

Minutes of the Board of the First Unitarian Church of Toledo

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 P.M. by President Schneider. Rev. Barger presented the “Bosenbark” gavel to her.¹

Attendance was taken and the following members were present: Schneider, DeBord, Hanson, Childers, Slawson, and Crowther and Rev. Barger. Kalbus was absent.

Opening words were read by DeBord.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of minutes – the minutes of the July 22, 2025, board meeting were unanimously approved without amendment.

Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer Slawson presented his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. He reported that payroll is currently less than monthly revenue, but a large basket collection for the last two weeks will help the financial situation. This situation tends to occur over the summer when fewer members are attending the services.

Slawson reported that the bookkeeper has recommended moving to a 24-pay period model for staff from the current 26-week model. After discussion, the recommendation was returned to the Treasurer for further information and involvement of the Personnel Committee.

¹ George Bosenbark was a former President of the congregation, and the gavel was unearthed during reorganization of the office.

Slawson reported that the church has changed its credit card company and will be getting better terms with the new card. **Motion made by Hanson and seconded by DeBord to donate credit card points to staff as Christmas bonuses in the form of charge cards. The motion passed unanimously.**

Slawson reported that the rummage sale will be held on the weekend of Sept. 5-6, 2025. Marna Slawson is chairing the effort. A sign-up sheet for volunteers will be in the next UU-FYI. Donations can be dropped off beginning Sept. 1, 2025. The Board sends many thanks to Marna for her efforts!

Senior Minister's Report – Rev. Barger discussed Ford Cauffiel's memorial service on August 25, 2025. The service was extremely well attended. Rev. Barger officiated and attended the wake at Cauffiel's home. Jeffrey Maxie performed the music. Many members attended and reported it was a lovely service. Thank you, Tim and Jeffrey!

Rev. Barger also discussed a scam email sent out under his name. He will follow up with an article in the UU-FYI and outreach to members that were affected. Rev. Barger indicated that he will never solicit funds via email or text.

Rev. Barger reported that things are going well in the office and that Office Administrator Jeffrey Maxie has organized and cleaned up the office so it is functioning more efficiently. The Board thanks Jeffrey for making progress in that area! A full copy of the Minister's report is attached.

Religious Education and Music Program Reports – Director of Lifelong Learning Gini Gottman and Music Director Maxie submitted written reports. Both reports are attached.

President's Report – President Schneider reported that a subcommittee composed of herself, Hanson, Terry Acocks, and Susan Smith will work with Rev. Barger on revision of his letter agreement. The deadline for revising the agreement is June 30, 2026. A motion was made to approve the creation of the subcommittee by Hanson and seconded by Crowther. The motion passed unanimously.

Update from Committee Institutional Investment – Committee Chair David Strickler presented the report. The current operating reserve balance is \$390,985. Of that amount, \$36,670 is in a restricted account. In the restricted account, only the interest, not the principal, can be used by the congregation. Typically, the congregation transfers 1.25% of the unrestricted funds to the operating account each quarter. The total is 5% per year which is in line with the congregation's investment policy.

The committee will return to Board with recommendations on two issues: 1) whether to put any or all of the funds in the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF); and 2) a revised investment policy. The account trustee is Toledo Trust and it has been the trustee for over 30 years. The UUCEF provides the same administrative services but is more focused on socially responsible investment. The investment policy has not been revised for some time and needs to be reviewed. The committee is interested in input on socially responsible investments. Members can discuss this issue with a board member or with Chair Strickler. The Board discussed the issue at the meeting but asked the Investment Committee to provide more information.

Solar Panel Meeting – a group of congregants including several Board members met in August to explore the feasibility of installing a community solar system in the congregation's green space. More information is needed and a second meeting will be held. The minutes of the first meeting are attached.

Personnel Committee Update – Hanson reported that the Personnel Committee will meet in September. Rev. Barger is currently completing performance reviews for the Director of Music and the Director of Lifelong Learning. The committee would like to find another member. Please talk to Member Hanson if you are interested.

