

**First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee  
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting  
August 25, 2020**

**FINAL**

**Present:** Mark Bender, President; Jane Cliff, Vice President; Mike Hogan, Secretary; Dianna Dentino, Melinda Vernon, Mark Miller (recording secretary), Jane Peterson, Rollie Hanson, Ben LeFort. **Also present:** Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom (senior minister), Noreen Gilbertsen and Jean Johnson.

**The meeting was conducted via videoconferencing (Zoom) due to COVID-19 concerns, and was called to order at 6:02 p.m. CT by Mark Bender.**

**1. Consent Agenda (Mark Bender)**

- Minutes of May BOT Mtg
- Minutes of Post-Annual Mtg BOT Mtg
- Renewal of Covenants
- General Assembly Report

Miller wondered about the Board Covenant having last year's signatures that includes 3 prior board members and not the new board members. Bender said that we pulled it forward and cannot sign it as we did last year because of the pandemic.

Miller mentioned the "energy" in the GA report and that they had good ideas for the upcoming GA, especially if it is online.

***Motion to approve the consent agenda: (Hogan/LeFort); passed unanimously.***

**2. Year-End Financial Report (Noreen Gilbertsen)**

- Income: Biggest income is from pledges. Pledge fulfillment at 98% (good). Total contributions are 5% below budget. Activity income down 21%. Investment income up 25% from budget. Apartment income 39% over budget. Total income down about 4% below budget.
- Expenses: Total expenses 5% below budget (good). Capital maintenance was up 51% above budget because of a project that was billed in this church year rather than last.
- Net: -16% Income net of operations  
Miller: confirmed that this is not -16% of budget but just "net"  
Hanson: asked about the capital maintenance
- Extraordinary income: \$7,000 gain on investments  
Miller: what impact of not spending some expense money from programs? Partially because we couldn't meet in person. Mainly to do with the pandemic.
- 5% decrease in total assets from last year. This is mostly to do with planned spending and not stock market fluctuation.  
Doreen explained last year's investment fluctuations in the UU Common Endowment. We ended positively. Hogan: Asked about the PPP loan. Associated bank is in no hurry to reconcile this because new rules and information continues to dribble in from the U.S. Government.
- Jean Johnson provided 2 reports: Pledge fulfillment, and the Monthly Income Summary.

- We received an anonymous \$25k memorial contribution. The memorial was for Bill & Gladys Fernholz.  
Bender asked about restricted funds. Jean clarified where that appears. He also asked about the format of the report where pledges from the prior year appear. Jennifer asked if the board would like this Summary report each month. Bender agreed that it would be good to have during the pandemic. Hogan asked about the variations in pledge income. Jean says it's very unpredictable. He asked about bequests without restrictions and what our policy is on where those funds go. Jean says that we do have a policy. Jennifer said that it is an operation policy, not a board limitation.

***(No vote. This financial information was only to inform.)***

### **3. Monitoring Limitation 4.4 Financial Planning & Budgeting (Bender)**

Bender walked through 4.4 language, including limitations. Based on the prior discussion, we saw that compliance was met.

(See next item for motion)

### **4. Monitoring Limitation 4.5 Financial Condition (Bender)**

Bender walked through 4.4 language, including limitations. Based on the prior discussion, we saw that compliance was met.

***Motion to determine compliance for 4.4 and 4.5: (Hanson/Cliff); passed unanimously.***

### **5. Monitoring Limitation 4.7 (Continuous Operations) (Rev. Jennifer)**

Bender shared Jennifer's interpretation of the limitation.

***Motion to determine compliance: (Vernon/Hogan); passed unanimously***

### **6. Congregational Sponsorship Procedure (Bender)**

Bender gave background for approving these. This has to do with sponsoring those going into the ministry. Jennifer said that all the ministers contributed, included Kimberlee, and cut outdated elements and made it a little more streamlined. Cliff pointed out some simple word changes. An acronym (MFC) needed to be better linked to its full term. Would like to change "good" Unitarian Minister to another word. Jennifer decided to strike the adjective altogether. Cliff mentioned the specific requirements needed from prospective ministers. Jennifer said that that changes too much to list here.

***Motion to approve: (Miller/Vernon); passed unanimously.***

### **7. Limitation 4.3 Interpretation (Rev. Jennifer)**

Jennifer explained the interpretation which gives all employees another week of vacation for the 20-21 year. Miller wondered if this needed to be here since its not violating the limitations. Jennifer agreed and it could be done in the personnel policy and not brought to the board, but felt that it was better to bring to the board to test for reasonableness. Bender talked it through using Jennifer's logic. Hanson felt it was a good gesture. Bender felt that because of freezing salaries this gesture could support our intent. (More comments and discussion followed) Vernon felt that it should be to reward the extra work and effort during COVID, not because of salary freezes.

***Motion to determine reasonableness: (LeFort/Hanson); passed unanimously.***

## **8. Senior Minister's Report**

Jennifer wanted to mention the staff retreat last week, which was not included in the report. COVID goals were updated. Three of the goals reflected Ends influenced by COVID. The other goals mirrored some of the other Ends. Learned about some online tools to assist with making connections. Continuing to make the digital transition. Jean & Jennifer are working on a scheme for hiring a staff person for one year as an "outreach" coordinator to do digital communications to promote our events to our congregation and beyond the congregation for 10 hours/week. And 10 hours/week on social justice. This saves \$20k and combines two unfilled jobs of ours. Lynn is working on moving people from visitor to member in the online world. We had our first online memorial service. It was for Joan Moore. Kimberlee is moving in a new direction for RE for online learning and working with parents about that. She is also working on how to work with new parents. Feast for Funds is trying to figure out how to work within the pandemic situation. Jennifer participated in other protest activities, including one in Kenosha.

## **9. Other Business (Mark Bishop)**

Vernon: do we have a list for what board member is doing what activities? Bender: one has recently been added to the BoT folder. Vernon also asked Jennifer if the GA convention will be virtual. Jennifer said that they are deciding that in September. Bender will be providing the sub-committee on the survey information that he has. Bender will re-start the board self-evaluation. If any issues with Dropbox, contact Bender. Bender will provide housekeeping for the Dropbox folders. Kudos given to Bender on the new folder arrangement. Mike asked about taking minutes and when he will receive the draft.

***Meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m. CT (Hogan/unknown); Passed unanimously.***

***Next meeting: September 22, 2020; Chair: Cliff, Minutes/Chanticleer article: LeFort; Words: Hanson***