

UUS Board Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

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), Nic Kaplan (Director of Religious Education).

Meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. with check-in. Honey-Arcement provided Chalice and Opening Words.

| Consent Agenda | |
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| Reports | Decisions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minister's Report – Dec.Treasurer's Report – Dec.Endowment Committee Minutes - Dec. 162025 ASA Calculation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approve Dec. 20 Board meeting minutesForward the following policy to the Governance Committee for review prior to final adoption:<ul style="list-style-type: none">4-6 Facility Use Guide |

The Board has not yet had an opportunity to review the 4-6 Facility Use Guide. Therefore, the reference to the Facility Use Guide was deleted from the Consent Agenda. The Chair reviewed the remaining Consent Agenda items, and hearing no objections, announced that the consent agenda has been adopted.

Meet with DLRE—Nic Kaplan updated the Board on recent developments in Lifespan Religious Education (soon to be referred to as “Whole Life Religious Education”). Kaplan informed the Board that there are particular needs for more volunteers in the popular “Lunch and Learn” series and the children’s religious education programs during Sunday services. Kaplan provided the Board with the 2025 summer camp brochure and described the upcoming summer camp offerings. Summer camps are already filling up, with a strong demand for camper scholarships. The summer camping program is expected to show a small profit this year.

Provide guidance to the Endowment Committee on dedicated funds--The Board reviewed the Endowment Committee's Policy Draft regarding endowment fund spending. There will soon be a collaborative meeting between a few members of the Board and of the Endowment Committee to further refine these policies, with topics to include: 1) endowment fund purposes and rules, 2) promoting fund availability to potential applicants, 3) the application process for funding requests, 4) decision-making and approval process for funding requests, and 5) reporting of funding decisions.

The Board reached a consensus that we want the minister/staff to review endowment fund application requests to ensure that such requests align with our Mission and Vision and are properly prioritized. The Board wants to review and shape the process, not the individual requests made. The Board also wants an annual end-of-year report from the Endowment Committee as to what endowment requests were made and funded. The Board understands that only interest and dividends (not principal or "corpus") of the endowment funds will be spent.

Approve mortgage campaign feasibility study-- DiCarlo described the status of a mortgage campaign feasibility study proposal which she and member Jim Olson are currently developing. Other members have expressed interest in being involved in this study. The purpose of the study is to reach out to the top half of pledgers to determine whether they would support a fund-raising campaign to reduce or pay off the church mortgage. The mortgage will be about \$675,000 in November of 2025, when it must be either refinanced (at a much higher interest rate) or terminated. Walberg discussed feasibility study messaging with the Board.

Motion--Gamon moved that the Board approve the creation of an *ad hoc* Mortgage Feasibility Study Committee, guided by the feasibility study proposal developed by Jim Olson and Monique DiCarlo. Honey-Arcement seconded. The Board unanimously approved this motion.

Discuss pledging and revenue--Honey-Arcement prepared a "Year-End Treasurer's Report" for the Board's review and shared his summary with the Board. We had only a \$17,000 budget deficit in 2024, which is much less than was anticipated. With our new method of budgeting, the church is in a sound financial position.

Walberg prepared a table showing pledges and payment trends since 2017, which he shared with the Board. Pledging has trended down somewhat, and we are unlikely to reach our pledge goal of \$400,000 for 2025 (currently we are at 92% of this goal). However, pledging is only about 70% of total church revenue. Many people have donated and continue to donate to the church without pledging (52 households in 2024). The Board discussed ways to encourage pledging, to encourage regular and consistent pledge payments, and to follow

up with people who have pledged but have not fulfilled their pledge (35 households in 2024). Some examples of specific ideas included assisting people to make their pledge on Realm and texting people with reminders to fulfill their pledge commitments.

Action Step– Rev. Diana will discuss with the Congregational Administrator the logistics of setting up pledge updates by text message.

Discuss Jan. 25 retreat —The Board will hold a retreat on January 25, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Eastside Recycling Center. The Board discussed topics and logistics for this retreat.

Closing

Cawley provided process observer comments. Rev. Diana engaged the Board members to provide closing words. With the agenda completed and no new business from the floor, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Lucy Gamon, Board Secretary

Email the Secretary at secretary@uusic.org with requests for documents reviewed at the meeting.

Addendum– The Board held a special work meeting by Zoom on February 12, 2025. The purpose of the meeting was to engage in financial planning for the upcoming year. Topics discussed included creating and seeding a dedicated account for facilities maintenance, promoting completion of 2024 pledges, updating on the mortgage feasibility study, coordinating with the Stewardship campaign, upcoming efforts on financial education for the congregation, and preliminary planning for the annual meeting on May 18th.

The Board approved these minutes on February 19, 2025.

