

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia

MINUTES Board of Trustees Meeting, Feb 21, 2024 (approved March 20, 2024)

Attendance

Marc Drews (President*)

John Logue (President-Elect*)

Karen Brown (Secretary*)

Jeanette Walton (Treasurer*)

Deb Matherly (Past President*)

Board Members, in-person: Regina Moody, Nancie Shillington-Pérez, Susan Legacy, George Johnson, Rev. Stephen Robinson (Minister**), Ginny Verne (Finance Chair**)

Visitors: Michele Currie (Bookkeeper) (Z), Tom Clements (Chair, Personnel Committee)

*Executive Committee; **Ex Officio; (Z)attended by Zoom

Call to order

Marc (President) called the meeting to order at 2:32pm. The meeting was held in-person at the church and online over Zoom.

Chalice lighting

George lit the chalice and shared the words of Alexei Navalny, a political reform activist who's recently reported death at the age of 47 was recently announced after he had been "missing" in a Russian prison for three weeks: *"Real politics begins when you stop just making political commentary and start actually influencing the situation."*

Covenant and check-in

We will treat each other as we would wish to be treated by listening to the opinions of all members with equal respect and responding in a kind and thoughtful manner.

APPROVALS

Accept the agenda

George moved to accept the February 2024 agenda. (seconded, carried)

Approve the minutes

George moved to approve the January 2024 minutes as amended. (seconded, carried)

Accept the consent agenda

John moved to approve the February 2024 consent agenda (Recent Committee Reports, Revenues & Expenses Reports, Restricted Funds; and Balance Sheets). (seconded, carried)

UPDATES

From the President

Marc thanked members of the Board and all who are helping the congregation meet our goals of (a) strengthening our support and care for the congregation by demonstrating gratitude, (b) being welcoming; (c) encouraging and strengthening our CYRE and programs for families; (d) developing our leadership capacity; and € increasing our visibility in the wider community.

Treasurer's report

Jeanette reported that UCC has received 161% more in contributions than expected, at this point in the year, due to special gifts. All other financial matters are coming along at the expected pace, as shown in the finance reports.

Minister's report (including staff update)

Rev. Robinson reported that everyone is getting ready for the pledge drive. Participation and attendance at Sunday Services has been good. Staff evaluations were quickly completed. There is a lot of excitement and energy about the Children and

Youth Religious Exploration program and the participation of so many families. We are experiencing some good problems to have. With more families now participating in the life of the church, we need to be sure childcare is provided. Plans are moving forward to be ready to find and hire a Director of Religious Education (Exploration).

Liaison's Highlights and Additions to Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – Ginny reported that Pledge Kickoff plans are well under way. She would like the board to allow the Treasurer to move cash funds exceeding two months of anticipated expenses to the Money Market fund for earning interest. Funds can be easily and quickly transferred back to the cash account if needed. She said that the board had previously approved a cap of up to \$50,000 to be moved into the Money Market Account. Money Market interest rates are higher than those offered by CDs, right now.
- Marc asked Ginny to prepare a motion and email it to the board for review. George suggested that perhaps only a one-month expense cushion is needed. Ginny agreed. George suggested that, perhaps when there is time, the Finance Committee could investigate CD options as rates change. Ginny noted that donor-restricted funds are not earning interest, and she would like to put those funds to work earning interest. However, there are some legal details that need to be worked out first.
- Denominational Connections Committee – Deb reviewed the various ways people could attend Virtual General Assembly (GA) 2024, and the registration fee options. Some events will be free for public viewing on YouTube. The business meetings require registration but no fee payment. Attending all programs and workshops requires that the full registration fee be paid – \$280 (until March 15), then \$315 (March 15 – May 15), then \$400 (after May 15).
- Ad hoc Committee to Review UUCC Rental Prices – Marc reported that Linda McLeod is heading up this committee and moving forward.
- Leadership Development Committee (LDC) – Nancie reported that the post workshop survey indicated that the 2-day leadership workshops were well received and appreciated although no one stated that they were interested in serving as a leader. Nancie shared that the LDC would likely be asking some of those people to serve just the same. The LDC suggests that a leadership development course/workshop be provided semi-annually moving forward. Marc suggested that, in the next training, we ask participants how they see themselves participating in the congregation in the future. There are many layers and levels of leadership to acknowledge and consider.
- CYRE Committee – Nancie is wondering if a committee or person might be interested in planning a baby shower for families who are expecting to give birth soon, or perhaps they would organize some other celebration. Ginny suggested reframing this as a baby welcoming. Nancie reported that CYRE won't be announcing as many activities in the next little while, but will encourage families to participate in more outdoor activities, that the Green Committee may be planning for example.
- Ad hoc Bylaws Subcommittee – George reported that the bylaws committee will be meeting next week.
- Ad hoc History and Archives – Regina reported that the Committee is working. She asked that board members help spread the word of this committee and its activities. There are many ways to help without attending committee meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

Music Directors' retirement support FY24

Marc asked for thoughts about how to resolve the issues brought up at the last meeting, where the board voted to contribute to the Music Director's retirement, but the UUA plan does not allow this before one year's employment of at least 1000 hours during a twelve consecutive month period. Deb moved that the board award the Music Director a temporary salary increase of up to \$2000 [this amount was amended at the March 20, 2024 board meeting] to be paid in one lump sum, to cover the pension amount the board negotiated with her, including employee payroll taxes. This amount will be paid on March 12, 2024. (seconded, carried). Rev. Stephen will follow up in communicating how this will happen.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposal to Increase CYRE CON Allocation – Nancie reported that The Mountain CON has been cancelled. There is no need for extra funds now.

Motion to approve UUCC DRE's LOA – Nancie presented a draft Letter of Agreement (LOA) for the Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) position that the ad hoc committee, consisting of Regina, Ginny and herself, wrote, using a draft that

Jonathan White and Meg Lynch had developed. The CYRE Committee has approved the draft. Nancie thanked everyone involved, including Michele for helping the ad hoc committee discover that the LOA needed to be written in the same format as other staff LOAs, which shifted their course of action. Suggestions for revision were discussed. Tom Clements, the Personnel Committee (PC) Chair, noted that this draft LOA would be further revised in negotiation with the selected candidate. Tom sought clarification about what to use for a job description when posting the job. Nancie offered a sample from another congregation. Rev. Stephen said that he trusted the Personnel Committee to write up an appropriate ad, based on the LOA. Nancie said would email the board a revised draft for review, and the board should anticipate a call to approve the LOA electronically soon. Tom said additional funds might be needed to advertise the position.

Motion to explore new RE Wing – Nancie discussed a proposal to build a new CYRE wing. Regina suggested board members review the UCC [Report of the Facility Assessment Task Force](#) located on the UCC website [under ABOUT, then GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION at the bottom of the page]. Ginny suggested going ahead and planning a three-story wing. Nancie noted that, including basement improvements, it would be three stories. Several people are involved in thinking this through, including: Bill Dolley (Sexton), Phil and Lis Turner (Building and Grounds Committee), and Marc Drews (President). Nancie hopes to meet with a recommended contractor to get more information soon. Nancie already has a blueprint of the building and Peck Drennan’s architectural plans that were used to renovate the sanctuary, social hall and bathrooms a few years ago.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Minister’s salary recommendation from Personnel Committee

Marc requested the board move to Executive Session to review the minister’s salary and evaluation. Tom requested that the salary figures be communicated to the Personnel Committee as soon as possible. A ten-minute break was taken.

Upon return from break, Karen moved to go into Executive Session (seconded, carried). During the Executive Session, the board discussed the summary of findings, highlights and patterns found in a recent survey where board members and Committee Chairs anonymously responded to a series of questions that focused on three areas of priority: Shared Leadership and Ministry, Pastoral Care, and Professional Services. The purpose of the review was to provide feedback to the minister as we continue to grow as a thriving congregation. The board agreed that Marc and John would meet with Rev. Robinson to discuss the findings.

Upon return from Executive Session, Karen moved that the board approve recommending a 3.2% increase of the minister’s salary to the Personnel Committee and allot \$2000 for Professional Development Funds for FY25 (seconded, carried). Marc will inform the Personnel Committee.

Extinguish chalice and adjourn

Regina extinguished the chalice. Marc adjourned the meeting at 5:16pm.

The information below is not part of the formal minutes.

Karen Brown (Secretary) emailed “draft1 to president” of minutes to the President on Feb 22, and draft2 on Feb 23, 2024, with the 2nd set of corrections returned on Feb 25, 2024.

Secretary submitted “draft1 to board” to Board, Minister, Administrator, Bookkeeper, CYRE, DC, B&G and PC Committees on March 3, 2024.

Secretary submitted “draft2 to board” of minutes to Board, Minister, Administrator, Bookkeeper, CYRE, DC, B&G and PC Committees on March 16, 2024.

Secretary submitted board-approved final copy to board, Webmaster, Administrator, Bookkeeper, CYRE, DC, B&G and PC Committees on on March 20, 2024.