

**Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

June 4, 2020

Final Minutes by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk

Reviewed by Burns Fisher, Lindsey Hedrick, Lindsey Sylvester, Brenna Woods, Victoria Agnew

Meeting Attendees: Victoria Agnew, John Burkitt, Burns Fisher, Lindsey Hedrick (Treasurer), Jodie K. Holway (Clerk), Carol Houde (President), Rev. Allison Palm, Rick Spitz, Lindsey Sylvester, Brenna Woods

Full Agenda: Appendix A

1. Consent Agenda

1. **MOTION** to accept May minutes and April 24th Special Meeting for PPP
2. **MOVED** by Victoria Agnew, **SECONDED** by John Burkitt, **PASSES**

2. Brief Updates, Carol Houde

1. Baseline Survey
 - i. 90 respondents so far, deadline has arrived
 - ii. Carol will send a reminder to bump it up to 100 respondents by July 1
 - iii. Wonderful comments at the end about our great pivot to online due to pandemic
 - iv. Mainly positive/heartening, some room for growth
 - v. Take a look over summer, especially Victoria Agnew and Burns Fisher who helped to author the survey
 - vi. Full Board will review the results more methodically in fall meetings

3. Minister's Report, Rev. Allison (see Appendix B)

1. Ongoing programs over summer
 - i. Children's Faith Formation was requested by parents, especially as school is over
 - ii. Adult programs too, we may well have more time and want ways to connect
2. Brainstorming session with adults last Sunday
 - i. Sometimes people wish for more connection, though don't know what to suggest
 - ii. Slight disconnect: what is the need that being in-person fulfills and then how can we fulfill these needs in other ways than being in person – unfortunately the discussion didn't get deep enough into this topic to get an answer
3. Rev. Allison is really striving to ensure that no groups get together, to STAY SAFE
 - i. It's not fair for the compromised/risky groups if others have small meets
 - ii. Lindsey Sylvester is lifting up Rev. Alison's taking a strong stand here – being strict and firm is the courageous way to go
 - iii. If you cannot safely sing at church, that's such a fundamental limit – what's the point of church without song?
4. Staff will try offering new things, but if low attendance, then what does it mean?
 - i. Could be not popular, or maybe it's a timing issue

- ii. Can get reminders via text
- iii. Sign up for reminders in Breeze, instructions in today’s newsletter
- 5. Discussion of the ways to do this not in person and not in zoom
 - i. E.g. pen pals, phone buddies
 - ii. Maybe it’s not fair to expect the church to provide these services; church already provides the tools, and people can just contact each other!
 - iii. Consider that covenant groups might fit the need?
 - iv. Some hate phone calls – especially younger adults who will only text
- 6. Decided to promote the BLM Vigil this Saturday, despite any mixed message
 - i. Tough because Rev. Allison has been so clear about not meeting in person
 - ii. Decided yes, people are looking for options to express their anger/take action
 - iii. Decided yes, the black community in Nashua doesn’t do a lot and doesn’t ask for a lot, so we surely should listen to their request to support this vigil
 - iv. Think of it this way: There’s another way to do services; no other way to do the vigil
 - v. It’s OK to not go, but we should consider because of our banner and its commitment
 - vi. What is worth taking this risk for? Haircut maybe not, dignity of black lives yes
 - vii. Might be inspiring and hopeful for our spiritual leader to show her support

4. Staff Appreciation for Exemplary Service during On-line Everything

- 1. Consider money from Board Discretionary Fund for restaurant of their choosing (takeout!) **MOTION** for the Board to give the staff a total of \$300, from the Board discretionary fund, to provide money for each of them to enjoy a nice meal **MOVED** by Brenna, **SECONDED** by Burns, **PASSED** unanimously - See screenshot!



