

**GorFirst Unitarian Church of Toledo Board of Trustees
Monthly Meeting Minutes, July 16, 2020
7:00 pm, via WebEx**

Meeting called to order by President Sandra Kosek-Sills (SKS), 7:00 pm

Roll Call by SKS

Board Members Present at the Start: Teresa Betts-Cobau, Mike Davisson, Arun Nadarajah, Hydie Ralston, Krista Schneider, Mary Souther

Quorum: yes

Board Member Colette Cordova joined the meeting at about 7:15pm.

Rev. Tim Barger also attended as a non-voting member.

Reading of the Election Results into the Minutes: SKS read the results of the recent vote. Since the Sunday, May 17, 2020 Annual Meeting was held virtually, there was no vote at the meeting. Votes were mailed in by congregants by Monday, June 8. Ninety-eight people (a quorum of 83%) sent in their ballots. Here are the results:

Vote Item 1 – Election Slate for Board Members and Officers

Passed unanimously

Officers for a two-year term ending June 30, 2022: Krista Schneider for Vice President; Elizabeth R. Ralston (AKA Hydie) for Treasurer

Officer for an unexpired term ending June 30, 2021: Tom Sheehan for Secretary

Member at Large positions for a two-year term ending June 30, 2022: Teresa Betts-Cobau and Mary Souther

Vote Item 2 – Election Slate for Nominating Committee

Passed unanimously

Nominating Committee Members for a two year term ending June 30, 2022: Elliot Adams and Dominic Wilson

Vote Item 3 – Bylaws Amendment (Minister section)

Passed: 97 yes, 1 abstention

To reconcile the Minister's range of responsibilities with Unitarian Universalist Association-recommended practices, Article IX of the Bylaws of the First Unitarian Church of Toledo is amended as follows:

"Article IX. Minister. [A.] The minister shall have responsibility for the conduct of worship services and shall serve as spiritual leader and advisor to Members. The minister shall have freedom of the pulpit and shall also have the freedom to express opinions outside the pulpit. The minister shall be an ex-officio, non-voting Member of the board and of *all committees except a Ministerial Search Committee formed to find a successor following the announcement of the Minister's retirement or departure* [such committees as the board designates]. The minister shall be chief of staff and shall supervise the staff of the Church. Other specific duties shall be negotiated between the minister and the Ministerial Search Committee *or, in the case of periodic formal reviews and assessments of the minister, between the board or its designee and the minister in collaboration*, be written into a job description, and be approved by the board. Any candidate for the position of minister must hold fellowship in the Unitarian Universalist Association. The minister will be employed under a written agreement which clearly stipulates the duties, compensation and other conditions of employment."

Issue 4: Budget

Passed: 96 yes, 2 no

Approval of Minutes: Former Secretary Elliot Adams emailed the Minutes of the June 11 meeting to the Board on June 15. Arun Nadarajah moved that the Minutes be approved as written. Mike Davisson seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report (Mary Souther for Hydie Betts-Cobaugh): The Church ended the year in the black. Important points:

- Total year to date pledge income is \$196,493, over budget \$2,040.
- Total year to date income is \$263,110, over budget \$13,967.
- Total year to date expenses are \$250,622, under budget \$4,704.
- Balance in the Huntington checking account is \$63,468. Included in this figure is \$22,415 from the PPP loan and \$7,500 transferred from the Operating Reserve.
- The new furnace and the dishwasher are being paid for out of the Capital Campaign as planned, so they do not show up on the annual budget.
- Our accountant, Teresa Langenderfer, is not working all her available hours, and SKS has asked her to use her remaining time to work on details such as the way the Capital Campaign and the annual draw from the Operating Fund are accounted for. Incoming Treasurer Hydie, Outgoing Treasurer Mary will get

together to make sure Hydie is up to date on what Teresa should be doing. All agreed that Teresa is generally doing excellent work.

