

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Minutes of the Meeting of Board of Trustees

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Present: Mark Chambers (Meeting Chair), Stacy Koenen (Recording Secretary), Ryan Pawlowski, Kathy Donius, Deborah Conta, Andrew Whitver, Dana Brooks

Attending via Zoom: Stacey Thieme

Also Present: Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Jean Johnson, Mark Bishop, Rev. Chris Long

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

1. **Opening Sequence** (Dana)
2. **Introduction and Welcome** (Mark)
Rev. Chris Long joined the congregation on August 1st. He attended the board meeting to introduce himself and meet the board members.
3. **Review/Consent Agenda** (Mark)
Moved to approve the consent agenda/May, Post Annual Meeting and Retreat minutes and Monthly Staff Change Report.
Moved: Dana, seconded: Ryan
Passed: Unanimous
4. **Election of BOT Secretary**(Mark)
Motion: Elect Kathy Donius as BOT secretary for 2025-2026 church year
Moved by: Debra, Seconded by: Andrew
Passed: Unanimous, Kathy Donius abstained

Officers were elected after the Annual Meeting in May. However, the elected secretary needed to step down. Kathy agreed to fulfill the role for this church year.

5. **2024-2025 Fiscal Year Q4 Financial Report (Jean & Mark Bishop)**
Mark Bishop joined the board meeting to review the role of the treasurer, as he steps into the role. The vision developed a couple years ago was to elevate the treasurer to advise the board and hire an outside service to assist with the bookkeeping. Mark would like to review the current process and the BOT's understanding of the financials. He is asking the BOT to provide feedback on what they would like to see reported. The BOT asked that items of concern or extraordinary be highlighted, as well as appreciating the current reports providing the details and a summary views.

Bequests and a tax credit from last year added approximately \$900K to our income. The Tax credit is segregated and not being touched for a couple years to make sure the government doesn't reclaim the funds. The Endowment Fund is a separate legal entity, so those funds are reported separately.

6. **Policy Monitoring (Mark)**
Motion: To approve compliance with Policy 4.4 and 4.5

Moved by Ryan, Seconded by Kathy
Passed: Unanimous

7. Review Monitoring Schedule (Mark)

There is an annual calendar in the BOT files that details the policies, monitoring, and annual items that need to be covered during certain months BOT meetings. Due to the process of revising the Ends, we will not be monitoring the Ends process this year.

8. Senior Minister Report (Jennifer)

Jean Johnson has announced her retirement for this upcoming January 2026. There is a communication plan for the congregation with a timeline for posting the job. The plan is to hire before Jean's departure so she can assist in training the new person. Jean will take a year away from the congregation as is customary with our congregation.

With the transition of the ministerial staff we will be adjusting the ministerial portfolio and responsibilities. Rev. Kimberlee will be handling all educational aspects including; Faith Formation, religious study groups, etc. Rev. Chris will be overseeing Membership aspects including; Theme Circles, Pastoral Care, Journey to Membership, etc.

9. Anti-Racism Update(Mark)

The Anti-Racism team is under the direction of the BOT. As such we need to have BOT members participate in the team. Dana Brooks and Andrew Whitver have been asked to serve as liaisons. There is a UCC rubric providing the levels of systemic understanding and to assist in moving towards a Anti-racist framework, focusing on cultural competency and biased thinking. There will be a cultural competency training offered to the congregation in Fall on October 12th. And a Spring training on interrupting racism, providing tools to relate in better ways.

9. BOT Housekeeping & Retreat Follow-up(Mark)

During the Retreat we all signed up for servant leadership positions. Based on people's requests Marks has set up the following list:

Nominating Committee Liaison – Debra
Feast for Funds Liaison – Stacy K
Endowment Fund Liaison – Kathy
SharePoint Transition – Ryan
Memorial Trust Fund – Ryan & Andrew
Youth Volunteers for BOT – Stacey T & Elizabeth
Ends Task Force – Stacy K, Mark, Debra, Elizabeth

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM