

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church  
Board of Trustees  
January 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Date/Time:	7:30 pm
Meeting:	Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Angela Castillo-Epps, Wendell Finner, Andrew Hager, John Mattingly, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Sue Royer, Samantha Saalfeld
Absent:	
Guests:	
Location:	<a href="https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96450829649">https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96450829649</a> Meeting ID: 964 5082 9649 Password: 141540
Next meeting:	February 17, 2021

**Pre-meeting Action Items:**

Activity	Owner	Target Date
These action items are to be completed before the meeting. Often, they are related to consent agenda items, which are items for which there is no discussion unless a member has a question concerning them.		
Sign-ups for chalice lighting, process observation and writing an article for the Threshold (monthly) – to Susan Riggs	All	1/20
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	1/20
Read reports	All	1/20
Read Ministerial Agreements – the 2014 agreement with Rev. Clare and the UU Ministers' Association template from 2018	All	1/20

**Scheduled Agenda:**

The meeting convened at 7:30

<b>Chalice Lighting</b>	Angela Castillo-Epps
<b>Go-Around Question</b>	All
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Owner
Approve minutes from the December Board Meeting Samantha had a few edits.	Susan Riggs
Accept Minister's Report (Appendix 1)	Rev. Clare Petersberger

Accept President's Report (Appendix 2)	Sue Royer
Accept President-Elect's Report (Appendix 3)	Andrew Hager

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
Sue Royer asked the Board if any items need to be moved from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 - 30 minutes</i>	
<p><b>Joint Ministry Evaluation</b></p> <p>Sue started with a suggested approach for this process. The evaluation should be mutual, goal-centered, individual and collective, etc. Hotchkiss, p.138. Suggest that we each use 3 questions: What do I need from the Board and others, What am I grateful for, and Where do I need something different?</p> <p>Everyone wrote their answers for the 3 questions and we went around to share. Angela asked if we could add an Old business section to the meetings, for continuity. Patty is grateful for everyone's expertise, and grateful for the structure that allows us to use our time efficiently. Andrew needs guidance from everyone, as he goes on in his duties. John is looking for continued support, grateful for our church community, needs all the interpersonal contact he can get. Samantha needs and is grateful for the broad base of knowledge, experience, humor. She sometimes needs more time to grasp issues. Clare needs support for growing into her new duties, as the Board governance changes are implemented. Wendell needs more institutional knowledge, being relatively new. He is grateful for the order of things, grateful for Clare's role, needs more congregational knowledge. Sue R needs feedback and let her know if she gets off track, grateful for all of the Board members, the work that gets done, she wants us to feel comfortable with what we are doing, be forgiving of ourselves. She needs us to not resign from our terms early, she likes our commitment, to see it through. Susan needs our understanding if her skills are not sufficient.</p> <p>Part 2 of the Joint Ministry Evaluation will be focused on what we accomplished in 2020 and areas for improvement. Sue will send out a draft that will be homework for the next meeting.</p>	Sue Royer and Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 30 minutes</i>	
<p><b>Treasurer's Report – see Appendix 4</b></p> <p>Wendell had several issues to discuss. The Endowment authorized for the Board to use four quarterly draws, but he doesn't know if we need to take the third quarterly draw, due to our current cash position</p>	Wendell Finner

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>with 6 months operating expense. John added that “why take money out if we don’t need it”. We have \$89,000 in cash. We could delay taking the quarterly payment, which Wendell would be comfortable with.</p> <p><b><u>Decision by consensus:</u> We will defer this quarter’s draw of \$10,000 from the Endowment until a future date. All were in favor.</b></p> <p>Our PPP loan will be forgiven, based on new guidance. The other, a second PPP loan will be offered, if we meet the criteria, and so far, we will. It would be forgivable, under the same rules as the first loan. It would be for the same amount, except if there was an increase in payroll. Wendell would expect it to be for \$59,300, like the first one. Sue R. suggested that we authorize up to \$75,000, in case we qualify for a higher amount. The loan is based on payroll, retirement, health insurance, and payroll tax expenses. Sue moves that we authorize application for a 2<sup>nd</sup> PPP loan, up to \$75,000. Clare is concerned since we are down by 20% on donations. Some congregants were concerned with the separation of church and state, but once the details were explained, there were no concerns. John thought we should apply for the loan. Andrew thought we would be irresponsible if we didn’t apply for it.</p> <p><b><u>Decision:</u> The Board authorized church officers and staff to apply for a second draw from the PPP of up to \$75,000.</b></p> <p>Unanimously approved.</p> <p>Wendell: last year’s stewardship campaign was interrupted by the pandemic. Overall, stewardship is down 37%.</p>	
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 30 minutes</i>	
<p><b>TUUC As Employer – see Appendix 5</b></p> <p>The benefit package is remaining the same, although Clare’s insurance will go up due to her age, \$33.00 a month. UUA recommends a cost of living increase of 1.2%. UUA may recommend a change mid-year. The Personnel committee should be meeting soon, to present a recommendation to the Board. Church pays 80% and staff pays 20% on health insurance. The staff has raised that as an issue and the Personnel Committee is aware. As insurance goes up, without a raise in salary, staff is effectively paying more money. Staff has questioned this. Also, the 80/20 is based on a full-time position and is pro-rated for part-time positions that qualify for benefits. This results in the church paying much less than 80% of health insurance premiums for part-time staff.</p>	Rev. Clare and Personnel Committee

