

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees
November 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Date/Time:	7:30 pm
Meeting:	Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Angela Castillo-Epps, Wendell Finner, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Sue Royer, Samantha Saalfeld
Absent:	
Guests:	
Location:	Join Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 815 4806 6486 Passcode: 992437
Next meeting:	December 15, 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	11/17
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	11/17
Read reports	All	11/17

Scheduled Agenda:

The meeting convened at 7:30 pm

Chalice Lighting	Ellie Hughes
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Go-Around Question	All
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Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from the Oct 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
Accept Endowment Committee Report (Appendix 5)	John Barry

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Sue Royer asked the Board if any items need to be moved from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda. All reports were accepted.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 – 20 minutes</i>	
<p>A-Team Update – Re-opening Plan, Hybrid Ministries, Misc. Sue Royer recapped the main points of the listening session held on 10/24, which focused on our re-opening matrix. Rev. Clare reported that the A-Team tweaked the matrix a bit, to accommodate their input. There will be challenges when we re-open. Other congregations are seeing this. The new place will not be like before the pandemic. Some discussion on whether we mandate vaccines. Rev Clare thinks we should require it. If persons choose not to get vaccinated, there are consequences for their actions. Sue Royer also thinks we should mandate. We went around for all to comment. Andrew thinks we need to respond to the letter received from a congregant responsibly. Andrew and Sam both think we should require vaccinations. Wendell thinks our decision is based on a lot of work and thought. Angela thinks we will make the best decision we can. Ellie thinks that we need to be careful of tactics used. Patty is pleased that we are honoring those differing opinions. Rev. Clare is not interested in requiring congregants to show vac cards; that decision has not yet been made. Wendell volunteered to draft a response to the letter the Board received about vaccines, and Ellie will edit.</p> <p>Sue Royer gave an update on hybrid ministries. They have found a business to help us. They are a complete integrator; they will provide support for a year. It is \$4,000 over our budget. Audio will not be upgraded. Two cameras will be used. The A-Team will make a decision on this quickly. It is possible we could be ready in several weeks for the Board to approve it via email.</p>	Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p>Stewardship Plans Sue Royer looked at our plan from last year, as an outline for this year. Angela: DRE families could be recruited for the team and for testimonials. Sam suggested Bunny Murray. Nancy Mears was suggested. Angela and Susan Riggs offered to be part of the Stewardship team.</p>	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 20 minutes</i>	
<p>Board Goal – Leading the charge to adopt the 8th Principle We started discussing the 8th Principle at the 10/24 listening session.</p>	Sue Royer

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>Sue Royer: We have been asked to not change the wording. (UUA), Sue listed the comments from the listening session. Andrew: the Program Council spoke of it last week. The UUA common read is Unfund Fear (non- fiction). Andrew is looking for some additional reading. He also talked about doing a self-audit. Questions would need to be carefully worded. Wendell spoke the experience of other churches when they did their self-study on the 8th Principle. A valuable experience. What are our next steps? After we re-open, we could start on the process, and forming a committee to do this. Angela reminded us that we all have cultural roots that are part of us. Patty found that the Widening the Circle format might help with the education process. Lou Giezl has done a lot of this work professionally, and there may be others, and we could ask for their help. Possibly create an 8th principle team. Such as our Black Lives Matter project. Our goal is to get this process approved at the June Congregational meeting. We could put a call out to the congregation for people with experience. Sue said she'd get with Angela on this. At the next listening session, we can do more background.</p>	
<i>Agenda Item #4 – 10 minutes</i>	
<p>Possibility of a Ministerial Intern 2022-24 (half time) Rev. Clare was approached by a SarahRuth Davis, a seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School, about serving as a ministerial intern at TUUC. She is a member of the UU Church of Annapolis. Her resume was sent to trustees separately. Rev. Clare, Sue, and Andrew met with SarahRuth on Zoom for a discernment conversation. SarahRuth was impressed them. She has a focus on disabilities, which is a good fit for us. We had a positive experience as a congregation when Lora Powell-Haney served as our ministerial intern in 2018-2020. We need to make sure that Clare is not over-committed, as far as time. SarahRuth is not seeking a stipend for personal reasons.</p> <p>Decision: Motion to proceed by Wendell, seconded by Andrew, all in favor to engage with SarahRuth Davis as a Ministerial Intern at TUUC starting in the Fall of 2022.</p>	Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 10 minutes</i>	
<p>Miscellaneous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sue is thinking about attending the UUA Compass workshop on Dec 11 and 12. It is a national virtual workshop that includes worship, skill development and networking. - November 28 Listening Session with the Board – on the 8th Principle. Sue will put it in the Threshold, and to ask if anyone is working in that field. Wendell asked if we need a quarterback for that. Andrew will take the lead and Wendell and Angela offered to help quarterback. The website link for 	

