



UUCK Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2024 - Approved

Call to Order and Chalice Lighting

Attendance in person: Claudia Miller, David Weaver, Ginny Horvath, Kara Kramer, Kay Eckman, Randy Ruchotzke, Susanna Smart

Attendance via Zoom: n/a **Unable to attend:** n/a **Guests:** n/a

Chalice Lighting: After a brief check-in the meeting started at 7:00 PM with Susanna offering the chalice lighting.

Agenda Review and Announcements

- Align on any late modifications or additions
- Correspondence for today: Ginny suggested we send thank you cards to acknowledge individuals whose recent work has significantly benefited the church community; the Board agreed to write cards. Six cards were written and signed by the Board members.

Board Meeting Minutes Approval

The *July 22, 2024 minutes* were approved by the Board via email prior to this meeting. These *August 15 2024 minutes* were approved by the Board via email in the week following this meeting.

Consent Agenda (Board reviews reports prior to meeting)

MET Report (August 13, 2024): “Account signers and corporate credit card updates: Ryan and MaryBeth met with Ginny Horvath on 8/9/2024 to discuss updates for the UUCK authorized account signers and church corporate credit card account. Below is our recommendation to the Board for consideration.” The [Bank account signer update](#) and the [Corporate credit card account update](#) reflect the current persons to be allowed access, given their roles. (See below, under [Decision Items](#).)

Treasurer’s Report (June 2024) :“Unfulfilled pledges were significantly higher than expected this fiscal year. This lost income was partially offset by significantly higher than budgeted revenue for rentals and service auction. Expenses were significantly under budget, mainly because we did not have a minister for 5 months of the fiscal year. We drew only half of the budgeted amount from reserves and are ending the year with a positive carryover balance in the General Fund. Note also that Portage County has re-assessed our property values, and the

campus is now valued at well over \$1 million.” It was noted that the UUCK collected 88% of our pledges; this is low, compared to previous years.

Motion to receive the Consent Agenda made by Kara and seconded by David. All approved.

Staff Updates

Ginny, serving as a Board liaison to the staff since Rev. Steven’s passing, shared that Emily Hall signed the letter of agreement and is officially the Director of Music Ministries! Ginny noted that Emily's new position description reflects Emily’s request for compensation when she does extra services for funerals and weddings. The total additional hours is not reflected in the overall operating budget, as the number of hours would be variable, based on special services.

Ginny shared the concerns of the staff, who view the Board as their employer and seek better communication and opportunities for input as decisions are made. Particularly in considerations about compensation, professional development funds, hours, and benefits, the decisions affect their lives, and they seek conversation. We discussed the importance of tending to right relationships and to continually improving communication with staff. Staff may wish to attend Board meetings in the future, although attending could not be considered part of their official hours.

Board decisions ultimately reflect financial concerns about sustaining our operations, but our aspiration is to improve the fiscal health of the entire UUCK operation, including staff compensation and benefits. In general, the staff would like better two-way communication, as would the Board. When Rev. Kristina joins us in September, the Board will raise this topic with her to get her input. The Board acknowledges the complex and ever-evolving effort of honing two-way communication to support clarity (for example, about who and how decision processes are made), transparency, and cooperation throughout the congregation, including with staff.

Update on Minister Onboarding

Administrative Onboarding: MaryBeth has completed a list of onboarding steps for Rev. Kristina

Minister Housing: After we get details from Rev. Kristina about how much of her compensation she wants to designate for housing, the Board will need to vote on the designation of housing related expenses.

Board Onboarding and Welcome Brunch: The Board agreed to host Rev. Kristina and her family with a social, celebratory brunch at a local restaurant on **Saturday August 31, or Sunday September 1, pending her confirmation.** Board members agreed to share this expense as a welcome. Due to the group size, Board members’ partners/families will not be included.

Board Development

UU Institute Development for Boards: Those who wish to participate in the [2024 Helpful Board Habits 4-Part Series](#) should register by Sunday, August 18, for the August 19 start (\$20/person). There is also the option to do the course as self-study. Board members were encouraged to consider attending this series, and several committed to signing up.

Updates from Finance Team

Health Insurance Proposal Review: Kay shared this document, [Health Insurance Contribution Proposal review](#), with the Board as a recommendation of the Finance Team in response to the proposal from the MET.

Kay shared the recommendations of the Finance Team.

PPO Coverage	KFF National Average 2023	UU Kent 2023
Cost of Single Coverage	\$8,906	\$12,645 (30% higher)
Cost of Family Coverage	\$25,228	\$29,318 (14% higher)
Employer/Employee Cost Split Single Coverage	83/17	DRE 64/36
Employer/Employee Cost Split Family Coverage	73/27	Admin 70/30

The Finance Team is in agreement that bringing each employee to 80/20 is a great aspirational idea. However, we are not yet out of the woods financially, the UUA Plan is expensive and we are still using the Hobbs Bequest in order to balance the budget. The Finance Team team's goal is to wean ourselves off of drawing on the Hobbs Bequest to balance the budget. This request would add costs to our budget over the next few years that we don't yet have the income to pay for. The Finance Team recommendation is:

- 1) We do not have the funds - we are reluctant to endorse
- 2) We are concerned that not all of our staff can afford UUA Health Insurance. We recommend that the staff work with COSE and fill out their questionnaire in order to receive a competing quote for health insurance. If we can get a lower priced policy, it may make health insurance more affordable to everyone.
- 3) If the board does adopt this policy, it would start in FY 2026 so it can be worked into the budget

The Board discussed the above and agreed that more information about other health insurance options would help identify ones that are more cost effective, including looking into the COSE option. Kay will meet with MaryBeth on August 16 to discuss further. It was mentioned that staff would like to discuss the options and have input.

