

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH Meeting of the Board of Trustees

February 9, 2023

*Meeting held hybrid, at church and via Zoom, due to COVID-19*

**Final Minutes** by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of the Board of Trustees

**Reviewed by** Robin Trudel, Cecile Bonvouloir, Anne Smith, Burns Fisher, Victoria Agnew

### **Meeting Attendees:**

- **In person:** Victoria Agnew, Burns Fisher, Lindsey Hedrick (Vice President), Rev. Allison Palm (Minister), Robin Trudel, Brenna Woods (President)
- **Virtual:** Caro Barschow (Ministerial Intern), Cecile Bonvouloir (Treasurer), Jodie K. Holway (Clerk), Anne Smith

**Agenda:** Appendix A

### **1. Board Covenant and Check-in**

### **2. Chalice Lighting and Storytelling**

- a. Robin Trudel describes Authentic Connection
  - i. He has been searching for a community to belong to
  - ii. Found UU Nashua, kept coming back, because everyone here is very authentic, continues trying to make connections w/ each other
  - iii. Example of Ben Atherton-Zeman, our prior ministerial intern
    1. Participated in the Men's Group with Robin - they formed an authentic connection
    2. Ran through traffic to catch Robin for a conversation!
    3. The required 2-year no-contact period was a shock
  - iv. Example of Caro Barschow, our current ministerial intern
    1. Robin wondered if they could have a similar connection
    2. Then in a service he witnessed them defusing a potentially dangerous situation with a visitor, with no hint of physicality
      - a. Made an authentic connection to the visitor, made them feel welcome, made them realize that this isn't the right time to do what they'd originally wanted to do
      - b. Caro did it with such grace and talent, he was in awe
    3. As a many-year Taekwondo practitioner, I see there are other ways to protect than by implied or explicit violence
      - a. Caro is so brave and powerful
      - b. I see that I have a lot to learn from Caro!

- b. Other members' reflections from this story
  - i. There are seasons of church, people come and go, there can be many people that you learn from who go and you can remain connected
  - ii. Everyone here is indeed trying their best and being authentic
  - iii. When Burns first joined the UU church decades ago, felt connected
    - 1. And back then I was a totally different person than today
    - 2. The church has changed me over the years, in all good ways
    - 3. And I still feel that authentic connection to the church!
  - iv. Sounds like this is related to Courageous Community: being brave enough to be transformed by being a part of this church

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

- a. Young Adult group is up and running, great to have a leader: Teagan
- b. Our church will host a young OWL training soon for trainers
  - i. To be an OWL trainer you need to be certified, and an official training hasn't happened in our region for too long - until now
  - ii. We'll hold 4-6 grade OWL this spring, next year aim for K-1st grade
  - iii. Normally we give a 7-8 grade OWL every two years, but next year there's only 1 person in this age group
- c. Jay Guarneri was selected as the new co-chair of CWGWWS board
  - i. He's going to be good, he's quite involved already
  - ii. What do the CWGWWS rules say about Board qualifications?
    - 1. You don't need to be a church member to be a leader
    - 2. The bylaws say only "a person from the church"
    - 3. Board is specified to be at least 40% church people and at least 40% parents
    - 4. Co-chairs supposed to be one from church, other a parent
    - 5. So he's basically a member family - Emma joined in Nov. '22

**4. Monitoring, Lindsey Hedrick**

- a. Final changes to be made, after 2.5 years of work
  - i. Section II Policy H, Invested Funds Committee
    - 1. Suggest leave it in for now, next year tackle it
  - ii. Yes will add the BOT Confidentiality agreement link
  - iii. Burns point: NNED doesn't exist anymore: removed
  - iv. Remove specific organization names from Section I Policy E
- b. Monitoring Table final discussion
  - i. Revised to match the new version and new numbering/letters
  - ii. Some things are reviewed more than annually