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<p>the 8th Principle will be shared. Patty will help prepare for the listening session on Powerpoint. 8thprincipleuu.org.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rev. Clare met with the Personnel Committee; Rev. Clare and the committee are recommending a performance bonus of 10% for our Church Administrator, Kai Aiyetoro. Kai has worked tirelessly in 2021 and gone beyond the scope of her position in two key areas: a. the dander remediation project, which involved moving everything out of the offices, coordinating vendors, ensuring that jobs were completed to our satisfaction, and moving everything back in. b) covering essential bookkeeper responsibilities for several months, including bill payment and payroll submission, and helping the new bookkeeper to come up to speed. <p>Decision: Andrew moved, Wendell seconded, unanimous support by the Board for a 10% performance bonus for Kai. Sue Royer will coordinate with Rev. Clare to contact our payroll provider to ensure that the bonus is paid in December.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Still dealing with issues regarding return of church property and final payment after we terminated the bookkeeping contract for cause. 	
<i>Agenda Item #6 – 5 minutes</i>	
Agenda items for the next Board meeting: Church As Employer, Treasurer's Report, Re-opening Updates, Planning for Party Games with the Board. In December: Andrew (Chalice lighting), Angela (Process Observer)	Susan Riggs
Process Observation Report	Patty Barry

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:40pm

Key Dates: (please mark your calendar)

Listening Sessions with the Board: ~~10/24~~, 11/28, 1/23/22, 2/27/22, 3/27/22, and 4/24/22, 30 minutes after the service (e.g. 12 noon)

Service of Ordination for Karyn Marsh: 5/7/22, 2 pm

Annual Auction: 11/20

Party Games with the Board Auction Event: Sat 1/15/22 7 pm – 9 pm

Annual Congregational Meeting: Sun 6/12/22 12 noon

Appendix 1: Minister's Report

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

I officiated at the celebration of life for Dick Scholle on October 16th at Peaceful Alternatives. It was a lovely service for those attending in person. From feedback from those who watched on-line, I learned more about the perils and promises of hybrid worship.

I was sorry to miss the worship service offered by Andrew Hager and Tom Zeller on stewardship and the UN. I attended the virtual Union Sunday service at First UU Church of Baltimore. Rev. David had asked me to deliver a prayer for it.

October 31, we cultivated our relationship to those whom we love who loved us (as the words in our Memorial Garden read.) Ellie Hughes filmed students honoring their ancestors during a family gathering. Sharyn Rhodes spoke about what *Dia de los Muertos* means to her.

Nov. 7 we began our exploration of holding history in terms of how our memories shape our identity. Several people shared how moved they were by the story of *The Remember Balloons* by Jessie Oliveros and illustrated by Dana Wulfekotte and the beauty of the service.

Nov. 14 we will be welcoming guests from Earl's Place. We did not take a 5th Sunday collection on Halloween! Joyce has assembled photos of how YRE has supported donations of stockings to Earl's Place over the years. I will be speaking on how human it is to, in the words of Arthur Miller, "hope to end up with the right regrets."

I met with colleagues for a Minister Brainstorming Virtual meeting to discuss the December Soul Matters theme on "Opening To Joy."

I met with Lay Worship Associates on November 1.