- The issue of online access to the accounts at Huntington Bank came up. SKS had to get online access in order to apply for the PPP loan. Hydie said that she could also get online access so that she could make the reports herself. Mary mentioned that in the past, as a security precaution, no one had online access to the church's accounts. SKS said that a decision about online access could be made when check signing formalities are done.

Minister's Report (full report attached at the end of these minutes): While over the past couple of years Rev. Tim has taken study leave and vacation, this year during the coronavirus pandemic, it hasn't been time away but rather an attempt to minimize his work while taking some time to rest. Still, he has been involved in many church activities.

Rev. Tim said that on the morning of the Board meeting, so not included in his written report, he had a conversation with Courtney, the representative from NW Ohio Syringe Services (NOSS), an outside group that had been using our space pre-pandemic. NOSS is opening a location in East Toledo and will not need space at our church weekly. If the need arises on an emergency basis for Narcan distribution, Courtney and Tim agreed that our church could be a site for that. First Unitarian would not need to store any medicine if that happened. Tim has not been in touch with any representatives from AA about their use of our building, and he thinks that he may be in touch with them soon.

Approval of the Renegotiated Letter of Agreement between First Unitarian Church and Rev. Tim: Arun, SKS, and Rev. Tim have gone over the details of the letter. Also, Phil Teitlebaum, of Shared Ministry, has reviewed it. SKS and Arun recommended to the Board that they approve the letter. Colette moved that the Board approve the letter. Mary seconded. The letter was approved unanimously.

Commissioned Lay Ministers' Reports: Melissa Jeter has decided to become an aspirant to the ministry. Melissa has written a letter asking for support. First Unitarian is being asked to sign a congregational letter of support. This involves a funding request. SKS said that she would like to delay Board action on this until next month. She asked Board members to take a look at Melissa's cover letter requesting support and the Statement of Congregational Support, both of which SKS sent out to the Board before this meeting.

President's Report (Sandra Kosek-Sills) (full report attached at the end of these minutes): Sandra attended General Assembly (GA) and is attending Central East Region's Summer Institute (CERSI) both virtually. She wrote up a report about GA (See the attachments at the end of these minutes.) She is involved in several Anti-Racism Action projects. She has started conversations with Rev. Tim about having a minister with Diverse & Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM) or Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) work with us to have one or more meetings of a Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoC) 'caucus' for our congregation. Sandra has hosted First UU coffee hours and Spiritual Adventures. She is hoping other Board members will help out with hosting coffee hours. She has met twice with the Covid 19 Subcommittee. She has been acting as "general contractor" for Capital Campaign projects. She recommended having a virtual Board retreat with Rev. Sunshine.

Other members of the Board seemed to agree that a two-hour retreat would be appropriate.

Coronavirus Discussion: The Corona Virus Committee has met twice and recommends that we not re-open the building at least through the August Board meeting. Consensus of the board was that we wait at least until September 13, which would be the date of our traditional In-Gathering.

⇒ **Vote:** Aurn moved that we keep the building closed until the August 12 Board meeting at which time we would decide if we are going to open the building for a service in September. Mary seconded. The motion passed with 6 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

Some points brought up:

- We have a number of elderly congregants and others who are vulnerable to Covid 19.
- We might want to wait until the schools are open and see how the Pandemic changes after that.
- We might have a gathering in the parking lot on Sept 13 and then return to online services for the rest of the month.
- Church wifi would probably not reach the parking lot, so a drive-in service, with congregants coming to the parking lot to be together apart in their cars might not work.
- An outdoor service with a ten-foot grid indicating where people might sit or stand was discussed. This would require setting up a PA system outside.
- The topics of the auction and the stewardship campaign came up. SKS is trying to schedule a meeting of the Auction Subcommittee, and Stewardship

Subcommittee, and the Covid 19 Subcommittee to work through possibilities, timing, and safety issues. If an auction happens at all this fall, it would probably be some time in late September.

