

Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana Champaign  
309 W Green Street, Urbana, Illinois

Board of Trustees Combined Study Session and Business Meeting Minutes  
**January 25, 2022 (6:30-8:30 pm)**  
via Zoom

**In attendance:** David Gross, Jody Hanger, Becky Densmore, Rev. KB, Jennifer Ellis, Lan Richart, Penné Beckett, Mona Shannon joined the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 6:38 p.m.

**Chalice Lighting/Ministerial Offering** - Rev. KB

In a time of uncertainty, when everything around us is changing constantly and the landscapes of our world are filled with challenges and uncertainty—

We light our chalice to remind ourselves of our grounding in our faith.

In the midst of it all, we wrap ourselves in the warm light of a familiar flame,  
a reminder of the strength that emerges when we come together in community.

May this chalice flame we now kindle remind us throughout our meeting of our ministry,  
our mission and our need for one another.

Rev. KB had the BOT think of one word or phrase to positively describe each other; these were typed into the Zoom chat.

The agenda for the evening was finalized with no changes.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- The Board received reports from the Consulting Minister, the Associate Minister of Congregational Life, the Director of Congregational Administration, the Consulting Minister for Religious Exploration and Engagement, and the Coordinator of Religious Exploration and Engagement.
- The Board received minutes from the 12/14/21 BOT Business Meeting.

Discussion: Densmore had a conversation with Rev. KB about her time; KB will attend the beginning of BOT meetings, but then sign off. She will be on call - ready to re engage if needed.

The consent agenda was accepted unanimously without revision.

**ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE**

- Consulting Lead Minister Update - Rev. KB
    - nothing to add from written report
  - Treasurer's Report for Monthly Financials for November and December 2021- Lan Richart
- Resources:

[Summary Report NOVEMBER  
NOVEMBER Financials.xlsx](#)  
[Summary Report DECEMBER  
DECEMBER Financials.xlsx](#)

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- September, October, November monthly incomes were all down a bit with an average of \$31,870; \$46,397 is the budgeted monthly average; expenses were about what was budgeted
- December a little better - the actual income of \$43,321 was closer to the budgeted income; expenses were higher than average
- YTD (through December 31, 2021) our income was \$229,523, 45.5% of what we budgeted at 50% through the year
  - if we follow this trend, we will end up 9% down by the end of the year (June 30, 2022)
- So far this year, our income is down substantially; expenses are down a little as well
- Net income is -\$11,807 through December 31 (including income from the general trust, various setasides and grant funds)
- Mortgage - because of the recent paydown donations, we won't get hard hit by balloon payment
- There is about \$8900 left in the Associate Minister setaside
- Lan is still sorting out donations for December partner church - it seems that they will be little bit down from the past
- \$5183.43 went to Emily McKown's scholarship fund
- The church currently has \$190,452 total assets, \$89,002 of those are in unrestricted funds
- Our liabilities include \$23,887 in mortgage and \$508 for employee pension contributions

**Discussion:**

- Ellis - Did the mortgage donations have a negative effect on people fulfilling their pledges?
- Richart - the donations were off budget, and there were a small number of people who contributed; doesn't think it affected giving. Thinks that the COVID doldrums are the problem; Mona Shannon has a good sense of this - who has paid their pledges, what we are still expecting.
- Ellis - nonprofits usually see bump in December - was surprised that church didn't have more of one.
- Densmore - the UUCUC dashboard has patterns and trends of giving now (thanks to Brian Franklin); no real monthly trend, easier to see per quarter
- KB - met with Mona Shannon - the number of outstanding pledges is pretty small; Shannon working with 2-3 larger pledges; some have said that they will have to wait until spring to fulfill their pledge,

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **Action/Discussion:** Accessibility Task Force
  - Follow up from December 2021 Study Session: Accessibility Task Force is looking for guidance on its next steps. Currently, we have received a \$9100 proposal for the professional review to make our church home accessible. At this point, with the elevette exhausting the facilities budget and \$0 allocated for this work, the team would appreciate guidance from the BoT as to where they should move toward at this point.