5. Summer Retreat Planning, Vice President Brenna Woods, Rev. Allison

1. Rev. Allison will meet with next year's president Brenna and vice-president Lindsey Hedrick on June 20th to discuss this summer's annual Board retreat
 - i. 3 new people on the board, and 3 new officers including VP Lindsey Hedrick
 2. Board Survey responses will be reviewed together at the retreat
 3. Training from Laura Park
 - i. We have some consulting hours paid for and still unused
 - ii. She may attend 1-2 hours of retreat, give training Intro to Policy Governance
 - iii. People may not have had the right amount of training on this yet
 4. Discuss the topics of endowment and privilege and a capital campaign
 - i. Our church has a large endowment and its purpose is not well-defined among the congregation
 - ii. This may give an uneasy feeling of privilege and inability to act on it
 - iii. Certainly can undercut any capital campaign and requests for more funds, bequests from members, etc.
 - iv. Mark Ewert, financial consultant, we have more consulting hours with him
 - v. Board members can get our thoughts together or research before retreat
 - vi. UUA website has impressive resources to help thinking about budgets, pledge basis, endowments, and related topics: start at <https://www.uua.org/finance>
 5. Art of storytelling: this retreat we'll practice this and work on it!
 6. We need to clarify the Church's relationship with Cemetery and Preschool
 - i. This may be too big a topic for this retreat, or agenda is already too full
 7. Overall goal for the retreat: frame our Board's work for this upcoming year
- 6. Preschool Re-opening — Possibilities and Parameters due to COVID-19, Allison**
1. Preschool will meet monthly over the summer – Can they be in-person in fall?
 - i. Some of it will be decided by the state of New Hampshire
 - ii. They're under Early Childhood category; right now they can open but K-12 cannot
 2. Is there a situation where the Church would tell the Preschool no we're not comfortable with you being open? Even if the state allowed it?
 - i. Church won't be held in-person for a long while, the building is available for preschool
 - ii. Preschool staff is working hard to try to eliminate surprises, following every guideline
 1. E.g. don't go between rooms, only 10 people at a time including teachers
 2. Stay in limited areas, go in and out directly via classroom doors, not main door
 - iii. State policies may be enough or may sometimes be under-informed/political
 1. New Hampshire has published guidelines, more to come
 2. Note that one third of our board lives/works in Massachusetts, even MA said that churches can reopen very early, seemed to not take public safety into account sufficiently – are there "careful states" whose rules we can follow?
 3. Credentialing organization NAEYC also has guidelines for classrooms, etc.
 - iv. What should our policy be?
 1. Are the NH state regulations sufficient to help parents keep kids safe?
 2. Also we must consider our obligations to support parents if they are essential workers who may be pressured/forced to return to work, kids need care
 3. Could we designate some parts of campus that the preschool shouldn't use?

4. UUCN Board could set some policy to help the minister who doesn't want to make the whole decision
5. Our mission is as much as possible to give school and care for children – kids with lack of care and structure is worse for them and for the community
- v. Who to seek guidance and decisions from?
 1. Preschool board itself is well-equipped to make decisions on these topics
 2. Check with YMCA, a reputable organization that's been caring for kids of essential workers since April
 3. Check with teachers in Massachusetts
 4. What are Public schools going to do? Probably won't be known until August
- vi. But note this will not be school as we know it
 1. Even the attempt to social distance (though impossible to do perfectly) will change the way everything happens in the classroom
 2. Any false grasping for normalcy might restart the whole pandemic overall
- vii. Would it be different if they opened up as Childcare and not as a School?
 1. Four years ago the White Wing School would have been offended to suggest they're merely childcare
 2. Today's combined school with different staff might consider this differently
- viii. Budget implications of opening the Preschool
 1. Sexton Sandy Martinage's contract is 10 hours/week for school, 17 hours/week for church
 - a. Next year's budget retains this level
 - b. But if church is all online, it'll take only 12 hours per week
 - c. Leaves additional 5 hours/week for preschool, should be enough
 2. Sandy does feel comfortable cleaning these classrooms
 - a. Preschool will provide her with PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
 - b. She will be responsible to clean all the surfaces, but not the objects
 - c. Teachers will handle disinfecting all the toys
 3. Do they need special equipment, e.g. misting sprayers?
 - a. Rev. Allison hasn't seen this requirement; Rick Spitz will investigate and share this requirement from his brother's church's school
 - b. Budget will indeed have some more expenses, which would come from school's budget not church's
 4. Regulations are a moving target, no final numbers yet of course
 5. Do we have any liability for insurance if the school does open?
 - a. Church administrator Sherri Woolsey will check what is covered
 6. Church itself doesn't get any rules from the state – we are being stricter – and yes if our staff comes in to the building with Preschool then we'll have to wear masks, do contact-tracing, etc.
- ix. Preschool's own Board is a collection of experts on this topic
 1. They're better informed than government and than us on UUCN board
 2. Rev. Allison's sense is: They want to open, and if the state lets them they will
 3. We might ask that Board for a report, some data, their comparison of options
 4. Can we name any specific topics that we specifically want them to address?

