

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

10 Dec 2024 6:00-8:00 p.m. [Zoom link](#)

Duties: Readings-*Ben*; Timekeeper-*Kay*; Blog-*Will*; Proc.& Coll. Lib. leader-*All*; Recorder-*Melissa*

Present: Mara Sprain, Kay Aler-Maida, Juli Aultshul, Ben Fleming, Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson, Phil Hammond, Melissa Himelein (Note: Although Susan Andrew, Will Jernigan, and Monica Youngman were not present, each weighed in with comments about agenda items, and these are incorporated in the minutes)

Guests: Matt Farris, T Kay Browning (interns for 2024-2025); Charlie Marks (shadowing Matt)

| Start | Item | Details |
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| 6:00 | Call to order | The meeting was called to order on zoom by Mara at 6:03 pm. |
| 6:03 | Opening words & chalice lighting | Ben provided opening words. |
| 6:05 | Go-around | We discussed which of the new Article II values (JET-PIG) would be most challenging for us personally, and why. |
| 6:10 | Consent agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November meeting minutes • Q'Pasa (Rev. Claudia's report) • Confirmation of the Ministry & Vision Task Force: Kay Aler-Maida (chair), Gene Lambirth, Margaret McAlister, Kathrine Murphy, Gina Phairas, Rev. Audette (staff) |
| 6:15 | Ministry report | Rev. Audette provided an oral report including the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This has been a very busy season • Most UUCA activities are now back to their usual pace, with the November-December calendar looking quite similar to those months in previous years. We will be back to two services in January; remember that this date was set during the hurricane recovery and wasn't possible to alter because faith formation classes have to be organized months in advance • There is a holiday luncheon for staff coming up this week • New member orientation: Although >25 people attended the event, twice that number have expressed interest. Seven people already officially joined UUCA, signing the book. • Givens: Our interns presented at Givens recently. Rev. Audette visits there once/month and will be there on MLK/Inauguration Day for a presentation. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rev. Audette will be leading another class in 2025, this one based around the book, <i>On Freedom</i>, by Yale historian Timothy Snyder. ● Rev. Audette will be convening a group of 50 UU colleagues tomorrow (Dec. 11) about how to frame moral language and public conversation around UU values. This work responds to the religious right's domination of public discourse about religion, hoping to offer a more progressive mindset of moral philosophy. ● Rev. Claudia will be stepping down from her position on the Board of Directors of UU Justice NC in January, and Rev. Audette will be joining the Board. |
| 6:25 | Giving Tree update | <p>Juli reported on progress with the Giving Tree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● QR codes have proved to be challenging, especially for older folks. ● Jerry McLellan will do a presentation about the Giving Tree at Givens. ● Over \$11,000 has been donated so far! ● Although the funds raised will be part of the general fund, Juli observed that congregants appreciate the idea of donating for specific items. It's important to remember in talking with people that they understand that the idea of identifying the items is in part a means of helping provide a sense of what things cost in real dollars as opposed to being set aside specifically for those items. ● As donations come in, we will track what people list as the items they are donating for, information that will be helpful in the AGD. ● We still need volunteers for the last Sunday in December (both for announcement and post-service). Susan (per post-meeting email) agreed to take this shift. |
| 6:35 | Budget information | <p>We reviewed and discussed the year-to-date report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Note that the "Actual Final 2023-2024" column shows a deficit that is smaller than was anticipated, though still significant. ● This report summarizes expenditures in 2024 through the end of October, which is one-third of the church year. It's important to remember that month-by-month estimates are difficult to interpret, because items may be paid in lump sums so are not represented throughout the year; in addition, the hurricane affected expenses in October. So while expenditures are down relative to this time last year, this may be due in part to these factors and should not be viewed as a sign of lessened overall expenses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the same time, Rev. Audette noted that the new administrator (David McKaig) was able to put some |

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| | | <p>cost-saving measures into place that will prove advantageous to the 2024-2025 budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly reports are now being generated. ○ It is too early to tell if the \$108K deficit for 2024-2025 is realistic. Early in 2025 will be a better time to judge, but even then, there will be things we don't know yet. ● Will asked (via pre-meeting email) when we might expect to have a better estimate on the impacts of the hurricane on this year's pledged income? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will hopefully know trends during the next few months, e.g., if there are differences in giving due to the hurricane. ○ However, this is a thorny issue in our congregation, as there are apparently a number of pledges that typically come in after the fiscal year ends. |
| 6:50 | Fundraising Discussion Part 1: "Permission to Play" | <p>Since we're appointing a new fundraising team (see part 2 of this agenda item), it's a good time to take stock of our current policies on fundraising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Permission to play" is a term used to try different strategies without officially changing policies. We discussed what changes we might experiment with in the next six months (January through June, 2025) to improve our existing fundraising policy. ● One persistent challenge with our current policy is that special requests for fundraising events/activities are approved by the Executive, which puts the Executive in an awkward position. Recent practice has been not to approve special project fundraising (i.e., projects not accounted for in the general budget), but the youth program (YRUU) has been an exception to this practice. There is no funding in the general budget for the youth program, and consequently their fundraising has traditionally been allowed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monica noted (per pre-meeting email) that the YRUU should not be treated differently because this creates inequities when other groups request to fundraise. She suggested adding a line item in the general budget in the future for YRUU, and then any fundraising activities in which they engage would go toward the general budget. ○ Other Board members expressed their support for this idea. ● Kay suggested that the Board could undertake a review of the fundraising document (last updated in 2018). In the meantime, we could experiment with a change in policy (per "permission to play"). |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We voted and unanimously approved the following change to the current fundraising policy: Fundraising for projects not already part of the general fund will not be approved without an application to the UUCA Board of Trustees a minimum of 60 days prior to the requested activity/event. Because youth fundraising in 2024-2025 is already approved (grandfathered in), it will be continued as usual during this fiscal year. ● We will seek to add youth fundraising to the general budget in 2025-2026. |
| 7:30 | Fundraising Discussion Part 2: FUNraising Team | <p>The Leadership Development Committee provided names and bios for four members of the new FUNraising Team. We agreed that the slate is excellent and unanimously approved their selection. We also added one additional name, Michelle Carello, a new UUCA member who works in fundraising and offered her expertise.</p> <p>We discussed the official charge to this committee and the term of service, noting that because the giving capacity of UUCA members is already at its limit, it will be important for this team to tap external/community sources for new fundraising activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The FUNraising Team will plan fundraising events or activities that are primarily outward-facing for the benefit of the general fund of UUCA. ● The new team will initially be viewed as a pilot project with a term of service of 6 months (Jan 1-June 30, 2025). Our hope is that the group will transition into a permanent committee, with some pilot team members willing to extend their terms of service. ● A motion to accept this charge and term of service was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. |
| 7:40 | Executive session, closing, adjournment | <p>Following a brief executive session discussion, we jointly undertook our process/collective liberation review, agreeing to follow this process in the future. Two items that arose during this discussion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A desire to reschedule the Board retreat (or at least a shortened version of it) ● The need for a work session or discussion opportunity for Board members in January |