**DRAFT MOTION:** The Board of Trustees approves a motion to enter into a professional agreement with Reifsteck Reid under the terms outlined in their September 22, 2021 proposal to conduct a Limited Facility Study of church accessibility for an amount of \$9,100. Based upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees further directs the Treasurer to pay for these services with funds from the Operating Checking currently designated as the Accessibility Fund.

Resource: Church Facilities Task Force Approved Motion (July 2021)

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- Based upon information and recommendations from individuals who are providing oversight and building management, the board establishes a Church Facilities Taskforce to provide recommendations for immediate critical needs (elevator and building monitoring) in the short term and provide a preliminary report to the board by November 1, 2021. In the long term, the task force will provide an accessibility study and plan.

Resource: [Reifsteck Reid Letter](#)

Richart moved to accept the motion as written; Gross seconded.

**Discussion:**

- Richart - he and Frye met with the Finance Comm and they made the recommendation to use the Accessibility Fund to pay for the proposal from Reifsteck Reid
- McDermott - the church's procurement policy states that three different quotes be presented to the BOT for large purchases like this
- Gross- The policy does not apply because this is a proposal for professional services, not a bid for actual work; church has prior history of working with this firm
- KB - did her own research and this firm has the best reviews for working with older buildings and churches
- Ellis - cited the tremendous service by Sally (and David) on accessibility and the listening session after the service
  - lots of positive energy from attendees about building renovations and fundraising
  - is the scope of this proposal too limited and specific, should we be thinking bigger and broader?
- Gross - scope is limited but didn't think more money was available; this is just a start. Other churches have had successful capital fund drive during the pandemic - this is just a toe in the water so that we can get some more specific numbers on ramps, etc.
- KB - spend this money and use it to get some options on staying or moving; it will help us get the info need to make decision on staying or finding a new home
- McDermott - the Accessibility Committee still thinks this is the best way to go
- Densmore - the clear message from the meeting after the accessibility service was to find the money for this proposal.

The vote was unanimous; the motion to use the Accessibility Fund to pay for the Reifsteck Reid limited facility study passed.

- **Action/Discussion:** Elevette Repair

**MOTION:** Based on the recommendations of the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees directs the Treasurer to pay for the repair of the Elevette as outlined in the October 8, 2021 Elevator Repair Proposal submitted by Kone Inc. in the amount of \$11,430, by first using any funds that might be made available through a grant request to the Victor Hoerst Elderly Services Trust, then paying the remaining balance with funds currently in the Property Set Aside account in PNC Bank.

Resource: Per Tim Voelker:

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- The elevette inspection results ended in positive results (1.18.22) and now the next steps include submitting our application for certification to the Fire Marshall. However before the application is completed, Tim is working with KONE as the elevette “fix” seems unreliable at best (1.19.22).

Background: Richart

- Frye and Richart met and then brought ideas to Finance Committee to discuss; they have approached the VAHEST Trustees for grant, and the amount not covered by grant would come from the property setaside (there is about 10K in it right now).

Richart moved to accept motion as written; Beckett seconded.

**Discussion:**

- McDermott - we are trying to use off-budget money for repair?
- Richart - the maintenance fund is over budget, so yes, looking for off-budget ways to pay for repair
- Richart - Finance Committee would submit request for VAHEST funds
- Ellis - we can hold money until elevette is really fixed even if we pass motion about how to find money?
- Richart - ½ has been paid from the maintenance budget; second half won't be paid until it's fixed to our satisfaction
- Richart - reminded BOT that this situation is like the High St. house demolition with the money coming from a setaside earmarked for this purpose
- McDermott - Thank you to Lan, Jerry, and Mona (Shannon)!

Motion to direct Treasurer to pay for elevette repairs as outlined in the motion above passes unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Action/Discussion:** Commitment to Extend Rev. Sally's Agreement

**MOTION:** The Board commits its desire and intention to renew Rev. Sally Fritsche's Letter of Agreement, for a period of time to be determined, with details to be finalized pending the outcome of the generosity drive and any other factors that may arise.

Resource: Approved through September 1, 2022 [Rev. Fritsche Letter of Agreement](#)

McDermott moved to accept motion as written; Ellis seconded.

