

DRAFT MINUTES
First Unitarian Society of Ithaca
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 9, 2019

Vice President Andy Turner called the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) to order at 6:03 pm on Tuesday, April 9, 2019.

Trustees Present:

Marie Benedetti, Matt Hare, Wendy Salomon, Jennifer Streid-Mullen (Treasurer), Andy Turner (Vice President), Whitney Wiggins (Acting Clerk), Kim Wilkinson—arrived 6:24 pm, Angela Zhang (President)

Trustees Absent:

Oliver Habicht (Clerk)

A quorum was present being a majority of the full Board (currently nine members).

FUSIT Members & Guests:

Rev. Margaret Weis, Nathan Fawcett (Finance Committee), Lyn Staack (Prospective Board Member), Jessica English (Congregational Administrator)—arrived 6:56 pm, Beth Howard (Scribe)

Distributed Materials

Electronic:

Meeting Agenda
March Meeting Minutes (2019-03-12-BoT_Minutes)
Draft Gift Acceptance Policy
Budget 2019-20 Overview
Minister's Report
Notes on Annual Meeting 2019 Needs (Angela Z)

Agenda Item # 1: Opening Reading and Minutes Approval

Marie lit the chalice and read a selection.

MOTION: Approve the BoT March, 2019 meeting minutes (with one amendment).
PASSED.

Agenda Item # 2: Upcoming Dates

April 21, 2019: Congregational Meeting immediately after the service, to vote on the ordination of Aileen Fitzke.

May 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 the Month

Nominees offered by the Board included:

Sara Catterall for sundry heroic acts on Building and Grounds, including cleaning up graffiti found on church walls.

Marie McRae, Marie Kautz, Wendy Wolfe and others in the Environmental Interest Circle for their efforts to increase understanding and action on sustainability in our congregation.

Agenda Item # 4: Approve Policy on Gifts to FUSIT

Jennifer Streid-Mullen distributed copies of a proposed new Gift Acceptance Policy. Nathan Fawcett, Finance Committee Chair, presented it on behalf of the Finance Committee who developed it in consultation with attorney Elizabeth Bixler. The committee consulted other UU congregations' gift policies during their work.

This new Gift Acceptance Policy would replace the obsolete "special gifts policy" and outlines non-financial gifts/valuable donations such as pianos and real estate to FUSIT. The policy specific documents parameters for the acceptance of gifts made apart from the operating budget (pledges) and recycling sale, which have their own guidelines.

MOTION: The Board accepts the draft Gift Acceptance Policy as written. **PASSED**

Agenda Item # 5: Financial Report / Budget Update for 2019-20

Treasurer Jennifer Streid-Mullen presented an overview of current financial situation and budget status. Discussion included age demographics, religious exploration staff benefits, building maintenance needs, future sabbatical, and the resulting changes in FUSIT revenue and expenses. How to meet future financial needs is related to strategic planning and educating the congregation. Board member Kim Wilkinson will reach out to the Stewardship Team about the possibility of including funding/stewardship in the her "Board Minute" during Sunday Service. The Board will include future financial concerns during the Congregational Conversation On The Budget scheduled for May 19, 2019.

Agenda Item # 6: Minister's Report: Safe Congregation Policy update; Personnel policy; Seaway gathering.

Rev. Margaret Weis advised that April's All-Church night will include an opportunity to process and discuss the recent graffiti/vandalism incident at FUSIT. The Ithaca Police Department made a report and Sara Catterall removed the graffiti. Margaret consulted the UAA as well as local clergy and got supportive responses. Rev. Margaret is considering adding a statement about our FUSIT values and mission to include with all building/space rental contracts.

Board of Trustees Meeting, April 9, 2019 (continued)

Rev. Margaret indicated that the Personnel Committee is still working on revisions to their Personnel Policy/Handbook. It should be ready for Board consideration and approval soon.

Agenda Item # 7: Update from Ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee

Board member Matt Hare gave a status update on the Strategic Planning Start Up process and indicated that a message would go into the Mid-Week Announcements.

Discussion included how to select members for the Strategic Planning (SP) Committee and what the committee should be named. Similar to choosing members for the Settled Minister Search Committee, the congregation will be invited to suggest candidates for the committee. Matt will continue to work with Don Barber and define the specific process for nominating candidates for the SP Committee. Board members may be asked to participate in contacted FUSIT members to get their input regarding potential committee members.

Agenda Item # 8: Planning for Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation is scheduled for May 29, 2019.

The Nominating Committee is still finalizing BoT candidates for the seats turning over this year. The Nominating committee is seeking three or four nominations for the Board of Trustees. (There are three open slots on the Board. Finding four nominees would allow a member whose term is not up to step down due to health reasons.)

Team Leaders have been asked to submit their team's update for the Annual Report to the congregation. The Board must submit its annual report for inclusion, as well. With the change to Partnership Governance and the revised role of the Board, the Board Annual Report should be modified from previous years.

Angela Zhang will create a draft report and share with Board members for their additions and edits.

Board members who will be returning for 2019-2020 were asked to think about leadership transition and consider candidates for next year's Executive Committee (ExCo) which will be elected at the July 2019 Board of Trustees meeting.

Agenda Item # 9: Board Self Evaluation

Whitney Wiggins advised that the Google form for members to evaluate that Board's performance this year is now live. All Board of Trustee members should complete the form before the May Board meeting. Analysis of the results will happen prior to the last Board meeting of the year and discussed at the June meeting of the Board.

Board of Trustees Meeting, April 9, 2019 (continued)

Agenda Item # 10: Lightning Review (Meeting Highlights to be included in mid-week announcements)

Major financial discussions; policy for acceptance of gifts approved; eagerly anticipating draft of new personnel policies and launch of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes taken by Beth Howard, scribe
April 9, 2019