- iii. Safe Congregations is now added since it's about the congregants, no changes about how it's done, just adding it to this table
    - 1. Move to September, this is when we train on it so review it
  - iv. Policy A wasn't originally included in the table, seemed like an omission, even though she isn't really the right person to review this policy - but the Board will review it when we review the Minister/ED
  - v. Policy E and F we revisit in June in the Annual Meeting
  - vi. Last action: put this table into the finalized doc, then we'll post it!
- c. **MOTION** to accept all changes to Policies, from the past 2 years  
**MOVED** by Lindsey Hedrick, **SECOND** by Burns Fisher,  
**PASSES** - applause!
5. **Ellen McCormick Estate**, Brenna Woods & Rev. Allison Palm
- a. Beloved congregant passed away, left church \$10K from her estate
    - i. We need to officially Accept it, given with no restrictions
  - b. Ellen was Brenna's co-chair for the Long Range Planning Committee
    - i. Would be appropriate to spend her money on these projects
    - ii. Note the LRPC/BOV process has already cost ~\$30K so far
      - 1. All has come from Bicentennial Fund, which was set up for this 3 years ago, with some surplus budget funds
      - 2. Costs so far have been for architect and consultant
  - c. **MOTION** that the Board should move this money into Bicentennial Fund, to use for Capital Campaign, and if any left over it'll go to the Capital Campaign fund itself  
**MOVED** by Victoria Agnew, **SECOND** by Burns Fisher
- Discussion:
- i. Are there any restrictions or consequences?
    - 1. No, no tax implications, etc.
  - ii. Will this be an acceptable use of her funds, to the congregants?
    - 1. In fact it'll be good to put this decision into the minutes so that everyone knows that this has happened
    - 2. This is a perfect use, investing in the future of the church
  - iii. Does the Board get to decide what happens to the unexpected unrestricted donations? Yes, this is our job
  - iv. Is there some way to acknowledge Ellen's gift publicly?
    - 1. Yes but Ellen would have hated making a big deal

2. Board submit a Caring Candle of gratitude to her? Yes.
3. Mention her in the congregational meeting? No.
4. Include her name in the overall list of contributors when that time comes? Yes.

v. **VOTE PASSES**

6. **Church Meetings and Testimonials Debrief, Brenna Woods**

- a. Two after-church meetings were held so far
  - i. Format is similar, but each session's topics are different
    1. Board members give our personal stories about the theme, then congregants talk to a partner about the proposed improvements, then share-out, and then a short Capital Campaign 101 training, then any questions
    2. First one had 30ish attendees, this is good
    3. People may not go to all, thinking the content is all the same: but the topics are different, you can attend more
  - ii. Input from Zoom: attendee experience wasn't great
    1. Couldn't hear testimonials, were not facing the camera
      - a. Will follow-up directly with those 4 attendees
    2. Next time we'll bring in the microphone
    3. For partner-up time, will put Zoomers into breakout room
  - iii. Input from in-person: mainly engaged and positive
    1. Some distractions arise, like spending lots of time talking about parking lot - bring it back to focus, help redirection
      - a. Yes we're in a city! We did think it through, decided the tradeoff of staying here is worthwhile
    2. Write any distracting issues/goals up on chart-paper, don't engage in problem-solving - at this point the need is for imagination and connection
  - iv. Ways for session leaders to make sure all the voices are heard
    1. Linger even past the end of the meeting
    2. Ask/leave space for voices that haven't yet spoken up
- b. One testimonial was given during the Sunday service

- i. Brenna Woods gave a perspective that not everyone may have
  - 1. Very vulnerable to share about father in wheelchair
  - 2. Very relatable that you want to hear your child sing
  - 3. No guilt intended for these people who built it, they didn't think about these considerations, but the people who have the opportunity to fix it are here right now
- ii. Cecile is doing this for topic Accessibility next Sunday
- iii. Robin is doing this for topic Greening the following Sunday

#### **7. Fellowship Hour & After Church Meetings, Brenna Woods**

- a. Board members are visiting each Team/Committee meeting
  - i. Rev. Allison provided a script, helpful during these visits
  - ii. Got some questions about whether we can give specific input to these architectural plans, when and if the time comes
    - 1. Yes, will be a few opportunities to give specific input
    - 2. Can join a task force, like paint colors or what's movable in the chancel, etc.
    - 3. Rev. Allison to add this answer into the script
- b. Board is assigned to staff/provide Fellowship Hour on Feb 26th
- c. We will order food for the All-Congregation meeting March 5th
- d. Videos of how to make coffee, run dishwasher, turn on kitchen heat
  - i. <https://uunashua.org/connection-2/fellowship-hour-coffee-hour/>

#### **8. Congregational Meeting Update, Brenna Woods**

- a. Preparation for the March 5th vote about Capital Campaign
- b. We will assemble the Tech Team as usual for planning call
- c. We will do a run-through on the prior Saturday
- d. Online people will be told to come early for Zoom instructions
- e. Plan to split up the room into vote-counting quadrants again

#### **9. Capital Campaign Timeline, Rev. Allison**

- a. Capital Campaign Team is shaping up very well
- b. March 5: congregation votes whether to launch capital campaign now
- c. If the vote is a Yes, the following steps would occur:

- d. March 12: training for the Visiting stewards on 1-on-1 conversations
  - e. March 26: leadership phase, asking leaders and bigger donors first
  - f. April 16: main kickoff of capital campaign with a party
    - i. Asking for annual pledge PLUS capital campaign commitment
  - g. May 14: official end of both pledge and capital campaigns
  - h. May 21: Rev. Allison needs pledge numbers to plan the budget now
    - i. Commitments for capital campaign can trickle in more slowly
  - i. Board has explored a few versions of the budget by now, and will vote by email because there isn't a monthly Board meeting during this time
  - j. May 28: send the approved budget to congregation for awareness
  - k. June 4: Budget and Brownies meeting, members discuss any details
  - l. June 11: Annual Meeting, same day as Flower Communion
    - i. According to bylaws, must be in the last 4 weeks of fiscal year
    - ii. One week later than usual, to allow time for all campaign work to conclude and make the budget based on people's pledges
    - iii. So we must tell people this date well in advance
  - m. June 30: everything for capital campaign must be wrapped up
  - n. July: we move into the next phase of work with architects
  - o. Spring 2024: could start construction
  - p. Summer 2024: majority of the work could be done in summertime
    - i. Minimizes disruption to accessing the sanctuary and preschool,
    - ii. Summer services possibly in chapel, auditorium, and/on Zoom
10. **February 26<sup>th</sup> Volunteers**, Rev. Allison
- a. The final after-church discussion to prep for Capital Campaign vote
    - i. Who will run this meeting: Victoria, Burns, Cecile volunteer
    - ii. Getting a testimonial "Historic Moment" by non-Board member
    - iii. What do you still feel like you need to know about the vision?
    - iv. What it means to be part of history, what do you hope gets talked about in 100 years from now?
11. **Delegates for GA**, Lindsey Hedrick
- a. GA will be in Pittsburgh, around June 21-26, 2-023
  - b. Looking for 6 delegates from UU Nashua
  - c. Registration costs will increase March 1, 2023

- d. \$100 off for first-time in-person attendees
  - e. Scholarships can be generous, look into this ASAP if you want
- 12. Announcement!** Caro Barschow, Brenna Woods
- a. A few steps away from finishing Ministerial requirements
  - b. **MOTION** for the UU Church of Nashua to ordain them as a minister  
**MOVED** wholeheartedly by Victoria Agnew,  
**SECOND** by Lindsey Hedrick, **PASSES**
  - c. July 15th will be the ordination here, working closely with their home congregation of Portland Maine
  - d. Ordination Team volunteers will organize this event
- 13. Check Out & Closing**
- a. Including a post-credit scene of Rev. Allison laughing until crying

**Appendix A:** Agenda

**Appendix B:** Minister's Report

# Agenda

## Board of Trustees, Unitarian-Universalist Church of Nashua

February 9th, 2023

- 6:30 (20) Check In**
- 6:50 (5) Chalice Lighting: Robin's Story**
  - please sign up!**
- 6:55 (10) Follow Up Story Telling**
- 7:05 (5) Consent Agenda (Brenna)**
- 7:10 (15) Minister's Report – (Allison)**
- 7:25 (15) Monitoring? (Lindsey)**
- 7:40 (5) Ellen McCormick Estate (Brenna & Allison)**
- 7:45 (20) Church Meetings and Testimonials Debrief (Brenna)**
- 8:05 BREAK**
- 8:10 (5) Fellowship Hour & After Church Meetings (Brenna)**
- 8:15 (10) Committee and Team Conversation Updates (Brenna)**
- 8:25 (10) Congregational Meeting Update (Brenna)**
- 8:35 (15) Capital Campaign Timeline (Allison)**
- 8:50 (5) February 26<sup>th</sup> Volunteers (Allison)**
- 8:55 (10) Delegates for GA (Lindsey)**
- 9:05 (5) Caro – Announcement! (Caro & Brenna)**
- 9:10 (5) Check Out (Brenna)**
  - How did we do this evening?
  - Did everyone feel heard?
  - Are there any concerns or compliments you want to give to the group?
- 9:15 Closing Words (Allison)**



**Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees**  
**Rev. Allison Palm**  
**UU Church of Nashua, NH**  
**February 8, 2023**  
**Covering January 10 – February 8, 2023**

As you might imagine, my big focus this month has been on the Building Our Vision project and getting a Capital Campaign Team up and running. The BOV Team had a good meeting with our architects on Jan. 26, and got some good direction about next steps. They will continue to operate as a team for one more month, as we work on nailing down some financial numbers. After that, a smaller group will go on to become the project management team once we complete the campaign and move into the next phase of planning and construction.

The Capital Campaign Team is shaping up really well. Jess Woods and Karen Murray are our co-chairs, and we have recruited 6 additional members so far. The 5 person Stewardship Team will also be part of this group, so it will be a large team, which does much of its work in sub-groups. The Stewardship Team and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Capital Campaign Team met together for the first time earlier this week, with our consultant Mark Ewert. We talked in depth about how the groups will work together, and came up with a timeline for the campaign, which we will discuss at the Board meeting.