Other Financial Topics

Gift allocation: Another funding issue was discussed regarding how gifts to the congregation may (or may not?) be allocated in specific ways. Donors sometimes have a specific project that inspires their gift (for example, solar power). On the other hand, the church needs may go beyond that particular project. People love to give to designated areas, but we also need to support operational funds. This topic was not resolved.

Rental Policies review: no changes have been made yet.

Question from MET (via Kara): Do we want to pay back the draw we took last year from the 2024 overage in the General Fund or leave it in the General Fund and perhaps not take the \$29K draw budgeted for this year? The Finance Team will evaluate the options when it meets on August 16. Thereafter, Kay will make a motion to the Board via email in order to move this decision forward.

Historic Designation

Update on [Historic Designation](#) by the Kent City Council in August 7 public hearing (finalizing formal approval on August 21, 2024) and [Dave Mertz visit](#): The City of Kent Committee unanimously approved the designation before the hearing, and at the Council meeting, Ginny presented the proposal, which had great support. The formal approval will occur on August 21, and we will receive the documentation after that date. Claudia shared that when she toured Dave Mertz through the building, he was interested in our building and he said our building is in good condition. He was 95% sure the sanctuary windows were original (see Kitty's report regarding care of the historic windows).

Additional Decision Items

Account Signature Updates: The *Proposed Accounts Signers memo draft* and the *Proposed Credit Cards memo drafts* reflect the current persons in specific church roles. They were reviewed. **Motion to approve the two updated memos:** Susanna made motion and Kara seconded. All approved.

Proposed Little Free Library on UUCK grounds: Motion to approve the request for placing a Little Free Library on the UUCK grounds was made by Kara and seconded by Kay. The Board discussed that the Buildings & Grounds Coordinator should determine the right place for the LLF so that it is visible and used without disrupting traffic flow. The Board also noted the LLF will need to be monitored in case unwanted/offensive materials or objects are put there. All approved the motion.

Fire Alarm List: The Board appointed two Board member volunteers for the list of those Silco will contact in case of emergencies; in addition, we intend to ask Rev. Kristina, if she agrees to be on this list when she joins us. Importantly, those on the list need to be informed about *how* to respond and *how* to manage calls. The Silco Fire Alarm form is to be updated by the MET.

Motion to appoint Ginny and Randy to the Fire Alarm List was made by David and

seconded by Claudia. All approved.

Proposed Action on Elm Tree Removal and 2018 Site Survey: The MET recommended the Board instruct the Building & Grounds to obtain three quotes and contact the owners. Ginny agreed to draft a letter to the owners of the property with the tree; she will email it to the Board and the B&G Coordinator for edits prior to sending it to the property owners (the property is rented).

Board Retreat Reading Preparation: For our retreat, Rev. Kristina would like to lead the Board in a discussion of *Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice*, by Erik Walker Wikstrom. Ginny provided Board members books at this meeting, with the expectation that they read this before the retreat.

FY25 Meetings in Calendar for 2024 - 2025: We generally aim for first and third Thursdays for Board meetings, but we will need to include Rev. Kristina when finalizing the meeting calendar. Ginny has developed a tentative timetable that we will circulate to all before the September 5 Board meeting.

Items Tabled Due to Insufficient Time

- UUA Retirement Plan Restatement
 - [2025 Restated UU Organizations Retirement Plan Document \(95 pages\)](#)
 - [Summary of Plan Changes](#)
 - [Sample Board Resolution to Adopt the Proposed Changes](#)
- Proposal to Establish the Rev. Steven Protzman Fund for Staff Professional Development
- Safety Team - Reminder of Charge
- Personnel Committee / Handbook revisions?
- Name change of Membership/Welcome Team to Connections Team and Suggested Membership Policies revisions

Process Review

What went well: loved the snacks and the correspondence cards for sending thanks from the Board.

What needs improvement or attention: Agreed on a *goal* of a finalized agenda several days before the meeting (vs last minute additions), when possible; good discussion; able to say what we need to say and to hear diverse perspectives.

Extinguish the Chalice and Adjournment

Chalice extinguished: Susanna extinguished the chalice, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9 PM.

Upcoming Dates/Events

Board Welcome Brunch/Lunch for Rev. Kristina and Her Family: August 31 or September 1
(to be confirmed by email)

Next Board meeting: September 5 (6:50 - 8:00) Chalice Lighting by David Weaver (usual sequence is alphabetical by first name).

Board Retreat: Saturday, September 14 (9:00 - 12:00, Fessenden Hall)

Respectfully submitted,
Susanna Smart, Secretary