Capital Campaign:

We have around \$90,000 remaining in the Capital Fund. The sound project was approved at the June 2020 meeting of the Board for up to \$30,000. The estimate came in from Torrence Sound Equipment Co. at approximately \$17,000 including the hearing loop (for congregants with hearing aids). In addition, SKS and Eric Sills, who is consulting on this project, traced the wiring in the church and found that it needed to be replaced. The contractor will rerun the cable from the box in the back up to the front. As soon as the estimate is revised to include the rewiring, SKS will sign and figure out when the job will be done. This assumes that the addition of the wiring will not bring the total to anywhere near the already-approved \$30,000.

SKS has received two quotes on the lighting. The low bid was from Great Lakes Electrical for \$6,205.74 to put in the lights in the main part of the sanctuary (house lighting). The Gross Electric quote was just over \$6,800. This lighting does not light the “stage” or the front of the sanctuary. Buildings and Grounds is satisfied with what’s included in the lighting quote from Great Lakes. Hydie asked if we had any references for Great Lakes. SKS responded that Building & Grounds is satisfied.

We also have a bid for \$38,810 for these parts of the parking lot: the main driveway, the accesible parking area, the ramp, and a small area (as far to the south as the northern wall of the garage).

Arun suggested that this plan for the parking lot was very good, and that next year, when we have more money, we could do more of it. SKS mentioned that we would at least take care of the safety issue with the lot; people who are comfortable with walking on a bumpier parking lot can park in the back and those who really need smooth pavement for safety can park closer to the front of the church.

The total for the three above projects comes to about \$77,000, which is less than the \$90,000. One option for the additional dollars is to do the stage lighting (likely in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 range); another option would be to hold the money in reserve and use it as seed money for the next capital campaign.

⇒**Vote:** Colette moved to approve the bid of \$38,810 for the section of the parking lot described above. Second by Arun. Motion passed unanimously.

Mary, as outgoing treasurer, mentioned that we have not yet paid for the furnace. We have so far paid only \$4,500 for the venting. Frye Bros. have not yet sent an invoice for the heating and the air conditioning, even though this job was done over a month ago. SKS said that \$20,000 had been set aside for that.

⇒**Vote:** Hydie moved to accept the quote from Great Lakes Electrical for the lighting of the sanctuary (house lighting only, not stage lighting). Krista seconded. Passed unanimously.

New Business

Stewardship: Mike has been working with Chris Stockwell on the pledge drive. The plan is to have conversations with every member of the congregation in mid- to late September. Volunteers are already lined up, and most of the promotional materials are ready. They are waiting to see what happens with the pandemic. They will be talking with the auction committee and the Covid 19 committee. SKS said that she would write a kick-off letter by the end of August. Rev Tim asked Mike for a letter describing what the Stewardship Committee wants from him.

RE Committee: Arun reported that the committee is on the verge of signing a new contract with Kristin as interim RE Director. She will have reduced hours. The Committee also hopes to survey the families that have children to see what kind of RE can be done beginning in the fall.

Rev. Tim said that Sarah Rainey-Smithback, Director of RE of the Maumee Valley congregation, is developing a type of distance RE and wonders if we would be a testing congregation. Kristin is interested in looking into that.

Arun reported that the UUA was not able to help much with the issue of distance RE.

Krista wondered if we could get data about how many kids are using the Zoom RE that we have been offering, and if we actually had kids who might participate in piloting the BG materials.

Arun said that if we move RE from YouTube to Zoom in the fall, we would be able to know better who was participating. SKS said that Kristin was exploring a kind of

RE-in-a-Box that parents could use with kids participating in Sunday RE classes. This would also allow kids who do not participate every Sunday to at least do all the month's activities.

Krista also said that we need to think about how to build community among the kids. SKS said that one congregant was interested in social activities for kids, but it's hard with the pandemic.

UU the Vote: Colette brought up UU the Vote wondering if our church was going to have any organized activities. Some congregants have shown interested in the get out the vote activities. More leadership would be needed.

