

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees
November 18, 2020 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:	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96450829649 Meeting ID: 964 5082 9649 Password: 141540
Next meeting:	December 16, 2020

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	11/18
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	11/18
Read reports	All	11/18

Scheduled Agenda:

The meeting convened at 7:32 pm

Chalice Lighting	Angela Castillo-Epps
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Go-Around Question	All
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Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from the October Board Meeting	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

Accept Treasurer's Report (Appendix 4)	Wendell Finner

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Sue Royer asked the Board if any items need to be moved from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda. There were none.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 - 30 minutes</i>	
Report from the Endowment Committee Deferred until December	
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 20 minutes</i>	
Stewardship Plans The four Board officers met and brainstormed about Stewardship, since we currently do not have a chair. Wendell was to follow up with Anita to get the most up to date records on giving. Ideas that came up---The cycle usually starts in January, with testimonials each week during the service, and a mailing. Follow-up calls take place in March. Would it be possible to start with an email campaign, with an online form, and see how it goes? Possible Zoom party to kick it off. (Angela). Possible recipe sharing since we can't share food. Do we start with our budget, or with our needs? This is a year like no other, and our need is just as great, but also different. We are not together to feel like we are working towards a common goal. This year, we are feeling the effects of being a beloved community (Clare). Maybe a small group in the beginning, then more people to make follow up. Susan, Clare and Wendell will help Sue. Susan will bug Sue to follow up.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 30 minutes</i>	
Board Discussion of Open Question: What changes do we need to make to be more accessible to those living with disabilities or special needs? Sue broke us up into 3 groups to discuss. Educational session for the congregation. Improve our cultural and linguistic competence. Break out rooms for 15 minutes, then report back. Breakout Room #1: Team Members: Susan Riggs, Angela Castillo-Epps, John Mattingly. At the church, it is not accessible. Angela has worked in the disability field for 20 years, but we never make the changes we need to make. We need an assessment of our physical space, and work at it one at a time. We need a budget line item to make it happen. Physical, technology, etc. These discussions tend to lead to thinking of the possibility that we need our church to be in a more accessible location, on a bus line, with sidewalks, etc. Do we need a bigger building to attract more kids in RE. John said we need	Sue Royer

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>to start with an assessment of where we are now. Our services are not in “plain language” (Angela).</p> <p>Main Room: Team Members: Rev. Clare Petersberger, Wendell Finner, Samantha Saalfeld</p> <p>There are some things that don’t take money, but take awareness, define what “disability” includes – mobility impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment, cognitive impairment. We have tried many different approaches, but we need to start with assessment. One other group also discussed budget, adding an elevator, not on public transportation, need better audio, scooters can’t get in, closed captioning, stream the services, cognitive disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed captioning for virtual meetings • Streaming of live services • Support for individuals and families affected by cognitive disabilities, autism spectrum, etc. • Education/awareness. Support groups? • Accessible bathroom on main floor • Upgraded audio system • Better accessibility for scooters/wheelchairs • Move for public transit accessibility? <p>Breakout Room #2: Team Members: Andrew Hager, Sue Royer, Patty Barry</p> <p>Last group talked more micro level, steps to the pulpit, RE families have felt excluded if their child had disabilities. Our sound system is inadequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps up to pulpit are a barrier for participation. Is there a way to have elevation without this barrier? • Virtual space: an order of service posted would be useful, even if it’s abbreviated. Link to a document on website, perhaps put in chat. • Support for kids with special needs in RE. Invite those families to a listening session. • Does Zoom offer a caption option? Tech UU group might be a resource for captioning ideas. • When we return to physical space, we need to examine ways to livestream services. This will involve investment of both money and training. • Sound system in the meeting room needs upgrading to a loop system. <p>In the listening session, relate the open question to our mission and vision for the church. We could ask “What accessibility challenges</p>	