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<i>Agenda Item #4 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p><b>Letter of Agreement between TUUC and Rev. Clare</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both our current agreement dated 2014 and the 2018 recommended template from the UU Ministers' Association were provided in advance. Sue has reviewed the UUMA template.</li> <li>- Minister's Agreements continue indefinitely, but are supposed to be reviewed and updated every three years.</li> <li>- Sue suggests that we form a small group to draft an updated agreement based on the UUMA template.</li> </ul> <p>We are somewhat behind on this, but we should keep up with Best Practices. We have a UUA template to use now. Sue would like a small group of us to look at these documents and update what we have. Does that sound like a good approach? Angela and Andrew, Sue and Clare all volunteered, and Wendell said he would review.</p>	Sue Royer and Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p><b>Stewardship Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spreadsheet of current year donors received from Anita Cox</li> <li>- Stewardship Kickoff Sunday is Feb 7</li> <li>- We are working to update the letter and form</li> <li>- We are working to recruit people to give testimonials during worship</li> <li>- We are working to recruit a small team to share the work</li> <li>- Need to conduct analysis re: the decrease in pledging units last year (190 to 148). Are some donating even though they didn't fill out a pledge form?</li> <li>- UUA Stewardship Training Workshops on Feb 6 and Feb 13, for 90 minutes each, cost \$15 per person per workshop. Preregistration required.</li> <li>- Does the Board have any goals for the next fiscal year that we should specifically include in our communications?</li> </ul> <p>Sue feels like its late in the year to ask people to work on this. Steve Finner has volunteered to work on this, but not to chair. Angela would like to recruit a parent or two from YRE. She also asked if we are tracking who is new, on Sundays, and if they have children for YRE. Joyce is not getting info on new families. YRE is anxious to get all the new kids. There may be some glitches in our process due to Zoom, so we may not be getting new families. Sue asked Andrew to address the issue with Program Ccouncil, Patty will help (Membership).</p> <p>We could raise money for making the church a dual platform (Zoom and in person). Wendell talked about increasing our efforts into anti-racism (8<sup>th</sup> principle). Andrew spoke about accessibility issues, like for the hearing impaired.</p>	Sue Royer Wendell Finner
<i>Agenda Item #6 – 15 minutes</i>	

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UUA Certification—Patty and Wendell and Clare are looking at it.</li> <li>2. Plans for Listening Session on Open Question. About disabilities, Sunday, 1-2;30. Angela will follow up with Sue.</li> <li>3. Threshold Article for January – Sue Royer to author – both the listening session and the end of Special Gifts, thanking Sue S.</li> </ol>	
<i>Agenda Item #7 – 10 minutes</i>	
<b>Agenda items for the next Board meeting:</b> Endowment Committee Report, Joint Ministry Evaluation (Complete it), Planning for General Assembly, Discussion of one Open Question.	Susan Riggs
<b>Process Observation Report</b>	Andrew Hager

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Key Dates:

Open Question Listening Session Sunday, Jan 24, 2021 with the Congregation

Annual UUA Certification due Feb 3, 2021

Sunday June 13, 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting

### **Appendix 1: Minister's Report**

Since my last report....

#### **WORSHIP**

I conducted a Blue Holidays service for people for whom the December holidays are not joyful. Over twenty people honored losses by lighting candles.

On December 13, Joyce retold the story of Hannukah; Larry Magder lighted the menorah; Steve Finner sang "Rock of Ages;" Spice sang "Light One Candle" and we considered who our Maccabees were this year as well as other signs and wonders of the past year.

On December 20th, Joyce told the story of the Night Tree and we celebrated the winter solstice (as well as December's Soul Matters theme of stillness) by sharing images that stunned us to stillness.

Our Family Christmas Eve service focused on holiday ornaments that held great meaning: from a young child sharing his Elf on the Shelf to Kim Peabody sharing a teapot that had belonged to her grandmother. It was good to see one another for such sharing in two dimensions.