Building & Grounds: Mike passed on a message from Building & Grounds that some of our neighbors are concerned about the brush and branches building up along our West fence. Mike will get more specifics about the brush. SKS mentioned that B&G does have some budget, and if B&G is made more aware of what their budget is, they might need to use it for this.

Mary mentioned that the dumpster is totally empty and wondered why we needed it emptied weekly. It does seem to fill up, but we are not sure who is filling it.

Mary also wondered about the need for regular cleaning. SKS said that the building is being used, though lightly, but that it does still need to be cleaned. Rev. Tim said that we have received bids for other cleaning services, but we have not followed up on that. It may be coming up before the board soon. Rev. Tim mentioned that we might want increased services should we all start meeting at church again.

Check signing: Hydie asked if someone else could help with check signing because she cannot sign until she has the minutes of this meeting. Krista and SKS will handle it until Hydie has these minutes.

Smith Park Pride Project: Gwen Wilson has asked if our church could serve as fiduciary agent for a children's recreation program at Smith Park, near the Mott Branch Library. Their group has received \$5000 from the City. The idea is that as the group needed things, they would charge them to the program, and our church would handle the payment. It would be a little extra work for Teresa, our bookkeeper, who is not working all the hours that we have allocated for her. Our church would do it pro bono. Mary was concerned that the program might grow and increase the amount of work. The question of our liability came up. SKS said that it would be auditable, and that we would have to

maintain a paper trail. It was agreed that the Board needs more information before agreeing to do this. SKS is supportive of this because it would help us build community relations and support a program involving young people.

There were closing words from Rev. Tim. Next meeting: Aug 13. Meeting was adjourned around 9:00 pm.

Next Tasks (Sandra Kosek-Sills):

- Mary and Hydie will confer to be sure that Hydie, as incoming Treasurer, feels fully prepared.
- SKS and Hydie will discuss the issue of online access to accounts at Huntington.
- SKS and Rev Tim will arrange to sign the Minister’s Letter of Agreement.
- Board members will study Melissa’s July 15 letter requesting First Unitarian’s support in her becoming an aspirant to the ministry, and the Statement of Congregational Support.
- SKS will schedule a meeting of the Auction Subcommittee, and Stewardship Subcommittee, and the Covid 19 Subcommittee to work through possibilities, timing and safety issues. She will bring the results of that meeting back to the board at the Aug 12 meeting.
- SKS will write a kick-off letter for the Pledge Drive by the end of August.
- SKS will get the Capital Campaign items moving along: parking lot, sound, and light.
- Mike will get more details about the brush on the East fence and look into Building & Grounds budget with that brush in mind.
- SKS is going to get more information from Gwen Wilson about the summer recreation program, and we may have a special Board Meeting to make the decision.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tom Sheehan
Secretary

-----**Attachments**-----

MINISTER’S REPORT

JULY 2020

Rev. TK Barger

It's summertime, when over the past couple of years I have taken study leave and vacation. While following the concept this year during the coronavirus pandemic, it hasn't been time away but rather an attempt to minimize my work while taking some time to rest.

I led and preached services on June 14 and July 5, will do much preparation for but not lead on July 26 when we'll have guest Rev. Jef Gamblee, who preached at my installation service in 2017, as guest preacher by Zoom. Also I'm slated to lead all five Sundays in August.

I also presided at two funerals: a graveside service for Ruth London on June 20, with family present (a memorial for the public will be planned for when we're back to in-person gathering) and a service at our church's memorial garden for Don Elkins, the late husband of Pam Johnson, on June 28 with only a few family members present and the rest connected through Zoom.

Representing our church, I continued participating in the MultiFaith Council of Northwest Ohio's monthly Services of Universal Worship, on Zoom, offering brief words from Unitarian Universalism for the July 6 service.

While I haven't attended the weekly Black Lives Matter vigils at our church—knowing that congregants will be there—my family did donate a Black Lives Matter yard sign for use at the vigils.