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>have you or someone you know faced attending services or programs at TUUC (in person and/or online)?”</p> <p>Sue suggested the 4th Sunday of the month as a time that a group could meet, Jan 24, 2021 after the service, at 1 - 2:30. If there is a good turnout, you hopefully could get some people to start working on the issue. It would flow into the next year’s vision of ministry. Identified needs could be on a short list or a long list in getting things done.</p>	
<p><i>Agenda Item #4 – 20 minutes</i></p>	
<p>Miscellaneous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report – Annual Board Disclosure Forms. The officers met to discuss. There were no significant conflicts. Each Board members’ form was discussed for possible conflicts. Angela has an adult daughter who had been paid by the church for child care during Sunday services, and as an RE teacher. She is not being paid now, as church is closed. Her last payment was March 11, 2020. Sue Royer is a signatory on her neighborhood association and one other. She received interest repayments on a loan she made to the church of \$17. Mentoring Male teens in the Hood gave her a stipend in 2017 and 2018, but she gave that money away, and told them not to pay her any more. They had gotten a grant for this. - Credit Cards for TUUC Staff – Currently, we have 3 credit cards, for Kai, Clare, and Joyce. But Tracy also has expenses, and Sue found out she was not authorized to add a person. PNC has non-guaranteed credit cards for organizations, which we would need to apply for. \$7,000 is currently our credit limit, but Sue recommends that we apply for \$10,000. Wendell pointed out that we never come close to the current \$7,000. It would be nice to have the cushion. Decision: Wendell moved that the Board authorize Sue to apply for new non-guaranteed credit cards for four staff members from PNC with a cumulative credit limit of \$10,000. Andrew seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. - Bylaws & Articles Passed – The Bylaws can now be put on the website. The Articles of Incorporation still need to be signed by two trustees, and can be sent to the State. We can mail those and include a self- addressed stamped envelope for getting the receipt. Wendell can follow up on our options for submitting them so that we don’t have to pay FS&B to do it. - Appoint Endowment Committee members The committee now is appointed by the Board. 	<p>Sue Royer</p>

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>Decision: The Board appointed the four current members of the Endowment Committee to serve for the remainder of this fiscal year: John Barry, Marilyn Maze, Stephen Finner, and Tim Boniface. Moved by John Mattingly and seconded by Wendell. Approved unanimously. It is the Board's intention that members of the Endowment Committee serve for no more than two consecutive two-year terms and that terms be staggered. The Board will work with the Nominating Committee to help identify which positions will need to be filled for next year. Some members of the committee have been serving for a while.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article for the Threshold in December – reminder that Wendell Finner will write about the 8th Principle - Finance Head – “Restricted” Net Asset Account – Special Gifts Finally, Sue is looking for approval to move the \$4,591 that has been in a special gifts fund. Under the new governance policy, there are no more special gifts. Should this money be moved to the Building Fund? Sue Shankroff did a great job in heading that up, and we should thank her for her efforts. (Clare). Decision: Sue moved that the \$4591 in Special Gifts be moved to the Building Fund. Andrew seconded, unanimously passed. Sue will also thank Sue Shankroff for managing that fund and the process for approving its use on worth church needs over many years. 	
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 10 minutes</i>	
<p>Agenda items for the next Board meeting UUA certification comes up Feb 1. Membership, A-team report, Endowment, Clare sent an attachment for benefits.</p>	Susan Riggs
Process Observation Report	Samantha Saalfeld

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:28.

Key Dates

Sunday June 13, 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting

Appendix 1: Minister's Report

Nov. 12, 2020

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

The October 18 worship service was on listening for hope. It included the story of The Rabbit Listened as well as stories of hope from three TUUC members. The voices of Patty Barry and Spice Kleinmann offered hope as did welcoming Tracy Hall back.

I attended the October 25th worship service on our relationship to the United Nations which Tom Zeller organized. Bruce Knotts, Executive Director of the UU-UNO Office was with us for part of the service. It was wonderful to hear Tom, Joyce, Leah, and Emma sing harmony together and share experiences of the UU-UNO spring conference!

On November 1, we reflected on time with David Eagleman's parables on The After Lives. Dominique, Spice, and Tracy offered their gifts of music.