- x. Preschool's current situation is pretty well prepared
 - 1. Teacher contracts have been sent, already containing standard language: "If the school is unable to operate for more than 2 weeks, this contract can be ended."
 - 2. Enrollment is already at 65
 - a. Only a couple dropped out from the original plans
 - b. These were refilled with new enrollees
 - c. Numbers are high enough to support the current teachers
- xi. Next steps:
 - 1. Preschool Board's next meeting is two weeks from now
 - 2. Rev. Allison will go back to Preschool Board with all of these above questions
 - a. She'll write up the points we just discussed for this Board's review
 - b. We can provide new ideas or fix omissions before they meet
 - 3. After their next meeting Rev. Allison will get back to us

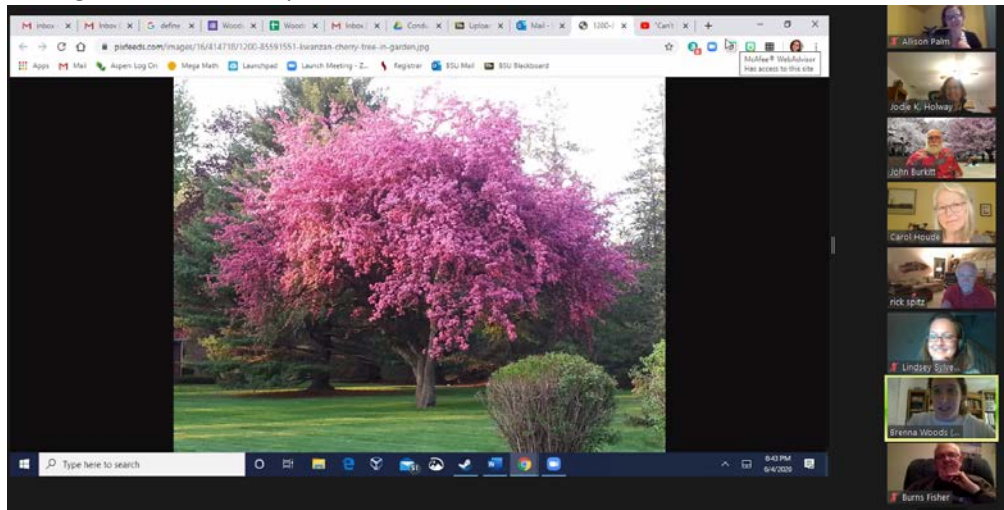
7. Annual Meeting

- 1. Review of the Budget & Brownies meeting
 - i. Went pretty well, after we got the idea of having two different versions of budget
 - ii. We'll make some adjustments about deficit based on feedback
 - iii. There was some discomfort that the budget we presented wasn't balanced
 - 1. Many places require a balanced budget to be presented
 - 2. Treasurer Lindsey Hedrick gave a great explanation that it's important to show a deficit when that is the reality
 - 3. In past years sometimes we've been over, others under
 - 4. Just shows where we're aiming to be at the end of the year
 - iv. Topic of PPP loan/grant from the U.S. government
 - 1. Topic wasn't raised at Budget & Brownies, but might be at Annual Meeting
 - a. Would be a genuine concern to discuss
 - b. No decision needed, we already decided to apply and took the money
 - c. Anyone with concerns can talk to Board after Annual Meeting
 - 2. Recall we explored it in a [dedicated Board meeting](#), April 2020
 - a. Decided to apply for this money, this was not just rubber-stamped
 - b. We decided that the PPP was for our people
 - c. Yes our staff has a calling but it's also a job supporting their families
 - d. Otherwise would consider endowment and cutting hours
 - e. We do consider our staff to be worth paying!
- 2. Voting and Speaking logistics on Zoom
 - i. Technical team is super prepared
 - 1. Several other churches already did their annual meetings successfully
 - 2. We have done more planning than those congregations did!
 - 3. We will do one final practice on letting people in from waiting room
 - ii. Did we solve the problem of who's Pro and Con at the microphones?
 - 1. Could ask them to privately message Brenna Woods if they're Yes or No

- a. She is the designated person to unmute anyone who wants to speak
- 2. Probably won't be an issue – this meeting has no controversial votes
 - a. Maybe only the PPP but no need for lots of discussion on this topic
- iii. Non-members and staff can attend, will be renamed to be “NONVOTING-Name”