Karyn Marsh, Sue, and I finalized Karyn's agreement to serve as our Affiliate Community Minister.

And Sue and I signed my Letter of Agreement with TUUC! This was like a sacrament and I appreciate all the hard work that went into it!

PASTORAL CARE

I have had 10 pastoral connections. I will be meeting with Lay Pastoral Associates on November 14th. Virtual Lunch with the Minister has resumed at noon on Tuesdays.

PROGRAMMING

I met with the Membership Committee on November 8th. I was sorry to miss participating in this session of Our Journeys and look forward to the next one!

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on October 15th and the prompt is in honor of LGBTQ history month. We will next meet on November 19th and the prompt is a reflection on gratitude by Ross Gay.

Soul Matters Sharing Circles have met four times. We have averaged 14 participants.

A-TEAM

The A-Team met on October 28 and November 11th. Here are highlights of items discussed and decisions made.

We tweaked the Covid Matrix that was then sent out to the congregation with the context that it may be revised and is not set in stone.

Clare F-A learned that our filters need to be cleaned and that we don't need fancier filters or quarterly checks.

We celebrated the hire of Arkady Thompson as our Bookkeeper. Arkady began on November 1. Thanks to Sue Royer for wading through the steps necessary to allow Arkady, who lives in NJ, to become part of the TUUC staff team. Kai will research Google cloud options for encrypted file sharing with Arkady.

Sue Royer and Clare Flynn Avallone have met with the AV Team and the Worship Team and selected a company with whom we hope to work on getting the technology and training we need to be able to offer multi-platform worship. It will take this small company 4-6 weeks to get the equipment once we sign the contract. Verizon estimates it will take them 4 weeks to get us connected to FIOS. Hopefully both will happen at the same time. If not, Plan B is to upgrade our Comcast service for a month.

We approved asking Strategic Factory to design a new sign to replace the one destroyed by a car accident. We have been informed that the insurance company of the car involved WILL cover our \$1,000 deductible and any additional expenses. We are soliciting a design that is 2 sided, with interior lighting, a chalice with a double circle, color for the chalice and/or a rainbow stripe, which reads Towson Unitarian Universalist (Church), 1710 Dulaney Valley, towsonuuc.org, Welcome, and which has space for a camera to be installed south facing.

When our books are caught-up, we will review where we are with the budget.

The UUA has informed us that Minister and staff health insurance premiums will increase by 6% beginning January 1, 2022. And there may be another adjustment of up to 2.5% for age. However, there is no plan to increase again in June (which happened last June.) Also, dental insurance rates will not change. Our Outreach Coordinator has accepted a new, full-time position with Microsoft. While he plans to try to continue to work for TUUC, his health insurance will be through Microsoft by the end of the year.

COVID CARE FUND

The fund still has a balance of \$673.53.

WIDER COMMUNITY

I participated in a virtual meeting hosted by the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies about their Congregational Leaders Fellowship. It is a year-long program in which leaders of religious communities (3 people from each religious community) come together across traditions, monthly, to learn and dialogue. Partnerships are then formed between two different congregations to combat religious bias and bigotry through promoting interreligious understanding, deepening relationships, and cultivating spaces of belonging. While it sounded interesting, I realized that I don't have the bandwidth to take on such a commitment in early 2022. I attended the annual meeting of the Assistance Center of Towson Churches.

At the invitation of The Rev. David Carl Olsen, I attended a meeting of BRIDGE a faith-based advocacy group whose mission is to demonstrate and advance justice in the world. Its leaders are predominately African-American. The meeting I attended was on Critical Race Theory---what it is, and what it is not. I plan to attend the December meeting of this group to learn more.

DENOMINATION

I attended the CUUMA Leadership Team meeting and the monthly CUUMA meeting.

Karyn Marsh and I communicated about her Committee on Ministry which she hopes will meet for the first time by the end of the month.