The later Christmas Eve service focused on the singing of angels and visitations of various kinds.

It was a treat to attend Dominique Hall's December 27th service.

We began our exploration of what it means to be a people of imagination with an exploration of Epiphany and some of the art and music it has inspired.

This past Sunday was going to be devoted to the role of imagination in terms of our perceptions. But then our Capital was attacked by insurrectionists on January 6 and there was a need to address this attack on our democracy.

I met with Lay Worship Associates on December 28th. They agreed to continue to take turns providing Vespers services at least through the first Sunday of March.

I attended a Soul Matters collegial virtual meeting to brainstorm ideas for worship on the theme of Beloved Community in February.

I attended a Worship Design Studio webinar on planning worship services with a theme of healing.

I wrote a newsletter column for January.

#### PASTORAL CARE

I have had 6 virtual pastoral calls. I met with the Caring Committee on January 7th. I met with Lay Pastoral Associates on January 10.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAMS

##### A-Team

The A-Team took a break for the holidays and was scheduled to meet last week but needed to reschedule. We will be meeting this Wednesday to talk about operational policies and procedures that need to be updated.

#### PROGRAMMING

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on December 22 and January 8. We continue to have about 10 participants.

Coffee With the Minister has resumed and draws 4-6 people.

Soul Matters Sharing Circle met on December 22nd and will be meeting on January 12. Art and I continue to facilitate one break out room. Patty Barry and Anita Cox facilitate the other. Attendance has ranged from 11-18. We will be opening the group up for "second semester" in February.

Thanks to Sue's PR, seventeen members attended the first meeting of "Widening The Circle" to discuss the Commission On Institutional Change's report! Our topic was theology and there was heartfelt sharing! I look forward to the next seven sessions--- the second will be this coming Sunday and all are welcome!

I started the January Book Club meeting on my Zoom account.

I talk to Tracy, Kai, and Joyce at least weekly. The staff met as a team on December 16th.

There have been no further disbursements from the Covid Care Fund.

#### COMMUNITY

On January 4, I participated in a virtual meeting of the Anam Cara Clergy group for spiritual deepening.

#### DENOMINATIONAL

I wrote a letter of reference for Karyn Marsh who will be seeing the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association in April!

On the morning of January 6, I met virtually from 10:30-noon with the Baltimore Cluster of the Unitarian Universalist Association. On the evening of January 6th, I shared information on UU gatherings that had been organized in response to the attack on the Capitol as well as prayers that had been planned to be offered by the DC Collective.

A colleague from seminary and I are discussing co-leading worship on March 7 and bring out two congregations together. The Rev. Pamela Barz serves First Parish UU Church of Scituate, MA.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare, January 11, 2021

### **Appendix 2: President's Report**

#### Programs & Ministry

Organized technical ushers and assisted with ushering for Sunday services, and for special services in December: Blue Holidays and two Christmas Eve services.

Promoted and attended the first discussion on Widening the Circle of Concern, which is the report from the UUA Commission on Institutional Change. I encourage all Board

members to read the report, which is available online and as audio files. Dropped off linens and a gift for our TUUC-sponsored resident Michael C. at Earl's Place before Christmas. Participated in monthly meetings of the Social Action Committee. Attended a Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood Zoom session with the Kings on January 2. Attended the UUA sponsored 8<sup>th</sup> Principle Learning Session on January 13 where UU Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) related their experiences related to our churches and the adoption of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle.

Attended the hearings on the proposed Red Maple Place affordable housing development in East Towson and gave testimony against the project as an individual, not mentioning the church. East Towson is an enclave of the descendants of formally enslaved people from the Hampton plantation. The project is opposed by residents and will turn the last remaining green space in East Towson into a large seven-story building. It will remove trees, create water runoff issues, and create traffic issues. The community has been subject to previous incursions, including the taking of open space and a ballfield for a large BGE substation, and the placement many years ago of a railroad, a bypass, and development of property.

Wrote a notice for the Threshold about our listening session scheduled for January 24 on the Open Question of What changes do we need to make to be more accessible to those living with disabilities or special needs?

Wrote a notice for the Threshold about joining the Bulletin Board email list. Currently there are 96 persons on the list. This is used for member-to-member communications. We have 532 people in Breeze as Members, Friends or Staff (plus an additional 161 Repeat Visitors).

#### Board & Governance

PNC Bank requested additional information from TUUC regarding our PPP loan. Their analysts are trying to submit documentation to the SBA for loan forgiveness prior to opening up their portal for customer input. Worked with Wendell, Kai, Raly, and Rev. Clare. Wendell submitted the information that was requested.