**Discussion:**

- Densmore - spoke with Rev. Fritsche
  - Rev. Fritsche stepped up to 75% time because Rev. Caplow was ill and needed her to do so
  - Densmore let her know about the budget numbers and that we are challenged to keep her at 75%
  - Rev. Fritsche said this was not a deal breaker, but she would need to step back on worship; loves being at 75% but willing to step back
  - Densmore asked if her position had changed about being Lead Minister;

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- Rev. Fritsche is happy where she is now and wants to continue to grow in her Associate role; she may change her mind after interim process is complete

The motion to commit to the extension of Rev. Sally Fritsche's contract carries unanimously.

- **Action/Discussion:** Consulting Lead Minister Housing Allowance

**MOTION:** The Board of Trustees affirms Rev. Karen Bush's desire to include the amount of \$30,000.00 to be reported to the IRS as a housing allowance and respectfully requests the Treasurer to make the necessary adjustments to the budget to accommodate this allocation.

Gross moved to accept the motion as written; Beckett seconded.

**Discussion:**

- Richart - this doesn't change her overall compensation; just changes how it is split
- Ellis - does KB fall into the UUA Ordained Commissioned Licensed Minister category? (is she eligible for the housing allowance)
- Densmore - yes, KB fits into this category

Motion to allow adjustment to KB's housing allowance carries unanimously.

- **Action/Discussion:** Planned Giving and Trust Fund Administrator Constitution and Bylaws Proposal
  - Motions to create new funds of the Unitarian Universalist Trust Fund

Resource: [PowerPoint Presentation from 1.11.22 Study Session](#)

**MOTION:** The Capital Fund - The board affirms the Finance Committee's recommendations to advance to the congregation the following:

- The Congregation hereby creates the Capital Fund, a specific fund of the Unitarian Universalist Trust Fund. The Capital Fund will supplement capital campaigns approved by the congregation. Prior to approval by the congregation, the Board of Trustees may use these funds to evaluate and plan campaigns under review. Monies from this fund can be spent outside of the customary operating budget.

Richart moved to accept the motion as written; Ellis seconded.

NOTE: Mona Shannon joined the meeting at this time to inform the BOT's discussion.

**Discussion:**

- McDermott - to clarify, the BOT may use funds for evaluation and for expenses related to planning campaigns (capital fund drives)?
- Shannon - that is correct - the money is not for a dishwasher (e.g.), but for architects, stewardship leaders, etc.

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Motion to affirm the Finance Committee's recommendation to advance to the congregation the establishment of a Capital Fund carries unanimously.

**MOTION:** Unrestricted Bequests Funds - The Finance Committee recommends the board take action this spring on the following:

- The Board of Trustees hereby creates the Unrestricted Bequests Fund. This fund temporarily holds monies from Bequests while the Board identifies the congregation's top priorities. These monies may be distributed under Article XV, Section 7 of the Bylaws or by the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting.

Resource: [Motions Requested by Finance Committee](#)

Ellis moved to accept motion as written; Gross seconded.

**Discussion:**

- Densmore - will help alleviate angst about where to put money when we get a large unrestricted gift such as Nan Erlich's
- McDermott - will the Nan Erlich funds be transferred into it once it's created?
- Richart - some Erlich funds are to be moved into the permanent trust and some left in restricted
- Shannon - clarified that the proposed fund would be empty now, the Erlich money won't be put into it because we've already dealt with it; it is for future use so that unrestricted gifts can be placed there and can make decisions about it later

Motion to create the Unrestricted Bequests fund carries unanimously.

**MOTION:** The board moves to advance Article XV of UUCUC Bylaws as modified by the Finance Committee to the congregation at its next meeting.

Resource: [Article XV Amemendment](#) as submitted by Finance Committee

Beckett moved to accept motion as written; Richart seconded.

**Discussion:**

- Densmore - who decides the long term priorities?
- Shannon - the "how" is not usually in the Bylaws; intent rather than process is the idea
- McDermott - will the Fin Comm support with informational sessions?
- Shannon - yes, will announce in Enews, hold listening sessions, etc., communication with benefactors who she knows have language in their estate planning documents

Motion to advance the amendment to Article XV of the UUCUC Bylaws carries unanimously.