8. Transition to New UUCN President, Carol Houde and Brenna Woods

- 1. Gifts of gratitude to our outgoing Board members
- 2. For outgoing president Carol Houde: gift of a flowering tree
 - i. Thank you Carol for all your service
 - ii. May this beautiful tree be a reminder of the beautiful things you did for this Board
 - iii. Carol gives us strength and courage to try harder, just a part of doing our jobs as trustees and congregants and people!
 - iv. We wish you comfort and serenity, you're not making the agendas for us anymore!!
 - v. Carol is overjoyed – she lost her cherry tree last summer, husband Steve has been talking about how to replace it – we must've read her mind 😊



- 3. For outgoing Board member John Burkitt
 - i. Cloth bag with our UU Seven Principles and a reindeer Santa Claus book
 - ii. Thank you for Personnel and linkage and job descriptions and the calligraphy mission
- 4. For outgoing Board member Rick Spitz
 - i. Books of the history and contributions of New England clockmakers – his hobby
 - ii. Thank you for Building our Vision and Ministerial process, Salary recommendation ranges, and all the Zoom support for various remote Board attendees
 - iii. Rick has served on this Board during all of Rev. Allison's years here! Very special

9. Covenantal Checkout and Closing

Appendix A: Full Agenda

Appendix B: Minister's Report

DRAFT AGENDA

Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua
June 4, 2020 at 6:30 pm

Our Mission: We are a welcoming community of faith, inspiring lives of wonder, generosity, and courage, serving the world through love in action.

Note: The Board meeting will be conducted via Zoom due to Covid-19.

6:30 [10] Admin: Chalice Lighting (Rick)
Check-in

6:40 [5] Admin: Consent Agenda

- May BoT Minutes
- Minutes of April 24th Special Meeting regarding Paycheck Protection Plan application

6:45 [5] Some Brief Updates (Carol)

- Baseline Survey—90 responses—ready to close to new responses

6:50 [15] Minister's Report (Allison)

7:05 [5] Staff Appreciation for Exemplary Service during On-line Everything

7:10 [15] Retreat Planning (Brenna and Allison)

7:25 [20] Preschool Re-opening—Possibilities and Parameters due to Covid (Allison)

7:45 [15] Annual Meeting

- Review of Budget and Brownies
- Voting and Speaking logistics on Zoom

8:00 [10] Transition to New UUCN President (Carol and Brenna)

Covenantal Check-out

Closing Words

Adjournment

Final Building Vision Statement

We are a welcoming community of faith that works to dismantle oppression and privilege within our congregation by removing obstacles to entering and using our campus. To this end, our campus is accessible to all by including the elements needed for our programs and services to meet various accessibility needs. Our campus provides a clear welcome, offering a sense of warmth, belonging, acceptance, and safety to all who pass by or enter our spaces.