POSSIBILITY FOR MINISTERIAL INTERN 2022-2024

We have been approached by a seminarian interested in doing a half time internship with us beginning in the fall of 2022 and going until 2024. She is not seeking a stipend. She is seeking a UU community committed to the formation of the next generation of UU clergy. Her areas of interest include community organizing, disability and domestic abuse advocacy. She has been attending TUUC worship and is an active participant in CUUMA. Sue, Andrew, and I have met with her. I am very excited by this possibility and welcome your questions and thoughts.

PERSONAL

Thank you for your support as I address my new diagnosis of “vestibular migraines.” This is not like the migraine phenomenon with which I was familiar when I was able to take a pill and feel better in 2 hours. Now, I’m making my way through The Treatment Pie.

The Treatment Pie



I’ve discovered that the Misc slice includes things like new glasses to cut down on computer glare.

While helpful, I can assure you that Karyn Marsh’s pies are more delicious!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare, 11/11/21

Appendix 2:
President’s Report
Programs & Ministry

Organized technical ushers and assisted with ushering for several Sunday services. Attended the meeting of the Social Action Committee. Facilitated process steps for TUUC to make a monetary contribution of \$400 to the Assistance Center of Towson Churches for Thanksgiving Baskets, in advance of donations coming in from congregants. Attended Writing as A Spiritual Practice.

Volunteered in person at Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood. Patty Barry led the lesson and activities. Also volunteering from TUUC were Nina Della Vecchia, Ginger Ashley, Craig Lee, Dan Phalen, and Dave Haupt. Wrote to my pen pal (UU Church of the Larger Fellowship Worthy Now Prison Ministry).

Re-engaged as Hybrid Ministries Team Leader: spoke with Tony Bonta about a possible interim solution based on a Mevo camera, joined House & Grounds Head Clare Flynn-Avallone in meeting John Morris from Armbruster AV at TUUC on 11/2. We received Armbruster's proposal on 11/4 and circulated it to the Hybrid Ministries and Worship Teams. Met with each team to solicit questions and concerns. Summarized questions for Clare F-A's review and then delivery back to Armbruster AV. We told them that our goal is to be ready for hybrid services by December 1.

Board & Governance

Reverend Clare and I signed the new Ministerial Agreement between on 11/3!! We forgot to get a photo. Copies of the agreement were forwarded to the church office, the Board members, and the UUA Transitions Office. Signed the Community Minister Affiliation Agreement with Karyn Marsh on behalf of TUUC.

The Small Business Administration has approved forgiveness of the second draw of TUUC's Paycheck Protection Program loan. The amount forgiven is \$59,300 in principal and \$398.63 in interest. Together with the first draw, TUUC benefitted from \$118,600 in principal and \$1,064.11 in interest being forgiven. Signed an application for TUUC to use PNC's Pinnacle system for ACH origination. This will allow us to pay bills and invoices without physical checks being mailed by PNC.

Hosted a listening session with the Board on 10/24. The discussion topics were our re-opening plan and the Eighth Principle. In addition to Board members, fifteen people attended. We had good discussions on both topics. Susan Riggs took minutes. Thank you to Ellie Hughes who updated the matrix and presented at the meeting.

Participated in internal discussions regarding securing the return of TUUC's property from our former contract bookkeeper and the resolution of disputed invoices.

Met with Andrew Hager to discuss church business including the Program Council. Met with Rev. Clare on Zoom on church matters. Attended the A-Team meeting on 10/28, to assist Rev. Clare and to work on hybrid ministries.

Attended the UUA CER Zoom meeting for congregational leaders on 11/9. Learned that some congregations are encouraging congregants to hum during in-person worship

as an alternative to singing. At one small church, everyone goes outside to sing during the service and then re-enters the building to resume worship.

Church As Employer

On 10/25, requested Board approval via email to waive the requirement to post the open bookkeeper position in the Threshold and on our web site. Approval was unanimous.

Worked with Rev. Clare and Board officers to investigate how to handle TUUC's tax obligations for our new bookkeeper, Arkady Thompson. She lives in New Jersey and will be working remotely. We contacted Ferguson, Schetelich, and Ballew for their advice; we will be incurring fees for that consultation. I opened a business registration with the State of New Jersey on behalf of TUUC. Enabled view access to TUUC's Schwab accounts for Arkady. Sent her a welcome email.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President, 11/10/2021

Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report

On Sunday, October 24, I helped lead the Service regarding UU@UN with Tom Zeller.