On Nov. 2nd, I offered Vespers with the theme of comforting and serenity. I am grateful to the TUUC Technical Ushers for all of their support with Sunday morning worship and vespers.

Nov. 8 we reflected on healing the heart of our democracy in light of the obvious divisions in our country following the Nov. 5 election. Ellie Hughes, Liz Boniface, and Tracy sang.

This coming Sunday we will be honoring the Transgender Day of Remembrance. I attended a two hour webinar with Marcia MacFee and the Design Studio to review the worship design process in general. We will be using materials from this platform in December.

I met with the Lay Worship Associates. Vespers has continued in November with me, Karyn Marsh, Dominique Hall, Tim Boniface, and Andrew Hager each leading one vespers service. The Vespers services are scheduled on my Zoom account. Steve Finner will be conducting worship on Nov. 29 on UU hymnody and healing.

I attended a Soul Matters collegial virtual meeting to brainstorm ideas for worship on the theme of stillness in December.

I wrote my newsletter column on the question, "What does it mean to be a people of healing?"

PASTORAL CARE

I have had one socially distanced visit and fourteen phone calls. Lay Pastoral Associates are meeting this Sunday.

ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAMS

A-Team

The A-Team has met twice since our last Board meeting.

We approved a Communications Policy which I will send separately to the Board to review.

Scheduling staff and others for building use is to be done only through Kai with 24 hours' notice. Kai will allow 48 hours between visits. The bathroom in the office is off-limits.

Bathrooms will be cleaned before and after the Auction Team are in the building.

Sue updated the Board about the Micro-bioretenction project that has begun. Todd will write a December Threshold article/Facebook post after the Jubilee Auction to thank Janet Schollenberger for all her work to make this project possible. The article will include an invitation to donate to the Building fund.

The A-Team approve moving forward with the Nov. 24 scheduled Keil Tree appointment to remove the crepe myrtle currently impinging on the chimney as well as some other dead trees.

Sue reviewed Governance Policy as it pertains to the A-Team.

The A-Team voted to keep the church officially closed through March.

The A-Team did not approve a Sierra Club request for a bonfire because the time frame was too long without a restroom.

PROGRAMMING

I attended the October and November Program Council Meetings.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on Oct. 16 with a prompt based on "Midrash For Happiness" by Grace Paley and again on Nov. 6 with three poems by Mary Oliver as prompts. These stand alone sessions continue to draw about 10 people. I find it quite meaningful.

Coffee With the Minister has met weekly except for Nov. 10. It draws 3-6 people.

Happy Hour had two participants on October 23 and I have decided to discontinue scheduling it for now. There does not appear to be a need.

Soul Matters Sharing Circle met on October 27 and November 10 and has 18 people enrolled! Art and I facilitate one break out room. Patty Barry and Anita Cox facilitate the other.

To follow-up on discussion of the Commission On Appraisal's report on how to build a more anti-racist/multicultural congregation, I have scheduled the following Sunday afternoon meetings on the TUUC calendar:

Conversations on Widening The Circle

Jan 3 1-2:30 p.m. Theology

Jan. 17 1-2:30 pm. Governance

Jan. 31 1-2:30 Congregations and Community

Feb. 14 1:00-2:30 Hospitality and Inclusion

Feb. 28 1:00-2:30 Living Our Values In The World

March 14 1:00-2:30 Restoration and Reparations

March 28 1:00-2:30 Accountability and Resources

April 11 1:00-2:30 Where Do We Go From Here?

I met with the Membership Committee on November 9. Gratitude for their work to keep members engaged. I look forward to Sunday's session to invite spiritual seekers to share their stories!

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

I talk to Tracy, Kai, and Joyce at least weekly. The staff met as a team on October 28th. Kai, Phil, and I now have Office 2019 installed on our computers thanks to a recommendation from Sue Royer that we upgrade and to TUUC providing us the opportunity to do so! Phil was on sick leave last week and Kai covered his work.