In our worship spaces we balance honoring our past with the flexibility needed for the diverse use and changing needs of our modern church, while inspiring wonder, authentic connection, courageous community, and love in action.

We are good stewards of the Earth, helping to combat climate change by working to limit our use of energy, using sustainable materials, and striving to attain carbon neutrality.

We effectively use technology to provide better access, enable many forms of communication throughout and beyond our buildings, and allow for greater flexibility for all. We have appropriate physical systems to efficiently do the work of our mission.

In order to know our authentic UU Nashua identity, we honor those who helped create our story while embracing change in ourselves as we serve as stewards for our future. We honor the heritage of our campus, which serves as a visible connection to our past and our future.

Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees
Rev. Allison Palm
UU Church of Nashua, NH
June 4, 2020
Covering May 6-June 4, 2020

Our online services continue to go well and get many positive comments from congregants. We had one Sunday this month when Zoom did not work for the service because of a widespread outage. We were able to pivot and do the service on Google Meet – I'm grateful to our team for their quick thinking and flexibility! We had two guests this month: Emma's Revolution provided music on May 10 and Matt Meyer led our service on May 17.

We are getting ready for summer services, which will begin on June 21. I completed my Summer Worship Workshop with the summer Worship Leaders a couple of weeks ago and they are all prepared to lead service online. Sherri has put together a tech team that will help with summer services, one on each Sunday. Frank Grossman has been doing this for us every Sunday so far and he offered a training for the new tech helpers on June 3.

While we usually completely stop our children's Faith Formation programming in the summer, this summer we will be continuing some programs, with the support of volunteers and Ericka LaValley, our Faith Formation Assistant. There will continue to be a Thursday afternoon kid's group, and Sadie is working on putting together a weekly evening story time for kids. The Youth Group will continue to meet once a month. Sadie is working on creating at-home church packets for the summer for various ages. We will also continue the Poetry Group for adults over the summer, and are looking into adding an art sharing group and a book group.

Our Community Dinners are indefinitely paused. We have been collecting nonperishable foods for the soup kitchen, organized by Krishna Mangipudi. I have been participating in a new round of Love 2020 meetings with GSOP, this time with gubernatorial candidates. I am convening a group of congregants next week to discuss how we can be involved in UU the Vote this fall. I've been working over the past week to figure out how to address the current Black Lives Matter protests across the country. I put together a list of ways people can be involved that is posted on our website, including attending an outdoor vigil on June 6 organized by the Nashua NAACP and Nashua Black Lives Matter. I have been asked to speak at that vigil.

We received our PPP loan, funded on May 4. Sherri and I have been working together to ensure we use and document the loan properly so it can be forgiven. We can apply for that forgiveness 8 weeks after the loan was funded. I am working on staff evaluations over the next month. They will all be completed before June 30.

Virtual General Assembly is coming up at the end of June. We have a full slate of delegates attending, as well as several other congregants. Sadie and I are holding an organizing meeting for anyone attending GA on June 9 at 5pm. We are also inviting everyone to attend the online GA Sunday Service on June 28 rather than holding our own service that morning.

Our preschool wrapped up their school year last week with a drive through graduation. They once again received a portion of tuition from more than half of their families in May, with the total equaling a bit more than in April. They are starting to talk about what the fall will look like, but so far it has been too early to make concrete plans. The preschool board plans to meet monthly over the summer to continue these conversations.

We have begun making plans for continuing remote church through next year, as advised by our UUA. Sadie held a brainstorming session about Faith Formation on May 17, and I held a more general brainstorming session on May 31. We got lots of great ideas that will help us shape the year, and are already planning to implement some over the summer.

As usual, the staff will be taking some time off at various points over the summer. I will be on vacation or study leave June 29-July 19 and August 3-10. Ben will be on call for pastoral care needs during that time. Our staff will be having a retreat (likely over Zoom) on July 25 to plan and set goals for the 2020-2021 church year.