

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

Date/Time:	7:30 pm
Meeting:	Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Angela Castillo-Epps, Wendell Finner, Ellie Hughes, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Sue Royer, Samantha Saalfeld
Absent:	Andrew Hager
Guests:	Karyn Marsh
Location:	Join Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 815 4806 6486 Passcode: 992437
Next meeting:	November 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	10/20
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	10/20
Read reports	All	10/20

Scheduled Agenda:

The meeting convened at 7:33 pm

Chalice Lighting	Angela Castillo-Epps
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Go-Around Question: All shared, especially Clare's good news about not needing surgery.	All
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Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from the Sept 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 Board Disclosure Report (Appendix 5)	Susan Riggs
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Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Sue Royer asked the Board if any items need to be moved from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda. Ellie had one correction to the draft September minutes. All other reports were accepted without discussion.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 - 15 minutes</i>	
Membership Committee Report Patty is leading a 4-week group using materials relating to Soul Matters curriculum. The UUA resource has been wonderful. There have been 3 meetings so far for newcomers. She is very excited about this group process. The participants also seem excited as well. She is looking into a training for people who do hospitality, and looking for a more inclusive congregation. There is a small fee and Sue reminded her that there is \$ in the budget for that. Angela also remarked that the Soul Matters materials are really good. Clare said she is hoping to put together a group of 20 somethings as new members. Wendell had several questions. Is the committee thinking about ways of welcoming new people during coffee hour? Ways to connect without asking where they go to school or what work they do. Either could be judgmental. Might be better to ask "What brought you here today", or "what brings you joy"? Patty offered to write a Threshold article about this.	Patty Barry
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 15 minutes</i>	
Affiliate Community Minister Postponed Karyn Marsh's ordination until the Spring. Rev. Clare is suggesting that Karyn become a "Community Minister" with TUUC. Karyn spoke to that topic. It's required as part of her preliminary fellowship with the UUA, since she is not working at a church. The Board must approve of this relationship. Also, a committee to oversee this must be formed, and would meet monthly. Karyn will not be on the Lay Worship Associates committee, in contrast to what's stated in the draft agreement that was sent to the Board. An updated version will be provided for signature. Karyn will lead one service per year. She will probably stay at Johns Hopkins as a chaplain for a second year. Ellie asked about the clause regarding close relationships, and Karyn explained. Wendell asked about her commitments overall and what time she has. She spoke about possibly re-invigorating our CUUPS group (leading UU Pagan rituals). Also, she will focus on training for new members of the Lay Pastoral Associations team.	Rev. Clare

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Decision: The Board unanimously approved TUUC entering into a relationship with Karyn Bergmann Marsh, M. Div, as an Affiliate Community Minister.	
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 15 minutes</i>	
Board Donation for Auction Possible to do a Games night with the Board, like we did last year, on Zoom. Looking at a Saturday night in January. Possible to do Jan. 15. We can duplicate the write up from last year. Samantha will write up and submit it to the auction committee. Decision: The Board will donate “Party games with the Board” to the auction.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #4 – 15 minutes</i>	
Draft Ministerial Agreement Sue said this has been worked on for a while. It is to be reviewed and updated every three years. The new agreement is updated. The UUA came out with a new template over the summer. Better wording in some areas. Decision: The Board approved the revised Ministerial Agreement!	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 15 minutes</i>	
Re-opening Plan The A-team developed a matrix based on guidance from the UUA, models from other UU churches, and using COVID Act Now as the source of metrics. Baltimore County is still at the High risk level. Numbers are coming down, but we are not there yet. One hold-up to re-opening is that we still don’t have dual platform or hybrid capacity. Comments on the plan: Some choirs are singing together in the medium range (we are at High). Wendell asked how close we are to being dual platform. Rev. Clare said that it is being worked on, including purchasing a camera. We are not there yet. Possible to have someone come in to record, but that probably won’t work. We should talk about vaccine mandates (and medical exemptions). Wendell said he was in favor of a vaccine mandate. Discussion about the matrix and parameters to be used to figure out how and when to re-open. Ellie spoke about using the “Dimmer switch” approach rather than the “On/Off” switch approach to re-opening. Discussion about re-opening, to clarify our approach before the listening session scheduled for this Sunday (Oct 24). We are trying to do this thoughtfully, but the numbers are changing all the time.	Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #6 – 15 minutes</i>	
Treasurer’s Report (Appendix 4)	Wendell Finner

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Wendell reported. He said that the next Treasurer's report as part of the discussion agenda should be in December. Hopefully he'll have a more accurate view of our financial picture by then, after the new bookkeeper is on board. We have sufficient cash on hand to pay staff and to pay bills.	
<i>Agenda Item #7 – 15 minutes</i>	
Annual Vision of Ministry, Open Questions, Board Goals (Appendix 6) Sue led a discussion. We looked at a draft of the Annual Vision of Ministry, Open questions, and Board goals. Go around to all on this. Some re-wording was done on the Open questions. The revisions made the document clearer about our intentions. Some discussion on the age range for Young Adults/Emerging Young Adults. Decision: We approved the Annual Vision of Ministry, Open Questions and Board Goals.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #8 – 10 minutes</i>	
Miscellaneous: - Listening Session on Sun 10/24 at 12 noon – Re-opening plan and Eighth Principle	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #9 – 5 minutes</i>	
Agenda items for the next Board meeting: Endowment Committee report, Stewardship plans, Open Question discussion: 8 th Principle, debrief from the Board Listening session. Report from the A team on re-opening	Susan Riggs
Process Observation Report	Ellie Hughes

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm

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: April, 2022

Annual Auction: 11/20

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

Appendix 1: Minister's Report

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

9/11 was a beautiful day to remember, outside at TUUC, the beautiful blue skies 20 years ago that filled with smoke and tragedy. Great gratitude to Sue Royer, Tracy Hall, Andy Peterson, and Janet Kuperstein for all of their assistance.

We celebrated our second annual Water Communion on September 12 with photographs of water that symbolized how it goes with our spirits.

September 19th the worship service focused on Criminal Justice reform and we were joined by Nicole Hanson-Mundell from Out For Justice (a TUUC Community partner.) Great gratitude to Wendell Finner for his role in this service and in our partnership.

On September 26, I watched the wonderful Lay Worship Associate's worship service about the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly.

On October 3, we began our exploration of what it means to cultivate our relationship to faith. Specifically, I focused on Universalism since we were bidding a fond farewell to our most vocal self-identified Universalist, Steve Finner as he moved back to Vermont.

The October 10th worship service focused on cultivating our relationship to earth by lifting up creation myths---and specifically some creation myths and poetry from Indigenous traditions for Indigenous People's Day and for the climate action against Fossil Fuels in DC.

The October 17th service will focus on how to respond to the disintegration of "we" in America. Its origins were an e-mail I received from a TUUC member about having a hard time forgiving those who refused to get vaccinated for non-medical reasons.

I officiated at the virtual celebration of life for Al Peabody on September 18th. Although we had hoped to meet in person, it was a deeply meaningful service with family and friends sharing.

I officiated at the wedding of Nicole and Clay Condell on September 24th at Basignani Winery. It was a picture-perfect evening for a picture perfect wedding!

I will be officiating at the celebration of life for Dick Scholle this Saturday at 10 a.m. at Peaceful Alternatives.

I met with colleagues for a Minister Brainstorming Virtual meeting to discuss the November Soul Matters theme on "Holding History."

I met with Lay Worship Associates on September 20th. Having lost Steve Finner and Tim Boniface as Lay Worship Associates, we did not feel we had the critical mass to continue weekly Vespers services at this time.

I have communicated with Karyn Marsh about a Roots and Wings ritual to mark Samhain in the grove at 5 p.m. on October 31.

I met with the Ordination Planning Team for Karyn Marsh on September 27 and we decided to move the ordination to April due to ongoing high rate of transmission of Covid in Baltimore County. Karyn would very much like to have an in-person celebration!

Am sending the Board our proposal for Karyn to become an Affiliate Community Minister of TUUC. This designation will support Karyn's renewal process with the UUA. And TUUC will benefit from Karyn's training and ministry. It is a win-win proposal.

I attended, virtually, the ordination of Dayna Edwards at Cedar Lane on October 9.

PASTORAL CARE

I have had 12 pastoral connections. I met with Lay Pastoral Associates on September 19 and October 10. Virtual Lunch with the Minister has resumed at noon on Tuesdays.

PROGRAMMING

Joyce and I have met weekly to discuss her participation in worship and how the Family Gatherings and Youth Group bonfires are going. While nine families participated at the first gathering at TUUC, the two gatherings in parks were attended by only two families the first time and no families last Sunday. Eight youth participated in the first bonfire. There has not been a critical mass of youth or Youth Group Advisors for the subsequent ones that were planned. This is frustrating.

I met with the Membership Committee on September 13 and am currently scheduled to participate in the small group session for newcomers on the evening of October 17th.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on September 24th with a prompt on trees. I had prepared a session for Oct. 1 with a prompt on October. I became quite ill an hour before it started. Lila Wisotzki kindly facilitated in my absence. We are scheduled to meet on Friday and the prompt is in honor of LGBTQ history month.

