

## MEETING MINUTES - First UU Austin Board of Trustees

### Meeting

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday, July 18, 2023
<b>Started</b>	6:30 PM
<b>Ended</b>	8:30 PM (CST)
<b>Location</b>	First UU Church of Austin 4700 Grover Ave Room 13 Austin, TX 78756
<b>Purpose</b>	Regular scheduled meeting 3rd Tuesday of every month
<b>Chaired by</b>	Vic Cornell
<b>Recorder</b>	Gretchen Riehl

### Attendance

<b>Present:</b>	Donna Carpenter, Vic Cornell, Suzette Emberton, Russell Holley-Hurt, Joseph Hunt, Chris Jimmerson, Mateo Kresha, Rev. Michelle LaGrave, Evan Mahony they/them, Shannon Posern, Dave Riehl, Gretchen Riehl, Erin Walter, Nathan Walther
<b>Absent:</b>	Jonalu Johnstone, Jonalu Johnstone, Nesan Lawrence, Sasha Lorenzo, Kelly Raley, Kelly Stokes

**Invited guests:** Audrey McCann, Susan Thomson

### Minutes

## 1. Coming Back into Covenant

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### 1.1. Chalice Lighting and Opening Words

Dave Riehl is doing readings

Dave Riehl read the opening words

**Status:** Completed

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### 1.2. Reading of Board Covenant

With the Values, Mission and Ends of First UU Austin foremost in mind, we the leadership do covenant to:

- Treat our time together and board commitments as spiritual practice
- Work collaboratively to clarify, assess and further our mission.
- Respect our time together by being focused, prepared and timely.
- Keep confidentiality when it is requested.
- Listen actively, address concerns directly with each other in a timely manner, and encourage others to do the same.
- Presume good faith in all our interactions acknowledging the importance of both intention and impact.

- Conduct ourselves openly, show compassion, respect boundaries, and enjoy each other's good humor in times of agreement and disagreement.
- Publicly support one another's decisions and leadership by speaking with one voice at the end of our deliberations.
- Agree to be called back into covenant.

The board read the covenant together.

**Status:** Completed

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### 1.3. Confirm Timekeeper and Process Evaluator

- Evan Mahony will be timekeeper
- Nathan Walther will be the process evaluator

Evan is timekeeper and Nathan is process evaluator

**Status:** Completed

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### 1.4. Approve Agenda and Consent Agenda

- Minutes from June meeting
- Monitoring - 2.1 Treatment of Congregants
- Reviewing End 1.4.6

Agenda and consent agenda were approved. A comment was made regarding consistency of terminology.

**Status:** Completed

#### Documents

- Minutes-2023-06-20-v1.pdf
  - 2.1 Treatment of Congregants, Friends and Visitors rev 7-2023.pdf
  - 1.4.6 Monitoring Report 2022.docx
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## 2. Connecting with our Moral Ownership

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### 2.1. Visitor's Forum

Susan Thomson, Chair of the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC)

When presenting a candidate to the congregation for a vote, the MSC should inform the voting members of what will happen if the vote is negative. In the case of regular searches (not inside candidates), the church goes into another search with another year of interim ministry and selection of a new search committee. When presenting an inside candidate for a vote, the search committee should also inform the voting members of what will happen if the vote is negative... the inside candidate leaves the church, the church continues with the interim minister and a new search committee is formed for the next search cycle. In our case that would be a search that would result in a settled minister in 2025. (The transition timeline needs to be updated to reflect this)

In other words, the result of the vote on either an inside candidate or an external candidate not reaching 90% (or higher if the candidate wishes that) is the same. We begin another year of interim ministry with the board eventually organizing another MSC. Both scenarios would be considered a failed search.

Christine Purcell says that while we could technically move right into search after a failed vote for the inside candidate, it would reduce the quantity and quality of our candidates. She further added that ministers in search, to quote, "would rightfully be nervous about committing to a congregation which lost its beloved senior minister to a

medical retirement, had an improvised interim period, and then voted down an inside candidate with a long history with the congregation. Ministers are looking for stability right now, and such a move would not signal that.”

**The decision to immediately continue with a search after a failed vote rests with the Board.** The MSC gets its charge from the Board. Weigh the above information carefully and we need to make a decision, preferably tonight.

Also, we need to pencil in the date for an inside candidate vote. 10/22, 10/29, 11/5?

Susan Thompson gave us an update on the minister search. She asked advice regarding the MSC process if there is a failed search either internal or external. The recommendation is to start over and have another interim year. She is asking for direction on this from the board. She also mentioned that she wants to talk about the vote as a pulpit announcement in August. Discussion ensued. The board agreed to alter the timeline to include an additional year of interim should the inside candidate vote fail. Donna will make the changes to the timeline in Howson Hall. Susan also asked for a date for the vote. After much discussion, we decided to hold the vote on October 29.

