

MINUTES  
**First Unitarian Society of Ithaca**  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
March 12, 2019

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President Angela Zhang called the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) to order at 6:07 pm on Tuesday, March 12, 2019.

**Trustees Present:**

Marie Benedetti, Matt Hare, Jennifer Streid-Mullen (Treasurer), Whitney Wiggins (Acting Clerk), Kim Wilkinson, Angela Zhang (President)

**Trustees Absent:**

Oliver Habicht (Clerk), Wendy Salomon, Andy Turner (Vice President)  
A quorum was present being a majority of the full Board (currently nine members).

**FUSIT Members & Guests:**

Rev. Margaret Weis, Beth Howard (Scribe)

**Distributed Materials**

Electronic:

Meeting Agenda  
Letter requesting Ordination from Aileen Fitzke  
Minister's Report  
January Meeting Minutes (2019-01-08-BoT\_Minutes)  
2019-2020 Draft Vision of Ministry

Hard Copy:

Observations on Nominating Committee Process (Fred Balfour)  
Board Self Evaluation Draft Process (Andy Turner)  
Draft Charge to Ad hoc Planning Committee

**Agenda Item # 1: Opening Reading and Minutes Approval**

Marie lit the chalice and read a selection.

**MOTION:** Approve the BoT January, 2019 meeting minutes (no revisions). **PASSED.**

**NOTE:** Bad weather prevented an in-person meeting of the BoT on 2/11/19. Those available met electronically via Zoom, but it was not an official meeting and no voting took place. The meeting was not rescheduled and no minutes were taken.

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**Agenda Item # 2: Upcoming Dates**

3/30/2019 Emergency Preparedness Training (co-sponsored by FUSIT) in Cortland.

5/3-4/2019 UUA Central East Region Lawrence Seaway Spring Gathering at FUSIT. Registration opens March 1. Home hospitality for participants would be welcome.

**Agenda Item # 3: Unsung Heroes for February**

The Stewardship Team for their work on the current campaign and the lunch event held last week.

Jessica English and her team of massage therapists for ministering to hospice volunteers.

**Agenda Item # 4: Approve the Vision of Ministry for 2019-2020**

**MOTION:** Approve the draft BoT Vision of Ministry for 2019-20 with no changes.  
**PASSED.**

**Agenda Item # 5: Financial report**

Jennifer Streid-Mullen presented 2018-2019 updated financials showing a surplus which she recommends be used for Congregational Administrator Health Insurance (a new expense) in 2019-2020. A request has been made for unbudgeted funds for the ordination of Aileen Fitzke. Expenses would be shared with Binghamton congregation.

**Agenda Item # 6: Budget team update**

Jennifer Streid-Mullen presented information about 2019-2020 budget development process and related items:

- Buildings & Grounds Team suggests a Capital Campaign for updates to sanctuary, repairs of organ, possibly AV upgrades may need to happen in 2019-2020. Some money could come from the Endowment. Estimates, timing, leadership, etc. still to be discussed.
- New Mark Pedersen Memorial Fund to be used for a new telephone system (~\$2,000), costs associated with FUSIT sponsorship/participation in the AIDS Ride for Life (~\$500), and/or financial help for UUA attendance (up to \$1,000 per year, registration fees 2 persons/family, need-based)
- Rev Margaret's is eligible for sabbatical leave after 7 years of service and we are nearing the end of year 2. There are financial implications related to covering the pulpit, pastoral care, etc. We might consider adding a line item to the budget for saving (\$6000 per year) for sabbatic as well as considering alternative models.
- It would be nice to have a line item for the Board expenses (training, consulting, guidance on policy development, food for group policy-development or training events, etc.)

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A **Congregational Conversation** to present and discuss the budget ahead of the Annual Meeting was set for May 19. The Annual Meeting and budget votes is scheduled for 5/29/19.

**Agenda Item # 7: Minister's Report: Aileen Fitzke's request for \$1000 to fund half of her ordination**

Aileen Fitzke, longtime FUSIT member, is approaching ordination as a UU minister. Ordination is bestowed on candidates by one or more UU congregations (by official vote), and Aileen has requested ordination from both FUSIT and Binghamton, where she is currently an intern. FUSIT has never before ordained a minister. Rev. Margaret explained some of the background, philosophy and details of the process. Aileen has been granted Fellowship status by the UUA, indicating that she has fulfilled necessary requirements and is deemed suitable for the ministry. As an ordaining congregation (and her home congregation), we validate her call and affirm her suitability. We are responsible for 1) planning and hosting logistics, 2) financial assistance, and 3) a formal congregational vote, per the Society's bylaws. The congregation will be informed about the process as soon as possible, and Aileen will join Rev. Margaret in preaching on Sunday March 31. The congregational vote will not take place that day, since a voting meeting must be advertised for two weeks, and a quorum of the membership must be present. (Binghamton—her intern congregation—will vote on ordination this month.)

Provided our vote is affirmative, Aileen's ordination (ceremony and reception) is planned for June 2, 2019. Expenses will be approximately \$1,000. The Binghamton congregation is contributing \$1000 as well.

**MOTION:** The Board approves the expenditure of up to \$1,000 for costs related to the ordination of Aileen Fitzke in June 2019. **PASSED.**

**Agenda Item # 8: Update from Ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee**

A draft charge to the committee was distributed. Board will seek advice from similar-sized congregations that have been using Partnership Governance longer than we have.

**Agenda Item # 9: Preparations for Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting announcement happens at least two weeks in advance the meeting date.

The Board President, Committee Chairs, and Team Leads provide a summary of this year for the Annual Report.

Loretta Heimbuch compiles and prints the Annual Report.

Congregational Administrator, Jessica English assembles the membership list for ballots.

At the meeting the Treasurer presents the proposed budget.

The Nominating Committee presents the names of candidate for the Board of Trustees and for Nominating Committee.

Voting by the membership.

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The Annual Meeting will be held on May 29, 2019. A Congregational Conversation will be scheduled for May 19th, to discuss the proposed budget.

**Agenda Item # 10: Review Evaluation process: Board and Ministry**

The board reviewed the latest version of Board evaluation process document and proposed evaluation form created by Andy Turner. Whitney Wiggins volunteered to create a online self evaluation form based on Andy's recommendations. Each Board member should submit their evaluation online by the May board meeting. During the June meeting, the Board will discuss and compile the evaluation data.

Further discussion is needed on the Governance Committee and its responsibility for the Board self evaluation process and involvement in partnership governance.

**Agenda Item # 11: Board speaker for Sunday service in March**

Kim Wilkinson agreed to give the "Board Minute" during the service on March

**Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm**

Minutes taken by Beth Howard, scribe  
March 12, 2019