The worship service on the BOV project on January 29 was very well received, and so far the after church meetings have been well attended. I am feeling good about our communication efforts and grateful to the Board for taking the lead in this phase.

Our once-a-month chapel and twice a month workshop choices for kids has been continuing to work well. We are getting some new volunteers in the mix for February, which is great. The Crossing Paths class is continuing with their exploration of Islam, with a guest speaker coming in this Sunday. The Coming of Age group had a fun outing this past week at Key to Escape. They made it out of their escape room with 47 seconds to spare!

Sadie is supporting a new Young Adult group in forming for ages 18-35. They had their first meeting at the end of January and will be meeting after church every other week going forward. I resumed meeting with the Huntington Group in January and will be continuing monthly going forward. I also held my first Caring Circle in January, for folks who are caring for loved ones. The caregivers were interested in meeting again, so this month will be two breakout rooms – one for caregivers and one for folks dealing with divorce/separation.

Caro led a fantastic Leadership Summit on Jan. 28. We had 25 attendees who learned all about creating their UU elevator speech. Folks were really engaged, and there was a great mix of newer folks and longtime members.

We had a good showing of UU folks at the Interfaith MLK Service in Nashua, including several who sang in the Interfaith Choir. I'm grateful to Jed for continuing to be a part of making that Interfaith choir happen. Faith Formation organized a Love in Action project for the NH Community Bail Fund. UU Nashua folks donated items and assembled bags to give to the people

who are bailed out by the Bail Fund. There was great participation from lots of different people. We had planned on Spiritual Nourishment times throughout the UUA's 30 Days of Love, but they were not attended the first couple weeks. Instead, we have continued to advertise the resources in the newsletter. Under Caro's lead, we are hosting a first meeting of a 603 Equality Nashua Hub later this month. I am excited to grow this relationship and plan to attend.

I have been actively a part of a Planned Parenthood faith leader coalition again this year, which has ramped up during the current legislative session. I worked with this group to gather signatures of more than 30 clergy from across the state in support of the Access to Abortion-care Act that is proposed at the state level this year. I presented the letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee during their hearing on the bill last week, and plan to go up once or twice next week to testify on related bills for the House committee.

Ericka has been working on making fellowship hour hosting feel more doable for volunteers by reframing it as "coffee crew" and emphasizing that all you need to do is make coffee/tea (food is optional!). She and I also worked on creating some training videos about the kitchen, which are now up on the website.

Caro has been leading a Choir Covid Task Force over the past 6 weeks. After some confusion in the fall about policies for the choir, this group was put together to connect with choir members about current covid policies and practices and come up with a clear policy for the choir. They are working on a second draft now and plan to roll it out to the choir soon.

Sadie, Ericka and I took a 12 hour training through The Management Center (sponsored by the UUA) this week about management practices through the lens of equity and inclusion. We are excited about putting some of the tools we learned into practice!

Sadie is coordinating an K-6 Our Whole Lives training that will take place in our building March 17-19. We are excited for some of our volunteers to get trained so we can offer 4-6 OWL in the spring (and potentially K-1 OWL next year).

### **Professional Development/Collegial Connection**

- Attended NH UUMA January Cluster meeting
- Submitted a proposal for a workshop for General Assembly on ritual and theology
- Continued to work on ritual book (now expected to be published in Summer/Fall 2023!)
- Attended 12 hour training through The Management Center, debriefed training with Sadie and Ericka

### **Community/Social Justice Activities**

- Participated in GSOP Clergy Caucus planning call and monthly meeting
- Attended Nashua Area Interfaith Council February meeting
- Facilitated 2 NH Council of Churches Exec Committee meetings and one full board meeting. Had additional 1-1 conversations in between
- Participated in Planned Parenthood Faith Leader Coalition, including 2 meetings, collecting signatures and testifying in Concord
- Attended one Nashua Housing Justice Group meeting

### **Children's Winter Garden with White Wing School**

- Jay Guarneri has agreed to be the co-chair of the CWG-WWS Board.
- Registration is going strong for next year. Chris has been giving lots of tours.
- I had a debrief meeting with Amanda Banner (the outgoing co-chair) to get her perspective on where the school is at, which was helpful;

### **Minister's Schedule**

- My Sunday off for February is Feb. 12
- I will be on vacation Feb. 27-March 3 (and traveling out of state)

### **Monitoring Reports**

There are no monitoring reports due for this month, according to the current monitoring calendar.