**Status:** Completed

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## 2.2. Recognition of Church Volunteers and Staff

Toni Wegner and Susan Thompson for the service they led

Land sales team - Fred Higgins, Karen Neely, Donna Carpenter, Toni Wegner and Dave Riehl

Chalice Camp volunteers.

**Status:** Completed

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## 2.3. Moment with Rev. Chris & E.D. Shannon Posern

- Financials are attached
- Budget will not be available until later in the month
- I have attached a history I sent after the first town hall meeting that a board member felt might be useful to the entire board, as well as two prior versions of some long-term planning that had been done in the past.
- I have also attached documents from the recent workshop related to anti-racism/anti-oppression.

Chris and Erin gave us updates from General Assembly. Recap of one presentation regarding the need for churches to be more nimble to respond to rapidly changing environments. Erin expressed gratitude for the members who attended. Article 2 changes did move forward. Maxine Barkin passed away today at 104 years old. Chris met with Mani Subramanian who would like to lead the capital campaign. Conversations with major donors would need to happen sooner rather than later. We also just got a check for over \$18,000 to go to the capital campaign. Shannon and Chris are working on the budget. Chris had also provided history and planning documents from the prior capital campaign in the board packet. Chris also reviewed the history of long term planning at the church and how it got derailed by COVID and Meg's retirement but that it is back on track now. Discussion ensued on the best way to disseminate this information to the congregation.

We are starting to get right wing comments on our online sermons on Facebook. Question was asked regarding security of the church and congregation. There is a \$100,000 government grant for security purposes that we are looking into. We do have security cameras at most entrances.

We are looking at changing the worship service time from 10:45 to 11.

We held a great antiracism workshop with Julica Hermann de la Fuente. We are also looking at reconvening our change team to lead this work.

There was a summer dip in pledge contributions

**Status:** Completed

Documents

- historyandplanning.pdf

- AR-AOtrainingmaterials.pdf
  - May 2023 Board Financial Report.pdf
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### 3. Monitoring our Progress

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#### 3.1. Current BOT Committees

- Linkage
  - Nathan Walther - chair
  - Gretchen Riehl
  - Suzette Emberton
- Monitoring
  - Kelly Raley - chair
  - Evan Mahony
  - Joseph Hunt
- Policy
  - Dave Riehl - chair
  - Victor Cornell
  - Mateo Kresha
- Transitions
  - Donna Carpenter - chair
  - Kelly Raley
  - Russell Holley-Hurt
  - Victor Cornell

Vic reviewed the current committees. Let him know if there are changes

**Status:** Completed

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#### 3.2. Stewardship Items

- 10/1/23, kick off of pledge drive
- 10/8/23, 12:30-2:30, Lunch & text bank sign-up
- 10/22/23, 2-4, Virtual phone bank
- 10/29/23, 3-4:30 (after Halloween party), Virtual phone bank
- Looks like we're going to have to create a Capital Campaign Committee, but they won't be able to start until January 2024, to keep from stomping on stewardship toes

Reminded us that stewardship works best with board involvement. Please put these dates on your calendar and participate as much as you are able.

There was a discussion around whether the board needs to approve a capital campaign and the wisdom of doing so given the current situation regarding the loan and the mood of the congregation around the land sale.

Joe moved and Nathan seconded a motion to create a capital campaign. Gretchen suggested a friendly amendment to authorize Chris to explore the feasibility of a capital campaign including releasing appropriate financial information. 8 for, 1 opposed. Motion carries.

**Status:** Completed

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### 4. Learning & Creating the Future

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#### 4.1. Board Book Discussion

Governance section of "Widening the Circle"

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening/governance>

Need a volunteer to lead the discussion

Deferred to next time

**Status:** Parked

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## 5. Adjourn

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### 5.1. Action Items and Announcements

Let's review the action items from this meeting:

Donna will change the timeline in Howson hall

the vote on Oct 29

**Status:** Completed

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### 5.2. Assign Roles for Next Meeting

Assign roles for:

- Readings
- Timekeeper
- Process Evaluator
- Snacks
- Book Discussion

Joseph - time keeper

Suzette - readings

Dave - process evaluator

Gretchen - book discussion

**Status:** Completed

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### 5.3. Process Evaluation

Nathan Walther is process evaluator

Satisfactory on all areas. Appreciate that we spent time on items before the vote.

**Status:** Completed

Documents

- Board process review form.docx
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### 5.4. Extinguishing the Chalice and Closing Words

Dave Riehl is doing readings

Dave read the closing words.

**Status:** Completed

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