**MOTION:** The board affirms the Finance Committee's recommendation to strike Article V, Section 3e of the Constitution and to advance this to the congregation for action at its next meeting.

Resource: [Article XV Amemendment](#) as submitted by Finance Committee

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McDermott moved to accept motion as written; Ellis seconded.

A friendly amendment to add Article V to the motion was accepted.

The vote is unanimous; the motion to affirm the Finance Committee's recommendation to strike Article V, Section 3e and to advance this motion to the congregation at its next meeting carries.

#### **GRATITUDE PRACTICE**

- Card Shower Recipients
  - Mona and Kathy for their efforts on gift giving policies
  - Joe Omo-Osagie for his frank conversation on race
  - Sally Fritsche - flexibility and graciousness

#### **NEWS FROM THE FIELD**

- Accessibility (Church Facilities) Task Force - David Gross
  - no further report
- Church Governance Task Force - Brian McDermott
  - met twice; narrowed down reading; collecting org charts from other UU churches
- Committee Council - Penné Beckett
  - getting ready to send out email for March 5 meeting; will include new Membership Coordinator in invite; Hanger to take notes
- Covid Advisory Task Force - Brian McDermott
  - met in early January to review new guidelines; planning to stay the course; the task force is going into ad hoc status - will be available whenever staff or BOT needs advice or CUPHD makes changes to meeting in person
- Finance Committee - Lan Richart
  - met last week; discussion around projected shortfall; need to talk about early stage budget recommendations
- BoT Special Projects - Jennifer Ellis
  - nothing to report
- Immigration Justice Task Force - Lan Richart
  - met recently with discussion with Lisa Wilson from the Refugee Center - we are a trusted party - she knows that we are able host an Afghan family again
- Personnel - David Gross
  - Committee is available to run what-if scenarios re: new positions (Property Manager)
- Racial Justice Project - Jerry Frye
  - Jerry unable to attend BOT meeting
- Strategic Planning Taskforce - Becky Densmore
  - Karen Folk, Jenny Hunt, Becky Densmore - looking ahead to preparing an annual report, Karen Folk taking the lead
- Other
  - Ellis - could the staff reports include links to strategic plan when there is a reference? Just to help keep it more front and center when BOT is reading their reports

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**ACTION ITEMS**

- Review New
  - Densmore to ask Brian Franklin to have staff add links to strategic plan
- Review Old
  - Frye and Richart will come up with a plan for covering the elevelte repair costs and provide guidance for appropriate BoT action (DONE)
  - Richart to speak with the Finance Committee about the \$9100 for an architectural consultation - any funds in setaside? (DONE)
  - KB will facilitate a virtual introduction between Wendy Graves and Bob Devine (DONE) (contractor) [ Bob retired 3 yrs ago- i did some light research of other options in town and found one who specializes in churches– good reviews– sent info to Wendy- turns out it's the same company that the church had been working with- – KB]
  - McDermott will share news about elevelte motion and approval of new COVID guidelines with COVID Task Force (DONE)
  - Ellis will see about sending a plant or flowers to Rev. Caplow on January 3 (in progress - gift card to nursery - we will Venmo to her )
  - Board will make a covenant with KB about working with her on development (In progress - on calendar for February)
  - Richart will let Board know how much was raised during December for Partner Church and make agenda item if needed (in progress- \$1700 so far)
  - KB will let Sally know about Board's decision re: special UU Utility Fund collection and get with Brian Franklin to get it working (DONE)
  - Richart - to find what happened to the PPP money, came in 1 1.2 fiscal years ago bumped us up to new level (details to come later)
- Review Ongoing/In Progress
  - All Board members will write card shower cards
  - Jody will send out the addresses for card shower recipients
- FUTURE DATES:
  - a) Study Session with Nominating Committee to review smaller BoT size and recommendations for new board 22 - 23 (February 8, 2022)
  - b) Study Session with UUA on board development and future planning (February 21, 2022)
  - c) Study Session with COSM to resolve issue surrounding Mediation Committee (March 8, 2022)

Meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.