

# First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

Board of Trustees May Meeting Minutes  
May 12, 2020

Present: Chris Aiken, Mark Bender, Mark Bishop, Jane Cliff, Dianna Dentino (recording secretary), Jeremy Koenen, Mark Miller, Jane Peterson, Melinda Vernon. Also present: Noreen Gilbertsen, Jean Johnson (Directory of Administration), Reverend Jennifer Nordstrom (Senior Minister)

**The meeting was held via video conferencing (Zoom) due to COVID-19 concerns and was called to order at 6:03 PM by Mark Bender**

## 1. Review/Consent Agenda (Mark Bender)

- Minutes of mini-BOT April 28, 2020 meeting.
- Minutes of full BOT April 28, 2020 meeting: suggested general statement comparing 2019-20 to 2020-21 budgeted expenditures.
- No monthly staff changes noted.

***Motion to accept the consent agenda: (Mark Bishop/Melinda); passed unanimously.***

## 2. FUSM 2020 - 2021 Budget (Noreen Gilbertsen/Jean Johnson)

The 2020-21 FUSM budget was developed using a predictive model. The only major change from last month's budget presentation was moving the \$118,000 PPP loan received under the CARES Act from the 2019-20 church year (CY) to the 2020-21 CY.

Additional items discussed included: status of pledges (lower); Journey to Membership budget (lower); HR expenses (flat); investment income (lower); bequests (generous); more realistic projections for Feast for Funds; RE fees (lower); apartment income (consistent); extra costs associated with the UU General Assembly (GA) to be in MKE June 2021, since local UU Congregations typically host a booth.

The current 2020-21 CY budget reflects a reasonable and accurate picture of expenditures and receivables and appears to be in compliance with FUSM's policies & guidelines.

It was noted that the financial condition report that reflects a consistent deficit. Pledges need to increase by 6% each year for the next 8 years for FUSM to become a sustainable congregation.

The BOT will revisit the 2020-21 CY budget in December & January and make any needed adjustments.

***Motion to accept the budget as being compliant with FUSM Policy 4.4 Financial Planning & Budgeting: (Mark Bishop/Jane Cliff); passed unanimously.***

## 3. Annual Meeting Final Prep (Mark Bishop)

A successful dry-run for the FUSM annual meeting was conducted on 5/11/20. Congregational attendance and/or participation may be challenging for some due to the required voting component and the virtual nature of the annual meeting. Members will have to 'leave ZOOM' or use another device to vote. Expect meeting to last about 1 hour 40 minutes.

Congregational president Mark Bishop, Rev. Dena & Rev. Jennifer will be the main speakers.

Mark Bishop will present updates on: 1) policy governance monitoring & compliance; 2) adding a youth liaison to the BOT; 3) hosting the UU GA in MKE, June 2021; 4) BOT approval of FUSM investment policy; 5) policy and procedures for voting on sponsoring Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson's ordination.

Mark Bishop also noted how fortuitous it was that previous FUSM BOTs had the foresight to adopt a policy governance model. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, this model allowed FUSM staff to respond nimbly to changing conditions without having to seek BOT approval. Applying and receiving CARES Act PPP funds demonstrates one benefit of adopting such a model. The leadership and staff deserve high praise for their rapid and seamless transition to keep our beloved community (virtually) connected during these unprecedented times.

Rev. Dena will focus on pastoral care.

Rev. Jennifer will focus on worship; her vision for fall 2020, and the impact of and approaches to dealing with COVID-19 in the coming year.

Current and new FUSM BOT members will meet briefly via ZOOM for immediately following the annual meeting.

#### **4. Sr. Minister's Report (Rev. Jennifer)**

First Church will follow a phase planned return for next CY services, relying on the best science and advice of public health officials relative to the Covid-19 pandemic. We will follow guidance of the UUA, as well as follow criteria in the Badger Bounce Back Plan. Health and safety of the congregational and the community are our top priority and we will proceed with caution because of our values for human life. Expect to have variation from a normal church year.

Rev. Jennifer also touched on: 1) a new "phone pals" initiative to reach out to members while we aren't gathering in person due to Covid-19; 2) pledge fulfillment status; 3) current online Journey to Membership class; 4) online viewer numbers for virtual worship services; 5) summer service pulpit guest remarks will be pre-recorded.

#### **5. Other Business**

- All expressed thanks and farewell to BOT members ending their terms--Mark Bishop, Chris Aiken & Jeremy Koenen.
- August FUSM BOT retreat date and location TBD; may be a virtual event.

***Meeting adjourned at 7:57p.m. CT (Chris/Jeremy); passed unanimously.***