On behalf of the Board, wrote a thank-you note on a TUUC card to Sue Shankroff for her many years of service leading the Special Gifts Committee.

Met with Rev. Clare to discuss multiple topics: candidates for the Personnel Committee, trying leaving all videos on during worship, and Widening the Circle of Concerns. Met with Andrew Hager to discuss how the Program Council is going. Andrew suggested that I continue for another year as President to give him additional time in his role as President-Elect and to be more prepared for the role of President. I'm willing to do this. Spoke with Anita Cox, who was previously the Stewardship Chair, to understand the data in the tracking spreadsheet that she provided to Wendell and I.

Reviewed the 20-21 UUA Certification form, which has some changes from the requested data for 19-20.



Acted as a stand-in at the Administrative Team virtual meetings, in place of the Finance Head.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President, 1/14/2021

### **Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report**

The Program Council met on Wednesday, January 13. We discussed streamlining the Threshold, publicity for our programs, and budget requests for 2021-22, which are due to Kai by the end of the month.

Our main area of focus was brainstorming a potential event or program that would attract a variety of TUUC congregants to be offered in late spring. Suggestions included a talent show, virtual play readings, and a speaker series. We will choose one of these events at the next meeting.

On January 4, I led a vesper service focused on hope.

Cabin Fever continues to attract 8-10 participants each week. We have recently watched and discussed *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*, *The Running Man*, and *The Master*.

Respectfully submitted, Andrew Hager, President-Elect, January 14, 2021

### **Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report for December 2020**

#### **Revenues:**

1. Total revenues are down 20% for the first half of the fiscal year, against the same period in 2019, reflecting lower Plate (-22%) and Pledge (-32%) contributions.
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> half revenue in 2019 was extremely high, such that we are still breaking even, with the dropoff.
3. The interruption of last year's stewardship campaign left us with a drop of more than 20% in pledging units.

#### **Expenses:**

Total expenses have been roughly the same in our first full six months of virtual operation as they were for the equivalent period in 2019, but the Communications Outreach Coordinator position was unfilled for the first quarter. We may not be able to expect meaningful cost savings from continued virtual operation.

#### **Balance Sheet:**

The endowment value at month end was \$1,154,992.38. We had \$188,754.00 in the bank, of which \$152,013.37 are unrestricted funds. These cash balances include the \$59,300 received from the Payroll Protection program in May, 2020.

Payroll Protection Program:

The year-end “stimulus” legislation included two significant PPP changes:

1. Recipients of loans under \$150,000.00 can obtain forgiveness with a simplified affidavit submission rather than the detailed showing how the money was spent that we had geared up for.
2. Businesses which have already received a PPP loan are eligible for a second draw, forgivable under the same terms, if they had revenues for any 2020 quarter which had a 25% reduction in gross receipts below the equivalent quarter in 2019. TUUC's just-completed quarter was down 26.67% from the final quarter of 2019, so we would qualify for a second draw. The new PPP funding explicitly targets businesses in underserved communities before opening up to other businesses, such that eligibility for a second draw does *not* assure receipt of a loan before funding is exhausted.

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, January 13, 2021

#### **Appendix 5: January 2021 Report on TUUC As Employer**

No TUUC staff member chose to change their retirement contributions or their health plans in November.

Here is good news from the Unitarian Universalist Association about its health plans:  
*We are pleased to have negotiated renewals for our Dental, Life, and Long-Term Disability plans that keep 2020 rates and benefits unchanged for all of calendar year 2021.*

*For the Health Plan, benefits remain unchanged for 2021 and there will be no base rate change on January 1. We are keeping open the possibility of a rate adjustment in July, however. Because premiums are based on age, some Health Plan participants will experience a small age adjustment as we move into 2021 (because we get a year older every year).*

*In this time of uncertainty, we hope that this unprecedented rate and benefits extension is helpful to you and your staff.*

For 2021-2022, the UUA is not recommending compensation increases beyond cost of living: The UUA wrote:

Given the stresses and uncertainties of this moment, we're choosing to hold salary recommendations at 2020-2021 levels for another program year. Make no mistake – we are *not* suggesting that salaries should be held steady. To help you make good decisions about staff salaries in the coming year, preservation of purchasing power is a fundamental compensation principle. From 2019 to 2020, the third-quarter Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) increased by 1.2%. This is roughly the wage increase needed to maintain the typical employee's purchasing power over the next year. As you budget for staff salaries in the year ahead, remember that the first 1.2% of an employee's raise will go toward increased expenses.

With the holidays behind us, Kai and I will be working on updating the TUUC Personnel Manual using the template from the UUA.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare