

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees
September 15, 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:	John Barry
Location:	Join Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 815 4806 6486 Passcode: 992437
Next meeting:	October 20, 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.		
Submit Board disclosure form	All	9/8
Sign-ups for chalice lighting, process observation and writing an article for the Threshold (monthly) – to Susan Riggs	All	9/15
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	9/15
Read reports	All	9/15

Scheduled Agenda:

The meeting convened at 7:30

Chalice Lighting	Rev Clare
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Go-Around Question	All
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Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from the August 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.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 - 15 minutes</i>	
Endowment Committee Report See Appendix 5. The Endowment Committee recommended transferring \$40,000 from Vanguard S&P 500 Fund to the Vanguard Intermediate-Term Corporate Bond Index Admiral Shares. Decision: After discussion, the Board voted unanimously in favor of making this transfer of funds. Wendell will implement on 9/17/21. Decision: The Board appointed Claudia Sumler to join the Endowment Committee and she has accepted the position. Claudia is filling the position vacated by Tim Boniface when he moved. Steve Finner is also moving, therefore there is another open position to fill.	John Barry
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 45 minutes</i>	
Open Questions, Annual Vision of Ministry, Board Goals Continued from the August Board Retreat ...Sue Royer said that last year we spent 3 meetings working on this. Some goals are more ongoing, and some are more relevant at certain times. Sue looked at drafting the Annual Vision of Ministry/Open questions/Board goals. Our 3 open questions from last year are 1) what changes do we need to make to be more accessible to those living with disabilities? 2) How can we work at dismantling white supremacy? 3) What changes do we need to make to more fully live our values through the stewardship of our resources? See draft for this year's goals, etc. She said that after SB 8 passed in Texas, she began thinking about our Social Action Committee doing more than just our work with community partners. She also began thinking about leveraging the UUA's umbrella social justice "brand" of Side with Love. Is it possible to have the Social Action Committee work more closely with the Green Sanctuary Committee? She spoke about how moving it was for her to be on an online protest with people from Minnesota. Finally, she said she thought it important to try to pass the 8th principle (the whole congregation) this year. We also need to update our letter of agreement with Rev Clare, enable the right-relations team, and continue to follow through with our new governance policy. Andrew commented that he thought that besides implementing dual formatting for church services, it would be difficult to work much on our disability goal. Sam had the same thought. Wendell asked what	Sue Royer

<p>it meant when there are social and political goals, but not the church structure to back those up. He also said that passing the 8th principle has a lot of work associated with it. Our church does not do much in the way of direct service (such as a soup kitchen) due to our remote location. Also, our congregation is older in age. He would like to see stronger wording used. Angela agreed with him. Ellie questioned the priorities regarding retention of YRE participants and their families, Wendell agreed. Patty said that when we revise the vision of ministry, we should take out the phrase “in virtual space”. Rev Clare said that reaching more people, was separate from reaching more people with disabilities. She would like to find a way to not lose parents when their children graduate from YRE. She thought Widening the Circle of Concern would be great to have in this document. Sue thought that it will be important for us to have focus, on our goals. Angela said she thought it was important for us to be mindful of disabilities in all that we do. Rev Clare said we need to educate ourselves on the kinds of disabilities we may encounter, seen and unseen. Sue said that, for example, on all our Zooms, we should turn on closed captioning, and people should not have to ask for it. Dismantling white supremacy is important because, since most of us are white, much of what we do seems natural, be it may not be so for a person of color. Rev Clare said that dual-platform is the way of the future, and we need to be there. Sam wondered if we should have an open question on the 8th principle. Should we also have one for our Vision of Ministry. What does it mean to broaden our vision? Discussion concluded.</p>	
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p>A-Team Report Rev. Clare said she gives Kai a “Gold Star” for her work in supervising the recent renovations at church. It is almost complete. We are now doing masked, outdoor gatherings that do not include meals. Several updates on her report were given.</p>	Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #4 – 10 minutes</i>	
<p>Ordination Committee Report No new information. They are in a holding pattern, waiting to see in what way the service will be done based on COVID conditions.</p>	Samantha Saalfeld
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 10 minutes</i>	
<p>Miscellaneous Listening Session 9/26 – remove from the calendar? Sue thought this would be ok, since there are sessions each month. Sue said she looked into adding an additional person to the Endowment Committee and came up with someone. The Board agreed that she would ask this person. Executive Session for 10 minutes on the Bookkeeper situation.</p>	Sue Royer, Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #6 – 5 minutes</i>	
Agenda items for the next Board meeting:	Susan Riggs

Membership Committee Report, Board Donation for Auction, Ministerial Agreement, Board Disclosure Reports, Treasurer's Report, Church As Employer, Covid metrics for re-opening	
Process Observation Report	Patty Barry

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Key Dates: (please mark your calendar)

Listening Sessions with the Board: 9/26, 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: Sat 11/6 2 pm

Annual Auction: 11/20

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

Appendix 1: Minister's Report

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

Gratitude to Andrew Hager and Mia Hager for the wonderful Blessing of the Animals on August 29th including Mia's homily to conclude our exploration of what it means to be a people of play!

On September 5th we began our exploration of "Embracing Possibility" with a worship service on Rosh Hashana in general and the role of the shofar in particular with its pattern of a whole note, followed by broken notes, and ending with a whole noter. Gratitude to Steve Finner for playing the shofar and recommending, "Eli, Eli!"

I held two listening sessions on August 24 and August 31 about our re-opening plan (or rather our need to postpone reopening the building.) Some people expressed an interest in outdoor worship.

As a result, I will be conducting a brief service of remembrance of 9/11 on Saturday at 10 a.m. outside of TUUC. So far, 30 people have pre-registered to attend this masked and socially distanced event. I am grateful to Sue Royer for her help and support and to Andy Peterson for running audio!

This Sunday we will be celebrating our second virtual water communion.

I met with colleagues for a Minister Brainstorming Virtual meeting to discuss the October Soul Matters theme of Cultivating Relationships.

Lay Worship Associates will be meeting on September 20th.

I have met three times with Kim Peabody to plan the Zoom celebration of life for Al at 2 p.m. on September 18. Andy Peterson has agreed to run AV. Tracy Hall will lead two hymns. It will be lovely!

I have finalized plans with Nicole Hebert and Clay Condell for their small outdoor wedding for September 24 at Basignani Winery.

PASTORAL CARE

I have had 11 pastoral connections. I will be meeting with Lay Pastoral Associates on September 19. Virtual Lunch with the Minister has resumed at noon on Tuesdays.

PROGRAMMING

Joyce and I have met to discuss plans for YRE for the fall. I am excited that families will be encouraged to attend and participate in the first 15 minutes of worship on-line. Family gatherings are being planned for 3:00-4:30 outdoors at TUUC and in the wider community on Sunday afternoons to explore our Unitarian Universalist principles. Masking and social distancing will be followed to keep our students safe. YRUU (the youth group) plans to have bonfires on Friday evenings.

I will be meeting with the Membership Committee on September 13.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice resumed, virtually, on September 3 with a focus on Labor Day. Four people participated. It will meet (with one exception) on the first and third Fridays of the month.

Soul Matters Sharing Circles will resume, virtually, on September 28th. So far, 15 people have registered. I am anticipating the need for two circles.

The Ordination for Karyn Marsh Planning Team met on September 1. We are still waiting to see what the Covid metrics do in terms of whether some (or all) of it will be in person. But we are making progress with other aspects of the festivities. An announcement about how to contribute funds will go out in the newsletter.

I have had three meetings with colleagues who plan to pilot a curriculum entitled "A Date With Death Club" written by The Reverend Karen Johnston for people to explore mortality in community. Karen serves the UU congregation of East Brunswick, NJ. TUUC will pilot this curriculum in the beginning of 2022:

January 9---Getting Comfortable With Death Talk 1-3:00 p.m.
January 23---Circle of Life: Loving and Losing 1-3:00 p.m.
February 6---Dying, Death, and Poetry 1-3:00 p.m.
February 20---After Life/Afterlives 1:00-3:00 p.m.
March 6---Good Life, Good Death 1:00-3:00 p.m.
March 20---Eco Grief, Extinction Fears, Processing 1:00-3:00 p.m.

A-TEAM

The A-Team met on August 19 and September 1. Here are highlights of items discussed and decisions made.

Kai deserves a medal for all of her work on the remediation project! She met contractors, ensured that their work was inspected, oversaw moving boxes back in,

arranged for furniture to be moved, and has, essentially, single-handedly set-up her office and Rev. Clare's office---including painting bookshelves a beautiful blue.

Ms. FeFe sent a revised and detailed contract. She has agreed to do 2 hour cleanings, twice a month for \$50 an hour until we reopen. This is significantly less money than her original contract of \$900 a month.

We approved Chason's proposal to insulate the fresh air intake to reduce condensation in pipe for \$581. Money will come out of the House and Grounds budget. This work was done on September 7.

Chason said they were going to do an airflow check at the same time that they insulated the pipes. However, the person doing the work said he didn't know what we wanted, So he recommended putting airflow filters on the HVAC units. These filters are not inexpensive and the A-Team will need to discuss. We also need to discuss if we are going to need additional air purifying equipment (such as in the nursery.)

Finally, we need to bring back Bayview Restoration to ensure that all the work that was done has been successful.

We know that the carpets upstairs and downstairs need to be cleaned. But we are going to wait until we are ready to open the building. In the meantime, Ms. FeFe will vacuum them.

Dan Alper shared thoughts on our re-opening plan after the Board retreat. Rev. Clare has shared them with Ellie. Rev. Clare and Ellie will meet on September 13th to look at the reopening graph/metrics that were discussed during the Board retreat. We will send the Board the results of our work.

In the meantime, the A-Team voted to approve masked, socially distanced outdoor gatherings. This means we rejected a request from the Youth Group to make s'mores at their bonfire. We also rejected a proposal from the Singles Group to have a potluck with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people on the TUUC grounds. The rate of transmission is just too high to take this risk. We informed both YRE and the Singles Group that we would consider similar proposals when Baltimore County is not in the red zone!

Equipment and other needs for hybrid ministries

ADS solutions proposed a package of equipment totaling \$48,000. This did not include someone to run the equipment.

ATS communications (Marty) recommends a subscription service---but doesn't appear to administer the subscriptions. Clare Flynn Avallone will follow-up with Marty.

Rev. Clare shared that one church is using <https://locallive.tv/worship> but does not know how this service compares, monetarily, with other solutions being discussed.

Kai learned that Verizon does not offer FIOS on Dulaney Valley Road.

We received a much lower bid from Dynamo to do a survey of our electrical map. We are going to go with Dynamo. Since it should come in well under \$3,500, we are not asking the Board for approval.

We received insurance money for our sign. We are now getting two bids on two specific designs that are simple, easy to maintain, and have lighting that will be easy to replace.

Cash position from report Dan. TUUC took in \$23,000 but spent \$36,000 plus...so we spent significantly more money than we brought in during July. \$11,000 was for dander remediation.

As a Board, we need to figure out where the money for remediation is coming from. It is my understanding that we have spent just under \$20,000. We have \$203,000 in unrestricted cash.

MINISTERIAL LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Great gratitude to Sue Royer, Angela Castillo-Epps, Andrew Hager, and Wendell Finner for working with me to update my Ministerial Letter of Agreement with TUUC using the template provided by the UUA and UUMA!

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION WITH KARYN MARSH ABOUT BECOMING A TUUC COMMUNITY AFFILIATE MINISTER

I want the Board to be aware that Karyn Marsh has approached me about becoming a community affiliate minister of TUUC. What does this mean? It does not mean that she would be called by the congregation to be another minister of TUUC. It does not mean that we would have to pay her a stipend (as we did for our Ministerial Intern.) It means that we would be the congregation that helps her to renew her preliminary fellowship with the UUA. How? A committee (including me) would meet with her monthly to talk about her chaplaincy at Hopkins (which is paying her to be a chaplain!) She might preach for us once a year. She might offer a training for TUUC Lay Pastoral Associates. She might discuss real case studies from her experiences at Hopkins (without names) and UU theology. I might refer weddings or memorial services of non-members to Karyn. She would be compensated by those individuals. At the end of the year, we would write an evaluation for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Karyn needs this annual evaluation for three years to continue her credentialing as she moves to Full Fellowship with the UUMA and UUA.

Please know, this is not a discussion item for September's Board meeting. Karyn is going to provide me with a proposed affiliation agreement for us to discuss and then for me to bring to the Board in October. But as preparation for that meeting, you might want to review: <https://uuscm.org/GuideToAffiliationForCongregations/>

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

I am very happy to share that Rob Canosa has agreed to serve on the TUUC Personnel Committee. In his professional life, Rob helped to manage 200 employees for Catholic Charities. At TUUC, he taught YRE with his wife, Roslyn, and served on the Committee on Ministries. He was Chair of the COM in 2013. He looks forward to the opportunity to serve on the TUUC Personnel Committee.

COVID CARE FUND

The fund still has a balance of \$673.53.

WIDER COMMUNITY

Thanks to Wendell Finner who 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 appreciate the opportunity to work with Wendell and Nicole as we raise funds for Out For Justice.

I participated in a leadership call for Planned Parenthood Federation of America on September 2nd to learn more about the Texas anti-abortion law that the Supreme Court allowed to go into effect in Texas. There will be a march on October 2nd in front of the Supreme Court to protest this law.

DENOMINATION

The Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association had to reschedule the live training for new Good Officers. So, I have begun my training through video and have had two meetings regarding this position.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Clare, September 9, 2021

Appendix 2: President's Report

Programs & Ministry

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

Spoke with new volunteer technical usher: Dick Wobus. Attended the meeting of the Social Action Committee. Wrote an article for Threshold about the Board Retreat.

Attended Writing As A Spiritual Practice. Spoke with a potential new volunteer for Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood: Dave Haupt

Attended one of the Ministry in Uncertain Times listening sessions. Attended a virtual Line 3 protest sponsored by the UU Ministry for Earth, and which featured indigenous music, dancing, and speakers.

Attended the Teach Truth Protest and Rally at Towson East Manor Park on 8/29, along with others from TUUC (Natalie Avallone, organizer, Clare Flynn-Avallone, Rev. Clare, Trish Lott, Spice Kleinmann, Kathy Rameriz (sign-maker)).

During follow-up with Andy Peterson, learned that he will need to step back from leading the Hybrid Ministries work group.

Board & Governance

Met with Ellie Hughes, to help orient her to being on the Board. Shared resource links and discussed governance policy. Led the Board Retreat. Sent a reminder to Trustees to complete the Board Disclosure Forms. Reviewed and updated the draft minutes from the June 2021 Congregational Meeting.

Update on the Janitorial Services Contract: Ms. FeFe has added more detail to what she cleans. The A-Team asked that we not start the contract until we return to the building. In the interim, Ms. FeFe is providing cleaning for the church as requested by the A-Team.

Signed the Property Tax Exemption Application that was completed by Finance Head Dan Alper on behalf of the church. This is for the "Spragins" property, which includes the playground plus more. Church Administrator Kai Aiyetoro submitted the signed

application by the deadline. Our intent is to have the property taxes waived since we are a non-profit.

I am grateful to Dan Alper for taking on the role of Finance Head, and enabling me to no longer be a participant in A-Team meetings or decisions!

Held a Zoom meeting with a subset of the Board and Rev. Clare to review final edits to the Ministerial Agreement. After the subcommittee has completed their review, the agreement will go to the full Board for review and approval.

Reached out to the UUA Central East Region Presidents email list to see if another congregation has a part-time bookkeeper who might want some additional hours. Obtained resumes and conducted screening calls with three candidates.

Church As Employer

Requested a payroll report from our bookkeeper Raly Baltchev to confirm that pay and salary changes effective July 1 were implemented correctly. Everything was accurate for all staff except for our Communications and Outreach Coordinator. He had some sick time during the July pay period and was not paid for sick time. He is non-exempt and is only being paid for the hours he works. I suggested to Rev. Clare that she and the Personnel Committee assess whether we should be paying the Outreach Coordinator for sick time up to 8 hours/week, now that he is eligible for benefits (he is eligible for benefits due to employment aggregated across several UU churches).

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President, 9/10/2021

Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report

On August 22, I facilitated the Poetry Service with Tony Bonta. Our theme was "Play," and we had several members and friends submit poetry.

