March Beacon (due February 15): Helen  
Next Board Meeting: 3/1/23