After that service, I attended the board listening session regarding church reopening policies and the Eighth Principle.

During the first week of November, I met with Sue Royer to discuss various church issues. We talked about reopening, accountability, and the nominating committee. At Sue's direction, I have emailed the members of the nominating committee so that we may begin the work of finding candidates for next year's slate.

I have met with the auction committee and I am involved in planning the entertainment for that event. I am working with Tracy Hall and Tony Bonta and seeking other contributions.

The program Council met on Wednesday, November 10. We discussed the eighth Principle, the ethics of using Facebook for church communication, and a church-wide audit of programming, which will take place in the spring. (The audit will ask each program/committee to evaluate its work as it relates to the mission and vision of the church.

Cabin fever continues to meet weekly. Recent films have included *Charlie Says* and *I Love You Phillip Morris*.

Respectfully submitted, Andrew Hager, November 12, 2021

Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report

Arkady Thompson began as TUUC bookkeeper on November 1, 2021. She's working diligently to bring books to date, but this month's financial report is only accurate to the extent I have reviewed financial institution statements.

The former bookkeeper has rejected a proposal to pay her for time worked in August and September until the contract was terminated in exchange for turning over her keys to the office, safe and copy room as well as any paper files she has.

Bank deposits for October total \$48,047.18. Breeze reflects donations during October of \$21,504.92. The first quarter endowment contribution of \$9,466.10 was moved into the Schwab money market account on October 14, correcting my error in September where I moved money from the church to the endowment instead of to the church as intended. We were notified on October 26 that the second PPP loan of \$59,300.00 has been forgiven.

The endowment value at month end was \$ 1,335,468.48. Unrestricted bank balances totaled \$219,691.44.

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, November 14, 2021

Appendix 5: Endowment Committee Report

Board of Trustees,

The Endowment Committee, currently made up of Marilyn Maze, Claudia Sumler, Wendell Finner, and John Barry, did not have a quarterly zoom to prepare a presentation for the November Board meeting. As the Chair, I am proposing no modifications to the Endowment Fund at this time.

To review, from the May 2021 consent agenda documentation, no modifications to the Endowment Fund were recommended. From the September 2021 presentation, our committee recommended (and the Board approved) transferring \$40,000 from Vanguard S&P 500 Fund into the Vanguard Intermediate-Term Corporate Bond Index Admiral Shares.

For the November 2021 presentation, no modifications are being proposed. Below is a snapshot of the endowment assets as of 11/12/2021. Our environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) is currently at 34.8%

TUUC ENDOWMENT FUND SUMMARY						
ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE PRESENTATION FOR NOVEMBER 2021 TRUSTEE MEETING						
	11/12/2021		8/31/2021		5/18/2021	
NAME	11/12/2021 BALANCE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	8/31/2021 BALANCE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	5/18/2021 BALANCE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Vanguard 500 Index Fd	415,545	30.5%	440,731	33.1%	400,671	32.2%
Vanguard FTSE Social Fd	414,193	30.4%	398,959	30.0%	355,851	28.6%
Vanguard Total Intl Fd	168,666	12.4%	167,483	12.6%	164,442	13.2%
Schwab US Small Co FD	214,407	15.8%	203,998	15.3%	193,440	15.6%
Vanguard Intermediate-Term Bd	88,822	6.5%	50,317	3.8%	49,103	3.9%
Cash & Cash Investments	59,383	4.4%	68,898	5.2%	80,330	6.5%
Total Endowment	1,361,016	100.0%	1,330,387	100.0%	1,243,838	100.0%
Socially Responsible	473,576	34.8%	467,857	35.2%	436,182	35.1%
Transaction proposed by the Endowment Committee for November 2021 Board of Trustee Action						
NONE						

Respectfully submitted by the Chair of the committee,
John Barry, 11/12/2021