Soul Matters Sharing Circles have met twice. While all 20 participants have not attended either session, we have a nice mix of long- time participants and new participants (and some new friends!)

A-TEAM

The A-Team met on September 22 and October 11. Here are highlights of items discussed and decisions made.

We decided not to pay for Bayview Restoration to return to take samples. Clare F-A assumes dander was in carpet. It did not seem worth the money to do another air sample.

Clare Flynn Avallone followed up with Chason. They reported that the amount of air going into spaces in the building is sufficient. There are no signs of a dead zone.

They recommended that we install Iwave on our three units at \$680 for each unit. The A-Team approved this proposal with funds to come out of the remediation project line item. The Iwaves will be installed on Oct. 22nd.

They also recommended running fans in the summer—not to just cool air---but to clean it. Iwave does not cause ozone to be put back into the church building.

Chason will change our filters quarterly and we need to find and train a team to change them monthly. When Iwave is installed, we will ask Chason about whether a higher rated MERV filter will give us better air quality or if the ones we have are sufficient.

We will further research air purifiers with HEPA filter that does not ionize. Joyce's office does not have a window that opens.

Dan and Rev. Clare worked with Ellie Hughes and then approved the TUUC Covid Matrix which is coming to you by separate e-mail. We are using the Covid Act Now metrics because it turned out to be easier to do so for the five categories and they incorporate CDC data. When we met, Baltimore County was still in the red zone. As I type, we are in the yellow zone. But our plan is to wait two weeks to make sure things are stable before moving from high to medium. So we are keeping the building closed through October.

Gallery Unicorn has been informed we hope the building will be open in January (after the holidays when GU didn't usually have a show.)

The A-Team did approve the Music Ministry's request for a Drum Circle outside and the Roots and Wings request for a Samhain ritual outside with pre-registration, masking, and appropriate social distancing.

In terms of multi-platform ministry, Sue Royer and Clare Flynn Avallone will talk to Andy and Tony. Our first bid for equipment was a grand vision with a very high price tag and no clear way to run this very expensive equipment. So, in the words of Clare F-A, "We are looking for an efficiency before we buy the house."

We know right now that our Wi-Fi needs to be improved to do any streaming. We had received a bid from Comcast and asked Verizon for one after the meeting.

Dynamo did our electrical mapping and we now have every outlet accounted for and panels beautifully labeled. They saw no sign that we would max out our capacity for more technology.

We received one bid for our sign replacement and are awaiting a second one.

COVID CARE FUND

The fund still has a balance of \$673.53.

WIDER COMMUNITY

So grateful that Wendell Finner invited Nicole Hansen, Executive Director of Out For Justice, to speak in worship on September 19th on embracing the possibility for criminal justice reform.

I participated in a clergy breakfast hosted by the Assistance Center of Towson Churches. TUUC Member Roslyn Canosa was featured as Treasurer of ACTC.

Because of health issues, I was not able to attend the Women's Health Care action in Annapolis on Oct. 2nd.

DENOMINATION

I attended a welcome meeting for new Good Officers to the UUMA.

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

I attended a virtual meeting of local UU ministers.

Rev. David Carl Olsen has invited me to deliver the prayer in pre-recorded Unity Sunday service on October 24 (it's usually held in May.)

PERSONAL

On Oct. 1, after exercising for 100 minutes, I felt like I was going to pass out. I also got terribly nauseous and was vomited. When I was still not keeping down fluids at 8 p.m. Don took me to the emergency room. I was diagnosed with vertigo. I'm now talking to specialists about the cause of my ongoing dizziness since Oct. 1 and what the next steps will be. I will keep Sue and the staff informed of what I learn and the plan for treatment. My thanks to Sue for her caring e-mail to the congregation and to you, the members of the TUUC Board of Trustees, for your understanding.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare, October 13, 2021

Appendix 2: President's Report Programs & Ministry

Organized technical ushers and assisted with ushering for several Sunday services.

Presented my update from General Assembly during the worship service on 9/26.

Attended the meeting of the Social Action Committee. Wrote several blurbs for the Threshold. Attended Writing as A Spiritual Practice.

Along with eight others from TUUC, volunteered in person at Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood for the first time since March, 2020. Patty Barry led the lesson and activities.

Also volunteering from TUUC were Nina Della Vecchia, Stephen Brown-Pearne, Ginger Ashley, Craig Lee, Dan Phalen, and Dave Haupt.