As part of denominational activities, by Zoom I attended the Unitarian Universalist Association Ministry Days June 22 through 24 and the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly June 24 through 28. Rather than have a Toledo service on the 28th, we encouraged the congregation to tune in to the GA Sunday service.

In our own Sunday services, we have expanded our tech crew, with Arun Nadarajah being in charge of streaming and Tom Sheehan operating the camera. Those moves also allow me to take some Sundays completely away.

With the board's desire for staff contracts to be re-signed to get on a fiscal year schedule, that is going slowly, with one signed agreement in hand, and the others in process; there is no concern that the updated agreements won't be completed as time permits.

Respectfully submitted,

TK

President's Report July 2020

GA and CER Summer In Situ:

I attended virtual GA. Report on that is attached with this report. I am also attending CERSI virtually – which turned out to conflict with the Board meeting since the events are in the evenings. Regardless, it is restorative.

Antiracism Action:

I called and chaired (or will chair) two meetings for people in the congregation interested in antiracism action. After discussion with CLM Melissa Jeter, I have also requested that Rev. Tim arrange to have a minister with DRUUMM or BLUU work with us to have one or more meetings of a BIPoC 'caucus' for our congregation, possibly as part of a weekend that includes a service (perhaps virtually). I am reading the Commission on Institutional Change report to the UUA "Widening the Circle". I attended another one of the 8th principle learning community meetings that are held by Paula Cole Jones. Many congregations are voting to adopt the 8th principle even though the UUA has gone back to the drawing board on it. For our new board members: we put adopting the 8th principle in the draft Strategic Plan.

Virtual Services:

I have assisted with virtual Spiritual Adventures a couple of times and I have hosted almost all of the virtual coffee hours after the services. I would like to request/suggest that the board take this on as a service project, so that we have two co-hosts for every coffee hour. That way if there's a conflict, it's not all on one person. Attendance has been somewhat light over the summer (about ten people). I regret to admit that we had a visitor last week and we failed to engage before she left. Coffee hour co-hosts should be mindful of this. We may want to add visitor welcoming language to our Zoom invites.

COVID-19 Subcommittee:

We have met twice as a committee. Additional discussion later in meeting.

Capital Campaign Projects:

I've continued to serve as "general contractor" for these. Additional discussion later in meeting.

Board Retreat:

Original plans to have an in-person retreat are out. Do we want to have a virtual session? Something not very long, like an hour or maybe two at most? I can check with Rev. Sunshine about availability and suggestions for how to accomplish a little team building and perhaps some facilitated COVID-19 decision making or strategizing.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Kosek-Sills

General Assembly Report by SKS



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VIRTUAL GA | JUNE 24-28, 2020

BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Regarding Moderator vacancies (allows appointment of co-moderator to finish term)

Regarding Nominating Committee (shorter timelines)

BUSINESS RESOLUTION

Embodying Human Rights in Our Investment Decisions (Directs the UUA to strengthen its Socially Responsible Investing portfolio via the UUCEF)

ACTIONS OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS (see articles at UUA.org for more info)

Address 400 Years of White Supremacist Colonialism (indigenous rights)

Amen to Uprising: A Commitment and Call to Action (supporting BLM/recent protests/defund)

RESPONSIVE RESOLUTIONS

Widening the Circle: Establishing Ongoing Intersectional Accountability Commission and Sunsetting the JTWTC

Supporting and Investing In Youth and Young Adults in Unitarian Universalism (call for a UUA/nationally based youth program to be revived)

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

UU the Vote called over 114,000 Texas voters (near Houston) to give more info about how to register and vote in their primary

Commission on Institutional Change Report released (Widening the Circle)

First ever GA drag show was awesome; also see <https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/heaven-broken-open>

Ware lecture: Naomi Klein speaking about climate change and was excellent

OTHER ITEMS

UUA Budget: cost savings from less travel will be repurposed for COIC response

AUUMM

YAYA / YA@GA

Article II Study

