

*Second Draft*  
**First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Board of Trustees**

Tuesday, February 27th, 2024

**Present:** Pat Geenen (President), Stacy Koenen (Vice President), Stacey Thieme (recording secretary), Joe Riepenhoff (Secretary), George Bledsoe, Amy Wilbourne, Sarah Richards, Tony Panciera, Dana Brooks

Also Present: Jennifer Nordstrom, Dave Becker

**The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM.**

**1. Opening Sequence**

**2. January Minutes (Stacy K.)**

**Moved to approve:** Tony **Seconded by:** Stacey T **Passed:** Unanimously

**3. Endowment Fund Communication Plan (Pat and Dave)**

Dave Becker joined us to update their progress and answer our questions about the Endowment Fund Communication Plan. EFTF has completed 6 out of the 7 charges from the board. The final form needs to be signed and notarized, but then the baton will be passed to the endowment trustees. Endowment trustees will conclude on the investment advisor, decide how that money is invested and during what time frame, and decide how the distributions will be handled. The CD performance will be monitored and adjusted as necessary.

**4. Monitoring Limitations 4.8 and 4.9 – Minister Well-Being and Communication and Support of Board (Jennifer)**

The board discussed Monitoring Limitations 4.8 and 4.9 with Jennifer. 4.8 states that the Senior Minister shall not neglect their well-being (including their physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and psychological health and strength), and their right to establish reasonable boundaries between their personal and professional lives. Jennifer tries to take at least one day off per week during the church year, usually on Monday, unless someone needs congenial support. When Jennifer has a week with no day off, she attempts to take an additional half day off the following week. Jennifer regularly sees her health care providers. During Jennifer's five-month sabbatical during the 2022-2023 church year, Jennifer was able restore her well-being through rest, travel, seeing loved ones, and engaging in writing and spiritual practice. Although Jennifer did not take a vacation this year due to her lengthy sabbatical, she did use the last two weeks of July 2023 as a study leave to prepare for the church year.

The board then discussed Monitoring Limitation 4.9 with Jennifer, which focuses on supporting and communicating with the board in a timely manner and informing the board of actual or anticipated noncompliance with any board policies. Jennifer has followed procedures, sometimes even turning in her reports early. Jennifer followed standard protocol prior to and during Lynn's departure. Jennifer has informed the Board that we will be out of compliance in 4.3 Compensation and Benefits.

**Moved, based on the evidence presented, to determine compliance with 4.8 and 4.9:** Tony  
**Seconded by:** Pat **Passed:** Unanimously

**5. Senior Minister's Report (Jennifer)**

There were no questions about the Senior Minister's Report. Jennifer highlighted the section on Staff Compensation and Staffing Changes (noted below).

**6. Staff Compensation and Staffing Changes (Jennifer)**

Last year we hit 22 out of 23 Guidelines. However, the guidelines have changed this year and we are no longer in compliance. Jennifer walked us through her recommendation and the other options. The information in the graph is color-coordinated to match each option. Highlighted in blue is the percent we are under the UUA's fair compensation guidelines.

This year, Deb is retiring, and Kaitlyn will be traveling. Our Membership Development Coordinator resigned, and we did not fill the position. There is still a gap between our expenses and our revenue stream, but there are several ways that we can close the gap. These include pledge increases, expense reductions (not replacing our Membership Development Coordinator), and the Forge Our Future Endowment Campaign's investment income, which will reduce the gap by 50% once all the pledges are collected. We will not have a total for the pledge drive amounts until March 10. The Board decided that they could make a more informed decision in March.

#### **Discussion Tabled.**

### **7. Board self-assessment and Sr. Minister performance assessment (Pat)**

The board was emailed 3 questions and Pat has compiled a list of the responses for the board to review. Pat sent a minister assessment form to the board on Dropbox that they will fill out and send in. The congregation will be surveyed soon. The board is considering holding their retreat in June instead of in August to give more time to discuss and address items that are brought up in the Congregational Survey.

### **8. Task Group Follow-up**

Anti-Racism Committee. There is an anti-racism event on March 9, and 6 board members will be in attendance. One of the anti-racism tasks is to promote the Share the Plate and the committee is currently in the process of nominating Black and POC organizations in the community.

The Nominating Committee is currently working on getting bios for the members who will be nominated to the Board and the Nominating Committee next year. Jean Cliff will be chairing the nominating committee next year.

The Congregational Survey Committee has a draft of the new Congregational Survey in digital form. They are determining the timeline for sending it out. In the past the board gave 3 weeks for members to fill out the survey and return it but might do 6 weeks this year. The same three who drafted the Congregational Survey will analyze the data when it comes in.

### **9. Board Training and Retreat (Stacy K.)**

The Board is contemplating moving the retreat to June, before the graduating board members leave. A focus of the training would be reviewing the current policies and deciding how they should change. Before the next meeting, Stacy and Pat will discuss possible retreat dates and will send a poll to all board members to determine what date works the best for everyone.

### **10. Other Business**

One of our church members who recently died had left half of his estate to FUSM in his will. He died without an heir or a trustee for the estate. We don't know the amount in his estate. The only way to move forward is for FUSM to petition the court and to appoint a special administrator. FUSM has to be the petitioner because the other two entities in the will are too large to get involved. Rollie Hanson has volunteered to do the work and has offered to assist.

**Motion to allocate \$3K and have Rollie petition the court on behalf of FUSM.**

**Motion:** Joe

**2nd:** Tony

Passed Unanimously.

The EFTF Committee asked if the board would be ready to vote on the 501C3 tonight. Because it is a separate entity from the church, the Trust created by the Trust Agreement must be certified as a tax-exempt entity by the Internal Revenue Service in order to ensure that donations to the fund receive proper tax treatment. As advised by our attorney, no funds should be transferred from the church to the Trust until the certification has been received. The certification process will likely take at least six months from the date the request for certification is filed with the IRS. Pat, the president of the board, has been asked to sign as the settler. The board has the authority to make these decisions. We can also vote as a congregation, which would allow the congregation to view it and ask questions, however waiting will push the timeline back on the process. There was some concern about making these decisions without the approval of the congregation. Voting as a congregation ensures more support, but making the decision sooner will benefit FUSM by receiving 5013c status sooner.

**Discussion tabled until next month.**

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM.

**Next Meeting:** March 26, 2024