

## UUS Board Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. by ZOOM

**Present:** Jeff Walberg (President), Sarah Ross (Vice-President), Lucy Gamon (Secretary), Michael Honey-Arcement (Treasurer), Ernie Cox (Trustee), Monique DiCarlo (Trustee), Ian Cawley (Trustee), Rev. Diana Smith (Ex-officio). Quorum met.

Guests: Bridget Laflin (Ministerial Intern), Dan Cummins (Endowment), Elizabeth Swanson (Stewardship), Jim Olson (potential capital campaign team leader).

Meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. with check-in. Cawley provided Opening Words.

<b>Consent Agenda</b>	
<b>Reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minister’s Report-Nov.</li><li>• Treasurer’s Report – Nov.</li><li>• Endowment Committee Minutes - Nov. 4</li><li>• Letter of Support for Restorative Justice Grant</li></ul>	<b>Decisions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve Nov. 19 Board meeting minutes</li><li>• Approve revised Ministerial Agreement<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Revision summary</li></ul></li><li>• Set Board retreat for Saturday, Jan. 25, 9-3, at East Side Recycling Center Environmental Education Bldg.</li></ul>

The chair reviewed the consent agenda items, and hearing no objections, announced that the consent agenda has been adopted.

**Discussion of Church Finances**—The Board engaged in a collaborative discussion regarding church finances. This discussion included guests Dan Cummins of the Endowment Committee, Liz Swanson of the Finance Committee, and Jim Olson, who has expressed interest in leading a capital campaign to pay down or pay off the church building mortgage. The church mortgage must be renegotiated or retired on November 30, 2025, when the balance owed will be approximately \$675,000. The Board reviewed the “2025 Mortgage Renewal Opportunities” report prepared by Walberg.

Related issues to a paydown of the mortgage are a budget spending gap of about \$50,000, and increased staff expenses and inflationary pressures. In addition, any capital campaign must be coordinated with the Fall 2025 Stewardship campaign, and the Endowment Committee’s planned campaign to increase the Endowment.

**Next Steps**—It is likely that we will engage in a capital campaign to pay down the mortgage in the Spring of 2025. **DiCarlo and Olson** will meet to discuss strategy, including contacting potential major donors and setting an appropriate fundraising goal.

**Discuss Report from Sabbatical Committee**—Ross and Rev. Diana updated the Board on planning for Rev. Diana’s upcoming sabbatical. A “Sabbatical Guide” will be released in January of 2025. This Guide covers pastoral care, worship planning, and staff supervision. The Board’s role and the Ministerial Intern’s role during the sabbatical were also discussed.

**Hear Updates on Inclusion Initiatives**—Rev. Diana informed the Board about her application for a restorative justice grant with JCIC. Laflin updated the Board about the revitalized Radical Welcoming Team (with an inward congregational focus) and the new diversity initiative (with an outward focus on the community).

**Retreat Planning**—The next Board retreat is planned for January 25, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Board discussed possible retreat topics. The three most salient topics are: 1) discussion of church finances; 2) conflict resolution as facilitated with “Hope for Us;” 3) Assessments/Evaluations, including assessing our mission and vision and a proposed ministerial evaluation. The Board also discussed potential learning or team building activities, including reading and discussing a chosen book, and/or learning more about how to grow the congregation’s membership.

**Discuss “Hope for Us”**—The Board has a Zoom meeting planned with “Hope for Us” on January 5, 2025. All Board members need to complete the “Hope for Us” survey by December 23, 2024.

**Reflect on Congregational Meeting**—The Board discussed the Congregational Meeting recently held on December 15, 2024. Board members had various opinions about questions and comments made at that meeting, and discussed how to appropriately respond.

**Next Steps**—**Cox** has scheduled a personal meeting with a congregation member who expressed dissatisfaction with the church’s direction at the Congregational Meeting.

## **Closing**

DiCarlo provided process observer comments. Rev. Diana invited the Board members to give closing words. With the agenda completed and no new business from the floor, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

*Lucy Gamon, Board Secretary*

*Email the Secretary at [secretary@uusic.org](mailto:secretary@uusic.org) with requests for documents reviewed at the meeting.*

The Board approved these Minutes on Jan 15, 2025 .