The August 29 Blessing of the Animals was a delightful service put together by Reverend Clare. I was pleased to participate with the help of my daughter, Mia.

The Program Council met on September 8, and the focus fell squarely on the upcoming auction. There was a great deal of enthusiasm for the way the event ran last year and excitement for this year's event.

The auction committee will meet on September 20, and I will attend.

Cabin Fever recently watched Annette and Magnolia, so it's been a little operatic. This week is Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

Respectfully submitted, Andrew Hager, September 9, 2021

Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report

July-August 2021

Books for the month do not seem to have been closed at the time of this report. The financial account balances were pulled online and are accurate month-end balances. Bookkeeping issues are now an action issue for the church which the President, Finance Head, Treasurer, Minister and Church Administrator are meeting to address.

Plate and Pledge receipts appear to be significantly slow this summer, but the bookkeeping may not reflect all pledges received. The total booked receipts of \$31,204.03 through July and August are a significant dropoff from the \$53,011.17 received for the same period in 2020.

We've now spent at least \$11,980.33 on the building remediation project – it looks like a few hundred dollars to the HVAC contractor may not have been included. There is \$8,680.79 in the building fund to offset it.

The endowment value at month end was \$ 1,329,897.93. Unrestricted bank balances totaled \$221,986.27. The endowment contribution of \$9466.10 was transferred in September and is not reflected in these reports.

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, September 9, 2021

Appendix 5: Endowment Committee Report

Board of Trustees,

The Endowment Committee, sans Tim Boniface, had a Zoom meeting on 9/1/2021 to prepare the September 2021 presentation to the board.

To review, from the February 2021 board presentation, \$50,000 was transferred from Vanguard S&P 500 Fund into the Vanguard Intermediate-Term Corporate Bond Index Admiral Shares.

From the May 2021 consent agenda documentation, no modifications to the Endowment Fund were recommended.

This month, our Committee recommends transferring \$40,000 from Vanguard S&P 500 Fund into the Vanguard Intermediate-Term Corporate Bond Index Admiral Shares. Our recommendation is based on the endowment fund having roughly three years of anticipated distributions available (assuming the Board authorizes withdraws of 4% of fund assets annually) in cash or short-term bond investments. If the \$40,000 is transferred, the short-term bond and cash positions will aggregate about \$160,000 -

12% of assets. This leaves 88% of the portfolio to appreciate long-term. The committee is mindful that there should be a point in time when the general equity market will pull back and having funds not subject to volatility will mitigate the reduction in overall funds available in the Endowment Fund.

Below is a snapshot of the endowment assets as of 8/31/2021. Our environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) is currently at 35.2%

TUUC ENDOWMENT FUND SUMMARY						
ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE PRESENTATION FOR SEPT 2021 TRUSTEE MEETING						
	8/31/2021		5/18/2021		2/5/2021	
	8/31/2021	PERCENTAGE	5/18/2021	PERCENTAGE	2/5/2021	PERCENTAGE
NAME	BALANCE	OF TOTAL	BALANCE	OF TOTAL	BALANCE	OF TOTAL
Vanguard 500 Index Fd	440,731	33.1%	400,671	32.2%	425,321	35.2%
Vanguard FTSE Social Fd	398,959	30.0%	355,851	28.6%	341,324	28.2%
Vanguard Total Intl Fd	167,483	12.6%	164,442	13.2%	157,867	13.1%
Schwab US Small Co FD	203,998	15.3%	193,440	15.6%	194,066	16.1%
Vanguard Intermediate-Term Bd	50,317	3.8%	49,103	3.9%	-	0.0%
Cash & Cash Investments	68,898	5.2%	80,330	6.5%	89,794	7.4%
Total Endowment	1,330,387	100.0%	1,243,838	100.0%	1,208,372	100.0%
Socially Responsible	467,857	35.2%	436,182	35.1%	431,118	35.7%
Transaction proposed by the Endowment Committee						
for September 2021 Board of Trustee Action						
Sell \$40,000 of Vanguard 500 Index Fund						
Acquire \$40,000 of Vanguard Intermediate-Term Corporate Bond						
Index Admiral Shares (VICSX)						

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the endowment committee (Steve Finner, Marilyn Maze, Wendell Finner, John Barry)

John Barry