I participated in three meetings hosted by The Committee on Ministries. No one attended on Oct. 28 so we ended the meeting after 15 minutes. Two people attended on Nov. 4. And three people attended on Nov. 8. Never-the-less, the feedback was helpful in that some people are finding it overwhelming to read through The Threshold and find information they need to understand a program or get connected through Zoom. The Program Council discussed this last night in terms of publicizing programs through videos on our website.

Covid Care Fund

There have been no further disbursements from the Covid Care Fund. However, the amount remaining I reported last month was incorrect because TUUC has been charged processing fees for credit card use. That said, we received an additional \$225 this week. So the fund currently has about \$1,600 (I don't know the exact figure with processing fees.) We have a generous congregation!

COMMUNITY

On November 2, I participated in a virtual meeting of the Anam Cara Clergy group for spiritual deepening.

DENOMINATIONAL

I attended three UU sponsored meetings on planning for worship around the election:

Oct. 20 UUMA 3-5 p.m.

Oct. 21, Soul Matters, 1-2 p.m.

Nov. 5 CUUMA 3-4 p.m.

On October 28 I met virtually from 10:30-noon with the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association for worship and to learn more about the UUA's Trauma Response Team.

On November 4, I virtually met with colleagues in the Greater Baltimore area.

On November 10 I attended the all-day virtual Harpers Ferry Ministerial Conference. The theme was story telling. Regi Carpenter was the presenter.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare

Appendix 2: President's Report

November 6, 2020

Programs & Ministry

Organized technical ushers and assisted with ushering for Sunday services. Attended several programs. Did phone-banking with UU The Vote. Participated in monthly meetings of the Social Action Committee. Attended a Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood Zoom session with the Kings.

[In the wider community] Attended the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project virtual state conference and provided A/V support. The keynote speaker, Michael Pfeifer, Ph.D., Professor of History at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the Graduate Center at the City University of New York, spoke about racial terror lynchings of enslaved persons and free Black persons before the Civil War, including in Maryland.

Attended the virtual memorial service for Rev. David Hicks MacPherson, who had served as TUUC's first minister.

Board & Governance

The revised Bylaws and amended and restated Articles of Incorporation were adopted by more than a 2/3 majority of the members present at the congregational meeting on October 25! Yay! Multiple absentee ballots were received. Results have been reported in the Threshold. Wendell Finner and Kai Aiyetoro set up the contract with Incorp.

Services, Inc. to serve as our Resident Agent. Signing of the Articles by all the Trustees will be scheduled soon.

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

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President

Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report

November 12, 2020

I submitted an article to *The Threshold* outlining our upcoming Common Read book series. The books (and their corresponding meetings) are as follows:

- *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendo/*Stamped* by Jason Reynolds—February 22, 2021, 7:30-9:00 PM
- *Punching the Air* by Yusuf Salaam and Ibi Zoboi, March 22, 2021, 7:30-9:00 PM
- *Breathe: Letters to My Sons* by Imani Perry, April 19, 2021, 7:30-9:00 PM

The Program Council discussed the current state of programming at TUUC. Most groups seem to be doing well in virtual space. There have been some efforts to hold socially-distant gatherings (Men's Group, YRUU) or to sell fair trade coffee and chocolate.

We also discussed the upcoming auction with Auction Committee members Dan Alper and Nina Della Vecchia. Donations are still being accepted. The auction has already raised over \$3,000, but we have a long way to go to hit our fundraising target.

I led vespers on Monday, October 26. I will lead them again on Monday, November 30.

Finally, Cabin Fever continues, with an average weekly attendance of eight people. Recent films include *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm* and *Boyz N the Hood*.

Submitted by Andrew Hager

Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report

Comments on Financial Results through October 2020

Revenues:

1. Plate contributions remain higher than anticipated

2. Only one pledgor still has continuing automated contributions to last year's pledge.

Expenses:

Building & grounds expenses and utilities are all running slightly high vs. Budget. B&G expenses include the GVC project and invasive brush clearing.

Balance Sheet:

The Endowment value at month end was \$988,080.37.

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, November 12, 2020