

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
UUCA via Zoom; October 26, 2021  
Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/92252637488>  
6:58 pm – 9:45 pm  
Approved Minutes**

In attendance: Rev. AZ, Rev. John, Carrie Kotcho, Jan Bird, Stan Keeve, Mike Wanhatalo, Jenn Pollitt-Hill, Jane Carrigan, Kari Alperovitz-Bichell

**Chalice Lighting and Opening: 6:58**

**Check In: All**

**Approve Minutes for the September 28, 2021 Board Meeting  
by Consent**

**Agenda of the Executive Committee**

Motion made by Kari and seconded to approve the  
Consent Agenda of the October 21, 2021 Executive Board  
meeting. **Discussion. Approved.**

**Replacement of Open Board Position**

Peter Morse has resigned from the Board of Trustees. Mike Wanhatalo left the meeting so we could discuss the backfill. The Board considered the nominating committee's recommendation to have Mike Wanhatalo to serve in Peter's place until the next

Congregational election in spring 2022. The committee had plans to make David Burman Chair of the nominating committee.

The remaining members discussed the appropriateness of a close relative of a staff member being the Chair of a committee that sits on the Board. Board members decided to postpone the selection of a person to fill Peter's spot until the November Board meeting.

## **Executives/Ministers' Report: Rev. John, Rev. Anastassia**

### **From Rev. John**

A Board member inquired about what our hiring process works and expressed concern that we do not have a written process. Rev. John reported that the Executives agreed to put a process in writing and that they would be intentional about how this process plays out in light of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle.

Rev. John confirmed that he will take an April-June sabbatical. It's a shortened time compared to his original request. The Ministers will meet with the sabbatical team to refine and complete the plan for this. He will share more detail at upcoming Board meetings.

The Ministers and Finance Committee are in concert on the draft budget. They agree that it is a realistic operations budget for FY22.

Rev. AZ updated the Board on stewardship strategy for FY22 and beyond. She noted that Board engagement will be key to any

fundraising campaign. The Board needs to be visibly involved in these efforts. Our consultant Mark Ewart created a report for UUCA on stewardship which is located on the Board Drive. He noted that we are one of the small number of congregations that do year-round pledging. There is not much data about its comparative effectiveness. Rev. AZ feels it's hard for us to get a sense of where we are financially at any given time. Mark could not definitively tell us if our year-round giving approach works or not. Rev. AZ reported that Mark did have many best practice recommendations that we were not doing that we've implemented since April 2021. We have 24 members who are now helping with stewardship this year. The messaging is diffuse because it is happening year-round. It never takes center stage. About 40-60% of members opt to have a meeting with their stewardship captain. The process is fairly automated and functions like a subscription plan. Because it is year-round, stewardship captains can participate at a time of year that works best for them. Another good aspect is that we can be more responsive to changing needs throughout the year. Some cons are lack of focus by congregation and Board. There is no focused time to talk about the value of members' giving and what's been done with the pledges. Rev. AZ remarked that the diffuse approach makes it feel more like an individual effort and not a collective action and that knowing what we actually receive in pledges allows us to budget and plan more confidently.

The Executives recommend returning to an annual stewardship campaign. Their research shows that UU congregations that have gone back to annual campaigns have found the transition

fairly simple. It makes clear to the entire congregation what the priorities, progress are. It also allows the church to have other types of fundraising efforts without competing with a pledge campaign. It is a high level of effort in a 3-month period so harder on the volunteers.

To make this a smooth transition, the Executives recommend changing our fiscal calendar. Our fiscal year runs January-December as per the by-laws. If we transitioned to an annual campaign with existing fiscal calendar, we'd run into issue of running a campaign in the fall and end of year overlapping with holiday giving season. If we change the fiscal calendar along with annual campaign, we could do the annual campaign in late winter/spring. This would mean a by-law change.

The Board held a robust discussion and decided to each consider the idea of annual campaign and fiscal year change and come back to the next meeting to continue the discussion with a timeline of how it would work.

### **Finance Reports: Kari**

Cash available for operating is low at \$40,000. \$60,000 is normal. This includes our PPP grant. Our cashflow is good despite this. We can fully pay our bills so not a crisis. Total pledge dollars coming in in September, compared to this time last year, are about \$4,000 ahead. December's Congregational Meeting requires folks to be in good standing to vote, so frequently we see bumps in pledge payments that month. Our revenue is still

behind expenses. We will show a deficit for this year due to that. December is still a higher month typically for payments so there is reason to be optimistic. As we reopen more, rentals and other revenue generation may increase.

## **Budget: Kari**

We originally thought it would take 3 years to get to sustainability with our new ambitious budget with two ministers of equal standing, but Kari posits that due to COVID we may need to consider if we need to extend that estimate to 4 years. She walked the Board through the proposed FY22 budget. A key recommendation is that we remove all pass-through budget items (e.g., Light House funds) so that they do not appear to add to our total operational budget. This move will lower the amount we pay to UUA in dues.

The Board discussed the budget and Kari's recommendations. Kari and Ministers answered many questions about line items and approaches to the budget.

## **BBC Update – Stan**

Stan reported that Darrell Nash has joined to replace Ellen as co-lead. They've started double sessions on certain Saturdays. We need to have good In the Know advertising with the link included to make sure we have good attendance. The POC report will be presented next month at the Board meeting. Stan, speaking on his own behalf and not the BBC, raised an issue of transparency and concerns about performance issues between the Ministers

and BBC. Jane clarified that those issues should be brought forward in a confidential process and not in the public venue of the Board of Trustees.

### **BEEC2 Update: Jan**

Jan reported that there are some complications, but the interior sprinklers are nearly done. The Arch Diocese of Baltimore is letting us bring in the water lines to the property (via an easement). Jane reports that the artist who is creating a design for the entryway is going to apply to the endowment committee to enact it.

### **Auction**

Diane Ratcliff asks if each Board Member would donate a \$20 bottle of wine to the fundraiser.

### **What do we have**

#### **Outstanding?**

- Discuss proposal by Master Plan committee
- Congregational Meeting Plans
- Discuss COVID-19 impacts on our operations
- Discuss November dates

**Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice: 9:45pm**

**Submitted By: Carrie Kotcho, Secretary**