IRS Ruling on the Johnson Amendment – Hanson reported that the IRS has not officially changed its position on the Johnson Amendment which bars political endorsements by churches. It did include some confusing doublespeak in a legal brief. It could be inferred that the IRS will not enforce the bar on endorsements. However, this is not a good time for Unitarian congregations to test the water. Rev. Barger struck just the right note in a recent Blade article in which he was quoted on the issue.

Memorial Garden – DeBord spoke to a congregant's son who is willing to take on the excavation and amendment of the existing memorial garden. Hanson got additional information on the memorial brick fundraiser. Rather than waste Board time discussing the details, Hanson, DeBord and Schneider will meet to put together a proposal for the next Board meeting.

Central East Region On-Line Board Retreat – Schneider, DeBord, Crowther, and Hanson participated in a Zoom board retreat with CER staff and representatives of other CER congregations from 6:30-8:00 PM on Friday, Aug. 22, 2025. Childers planned to attend but was ill. Participants appreciated the opportunity to speak to and learn from other congregations. Approval of the professionalism and energy of the CER staff was expressed.

Elder's Group Meeting – Schneider expressed her appreciation for Terry Acocks, Chair of the Committee on Shared Ministry, and all its members for their efforts at the second Elder's meeting. Each member

did a presentation on conflict resolution or organizational change, and those presentations were helpful to the attendees.

Security Grant Update – Childers reported that the security grant awarded to the congregation is still alive. The next step is to install automatic doors. Childers' contact at the State of Ohio requested additional information on the environmental impact of that step and Childers is sending in a response. David Murray is in the process of getting three quotes for door installation. The quotes will also need to be provided to the State of Ohio. Childers will know more once all that information is received and processed by the State. Many thanks to Sue for her hard work on the grant.

Fire Drill Update – Childers reported that she is working with the Toledo Fire Department to organize a fire drill on a Sunday during the Fall. More information will be forthcoming. She will also contact Gini Gottman to set up monthly Sunday forums on safety topics, such as, active shooters, weather emergencies, etc.

Calendar – all committee meetings should be sent to the office manager for inclusion on the church calendar. The calendar is available on the webpage.

NEW BUSINESS

September Fundraiser – Schneider reported that there will be two September fundraisers – the rummage sale on Friday, Sept. 5-6, 2025, and a coffee hour sale of the blue China UU mugs. The mugs are not being used and are taking up space in the kitchen. Crowther will work with Schneider on the sale.

Young Adult Group – A group of young adult members approached Schneider about holding a dance on a weekend night in September. It would be open to all. The Board expressed enthusiasm for the idea and Schneider will get back to the group.

October Board Tour of Building and Grounds – Schneider reported that the August agenda was too full to tour the building so the tour will be held at the September meeting.

Accessibility Audit – Gini Gottman is working with a disability advisor who will make recommendations on improving our facilities for disabled children.

Membership Directory Update – Schneider reported that it is time to update the membership directory. She will work with the office manager and Tom Sheehan to create a database that will make it easier to keep the directory current. The goal is to roll out a new directory in December.

By-Laws Review – Schneider said the November Board meeting will be used to do a group review of the By-Laws. Board members should review the By-Laws ahead of time and bring marked-up copies.

Board Participation on Sundays – Schneider suggested that a Board member make brief remarks once a month from the pulpit. This would be another way to inform the congregation of Board action. The Board was supportive of the idea.

Tour of UU On-Line Presence – Schneider will try to schedule a time for the Board to tour the congregation's on-line presence. In the meantime, Board members should acquaint themselves with the webpage changes. Rev. Tim remarked on the improvements Jeffrey has made to the webpage and on how helpful his tech skills have been.

Please send any photos of church activities to Jeffrey so he can upload them on the webpage.

Closing words by DeBord.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. Slawson moved adjournment,
Childers seconded and the motion passed unanimously**