Board & Governance

Joined Rev. Clare and Andrew Hager for an exploratory discussion via Zoom with a seminarian who is looking for part-time ministerial internship starting in the Fall of 2022 for two church years.

Met with the other three Board officers, Andrew Hager, Wendell Finner, and Susan Riggs, on 9/29 to review the Board disclosure forms. We found no potential conflicts of interest.

With Church Administrator Kai Aiyetoro, applied for forgiveness for the second draw of our Paycheck Protection Program loan on 9/30. Our application passed the PNC screening and has been sent to the SBA for review and processing.

Was a participant in the meeting regarding the situation with our contract bookkeeper where we made the decision to terminate the contract for cause. Supported discussions on process steps related to this decision.

Met in person outside with Andrew Hager to discuss church business including the Program Council. Met several times on Zoom with Rev. Clare on church matters. Attended the A-Team meeting on 10/11, to assist Rev. Clare and offer my help to the hybrid ministries work.

Attended the UUA CER Zoom meeting for congregational leaders on 10/12 and learned about several upcoming workshops of interest. We shared our journeys on hybrid ministries, adoption of the Eighth Principal and stewardship.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President, 10/13/2021

Appendix 3:
President-Elect's Report
October 13, 2021

Since the last board meeting, I have attended two meetings of the Auction Committee. I am now Entertainment Chair for the event. I am coordinating with Tracy Hall and musicians to help make the event the best it can be.

On October 6, I met with Sue Royer to discuss church matters and look toward the future. We do this most months, and it's both productive and diverting.

Program Council did not meet during October. I sent an email reminding everyone of the policy for new programs and encouraging programs/committees to donate to the upcoming auction.

Along with Reverend Clare and Sue Royer, I met with a prospective ministerial intern on September 29. This is very early in the process. Both she and we agreed to keep in touch and speak again in a few months.

Cabin Fever meets every week (except for October 16, the one weekend a year we take off). Recent films included *Watermelon Man*, *Crimson Peak*, and *Jacob's Ladder*.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Hager

Appendix 4:
Treasurer's Report
For September 2021

Kai has done an heroic job keeping bills and employees paid since the termination of the bookkeeper contract, but we won't have accurate books until a replacement bookkeeper arrives. We've interviewed two candidates with experience catching up church books after longer gaps, and have a second interview with one such candidate on October 25.

Bank deposits for September total \$14,629.32 (excluding money moved from Schwab to PNC). Not all the \$32,527.00 in September contributions shown in Breeze were deposited before month end.

The endowment value at month end was \$ 1,287,031.82. Unrestricted bank balances totaled \$184,717.77.

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, October 13, 2021

Appendix 5:
Board Disclosure Report

Officer's meeting, Sept 29, 2021

The Board met to discuss the Board disclosure forms. There were no concerns. We met via Zoom at 11:00 am.

Rev Clare: No concerns
Angela Castillo-Epps: No concerns
Samantha Saalfeld: No concerns
Andrew Hager: No concerns
Sue Royer: No concerns
Wendell Finner: No concerns
Patty Barry: No concerns
Susan Riggs: No concerns
Ellie Hughes: No concerns

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 am

Susan Riggs, Board Secretary

Appendix 6:

Annual Vision of Ministry, Open Questions, Board Goals

Towson Unitarian Universalist Church

Annual Vision of Ministry:

These are the top priority goals for the congregation this year. These will guide our actions and guide the Administrative Team, the staff, and the Program Council in setting priorities for the year:

1. During these COVID times, maintain and strengthen our ministry, including drawing in visitors, supporting families, and reaching those for whom Zoom isn't working. Implement multi-platform programs, initially for worship. Foster engagement with congregants and guests.
2. Actively work to be more accessible to people with disabilities.

Open Questions:

These are questions for which we don't have the answers and will not be making decisions soon. We will discuss them at future board meetings and hold listening sessions with the congregation to solicit ideas. These are "balcony" questions. No one is expected to take action on these questions this year. The board is inviting the congregation to participate in influencing our direction related to these open questions.

1. How can we strengthen our work and give congregants the tools to dismantle white supremacy, in ourselves, our church, and around us? How can we carry out recommendations from Widening the Circle of Concern?
2. How can we cultivate a thriving Young Adult community at TUUC? (Young Adults defined as ages 18 – 35)
3. What changes do we need to make to our approach to racial, social, and environmental justice actions? How can we provide opportunities for meaningful engagement in justice actions for more people, including youth, newcomers, and those not on a committee?

Board Goals:

1. Update the Ministerial Agreement between Rev. Clare and the church.
2. Lead the charge to adopt the 8th Principle as a congregation
3. Enable and support the Right Relations Team.