

**First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee  
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting  
October 27, 2020**

**Present:** Mark Bender, President; Jane Cliff, Vice President; Mike Hogan, Secretary (Recording Secretary); Dianna Dentino, Melinda Vernon, Mark Miller, Rollie Hanson, Ben LeFort; Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom (Senior Minister); Jean Johnson; Noreen Gilbertsen. Absent: Jane Peterson

**The meeting was conducted via videoconferencing (Zoom) due to COVID-19 concerns, and was called to order at 6:08 p.m. CT by Mark Bender (Chair).**

**1.Q1 Financial Review (Noreen Gilbertsen, Jean Johnson)**

- Financial report as submitted in advance was presented by Jean and Noreen
- Some highlights: Despite the loss of activity income, the church had a good first quarter with pledge payments are 6% ahead of projections. Investments continue to perform well and expenses have been below projections.
- Liabilities a line item was added for sabbatical accrual.

**Motion to accept report as evidence of compliance with limitation to BOT policy 4.5 (Hansen/Vernon); passed unanimously.**

**2. Review/Consent Agenda (Jane C.)**

- **Minutes of Sept 2020 BOT Mtg**
  - No changes
- **Monthly Staff Change report**
  - None

**Motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted (Cliff/Bender); passed unanimously.**

**3. YRUU Budget**

- No budget submitted. Item moved to 11.2020 BOT mtg

**4. Congregational Survey Sub-Team Update (Jane C., Ben, Rollie)**

- There has been a disappointing response rate even with the deadline being extended to November 1, with only 68 responses to date compared to over 150 last year. Discussion to extend the submission date to 11.22.2020
- E-announcements will be modified to reflect new deadline.

## 5. Choose Democracy Preparedness (Rev. Jennifer)

- A “Defending Democracy” team was voted into existence by the Social Justice Council at their meeting Oct 21.
- In keeping with the UU fifth principle, and in light of threats being made against the current election and democracy in general, this work will:

1) Help members to prepare emotionally

2) Help members to frame this work of faith practice as Defending Democracy.

- The BOT issue: is this in compliance with our limitations? BOT reviewed limitations compliance document submitted by Rev. Jennifer, particularly Principle 5: Right of Conscience.

- There was discussion of risk to the church and how we know if FUSM congregation will support the process Rev. Jennifer noted that: 1) during the training we will encourage all participants to do an assessment of personal risk; 2) there is a high level of active engagement and over 100 members enrolled in the Defending Democracy training. She also asked BOT members to consider that in case of emergency, we may need to open FUSM as a sanctuary. The point was made that this is a powerful demonstration of living UU Values.

**Motion (Bender/Miller) that “Defending Democracy” proposal is in compliance with FUSM Ends and policy limitations. Passed unanimously.**

## 6. Monitoring Ends 6 & 7

- **End 6 Opening ourselves to wonder**
  - Measuring worship attendance during Covid-19 is a challenge.
  - Quantitative measurement must be different, but there are also qualitative indicators from members, such as notes and emails regarding the sermons.
  - After-the-fact service attendance is over 700 per week, compared with 300 pre-Covid-19 on-line views.

**Motion: Given the evidence presented, we see sufficient evidence of compliance with End 6 (Vernon/Cliff); passed unanimously**

## **End 7. Creating community experiences, celebrating our inner connectedness.**

- A measure of success in this End is member's engagement in church activities. There are many activities that create community, such as child dedications, religious education, weddings, and memorial services. During the church year measured, there were 745 events at the church, and 7566 people participated in these events, all coming together to create community and build on relationships.

**Motion: Given the evidence presented, we see sufficient evidence of compliance with End 7 (Hansen/LeFort); passed unanimously.**

## **7. Limitation 4.1 moved to November 2020 meeting**

## **8. Senior Minister's Report (Rev. Jennifer)**

- We have a chair for pledge team--Mark Chambers.
- Record registration for Theme Circles -- 23 more members than in past years.
- Only seven members in our current Journey to Membership class and most are folks who have visited an in-person service. Two people found us in an internet search.
- PPP loan forgiveness process is beginning.
- Finance committee wants to present a socially conscious investment policy to BOT in November.
- Huge wins, all worthy of celebration.
  - Ordination of Kimberlee Tomzcak Carlson as Minister or Religious Education
  - Lois Lowry as Morter Lecture speaker
  - UU the Vote has contacted every church member

## **9. New Business. None**

***Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. CT (Miller/ Cliff); passed unanimously.***

***Next Meeting November 24, 2020, 6 p.m. CT***

***Chair: Jane Cliff | Words: Melinda | Minutes/Chanticleer Article: Melinda Vernon***