

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

April 13, 2023

Meeting held hybrid, at church and via Zoom

Final Minutes by Lindsey Hedrick and Jodie K. Holway

Reviewed by

Robin Trudel, Brenna Woods, Cecile Bonvouloir, Burns Fisher, Rev. Allison Palm

Meeting Attendees:

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

Agenda: see Appendix A

1. Chalice Lighting and Storytelling, Cecile Bonvouloir

- a. This year, all Board opening stories are about one of our four Values
- b. Cecile talks about Authentic Connection:
 - i. She joined a covenant group earlier on and developed personal connections with a group of people
 - ii. This group disbanded after a few years, but she reflects fondly on their time together
- c. Caro also deepened their relationship with Unitarian Universalist through a covenant group
- d. The same was true for Burns through Circle Dinners
- e. Rev. Allison highly encourages covenant groups, especially for new members

2. Consent Agenda

- a. **MOTION** to approve [March](#) minutes
MOVED by Robin Trudel, **SECOND** by Victoria Agnew, **PASSES**

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

- a. Coffee Hour Discussion
 - i. Volunteers have been hard to find, possibly due to:
 1. In general, we don't like doing things for ourselves
 2. We are terrible at signing up for things in advance

- ii. What does lack of volunteers for coffee hour say about our culture?
- iii. We do want to keep having coffee hour
- iv. Board can encourage participation, but this will only be effective if we put forth effort ourselves

4. Capital Campaign Update, Karen Murray

- a. Campaign will kick off this coming Sunday
- b. Visiting stewards training happened and went well.
 - i. Head visiting stewards: Kim Steele, Harry Purkhiser, Dave Price
 - ii. 17 stewards were trained, only 1 couple decided not to do it
- c. The only concern is the logistics of being able to reach everyone
 - i. Each visiting steward needs to reach out to a LOT of people
 - ii. If we have a few more visiting stewards join, then each person would have a couple less to reach out to
- d. Current numbers:
 - i. Annual pledge drive currently has \$109K, our goal is \$375K
 - ii. Capital Campaign is currently \$746K (from 20 gifts)
 - iii. We are currently in a really good spot, and still anticipate a few high contributions to come in that we know of
- e. Capital Campaign team is working to keep this on people's minds:
 - i. Writing literature for friends of the church, and weekly emails
 - ii. Team has put in SO many hours of concentrated, dedicated hard work in the past several weeks

5. Bank Account Questions/Updates, Rev. Allison

- a. Where to put the incoming money from the Capital Campaign?
 - i. Money will sit for at least a year before it is used
 - ii. We want it to sit somewhere where it will gather interest
- b. Proposal: open a Money Market savings account
 - i. Researched by Rev. Allison and Ericka Lavalley
 - ii. Propose TD Bank, where we already have accounts
 - iii. Proposed account would contain our Capital Campaign money as well as our Building Maintenance Fund
 - iv. Specific interest rates are unclear, expected to be around 2.5%
 - v. This account is insured up to \$250K
 - vi. Each month Rev Allison will tell the balance to this Board
 - vii. When the balance exceeds \$250K, we may find it necessary to explore other options.

- c. In order to open a new account, TD Bank must see the church's minutes stating that the church approves opening this account
 - i. **MOTION** to open a TD Business Money Market account
MOVED by Burns Fisher, **SECONDED** by Robin Trudel **PASSES**
 - d. Changes to how we receive donations of stock
 - i. We used to receive stocks and pass them directly to Bank of America. We have JUST been informed that they are no longer licensed to do that for us
 - ii. This is especially an issue because we just sent out a lot of literature telling people we accept stock for the capital campaign! So we must figure out a resolution to this
 - iii. They have sent us information on a Merrill Lynch account that would allow to accept stock transfers in the way that we had previously been accepting them
 - iv. We just opened an Ameritrade account to receive a specific bequest. Is it possible we can continue to use the Ameritrade account to receive stock? This is unknown at the moment.
 - e. Options to receive stock:
 - i. Continue to use the new Ameritrade account if possible
 - ii. Take BofA's recommendation to use Merrill Lynch, because they would have established channels, and if working with ML is as easy/flexible as it has been with BoA, that is worth it
 - iii. Whichever is the easier route
 - iv. **ACTION: Allison** will do a bit more research and come back to us with options via email for us to vote on
- 6. Initial Budget Conversation, Rev. Allison**
- a. Current income levels are made up/carried from last year because we don't have pledge numbers or endowment numbers
 - b. We're reviewing this now to become more familiar with the budget format/the way it works in the hopes that it is easier to approve as the numbers become more formalized
 - c. This budget currently includes an intern. We have not gotten any intern applications yet, so we do not know if this money will be used for an intern, or in another way

- d. UUA Salary Compensation Program:
 - i. Over the past few years, the UUA has revamped their compensation guidance
 - 1. They now use job levels, not job titles (fewer categories)
 - 2. Changes to congregational size profiles
 - 3. Consistent Ranges and implemented a ruler method
- e. Steps to figure out salary range:
 - 1. Geo index: Nashua is Geo Index 5
 - 2. Congregational Size: C
 - 3. Determine job level for each position
 - a. Based on responsibilities, characteristics, and qualifications, rather than what the job is
 - b. This is done to create more equity
 - 4. Salary ranges and placement on the ruler
 - a. Expected minimum: 90% of midpoint
 - b. Midpoint: 100%
 - c. Expected maximum: 100%
 - d. Special circumstances: 140%
- f. Allison's powerpoint demonstrates that when comparing current salaries to correct salary placement using the ruler method, our staff is underpaid
 - i. There is a large gap for our administrator and DFF when comparing existing salaries to proposed new salaries
 - ii. Our sexton is also underpaid when doing this comparison
 - iii. As is our music director and bookkeeper
- g. How to close these gaps:
 - i. We cannot close these gaps in one year
 - ii. To move us closer to fair compensation, Rev Allison has included 8% salary increases for the staff
 - iii. This may not be achievable for this budget, but it is important that Allison shows us the difference between where we are and where we should be

7. Self-Evaluation, Rev. Allison

- a. How does this year's self-evaluation feel to the Board?
 - i. Very genuine, very true to our perception of how 2022 went
 - ii. Doesn't call out all the work of the capital campaign, because (most of) that work is in 2023

- b. Potential Goals for 2023:
 - i. Be bolder than she feels is comfortable during Capital Campaign
 - 1. She's already taken big risks, but wants to keep doing so
 - 2. Example 1: The January service talking about the building. She said what we needed to hear about the building without being afraid. She was vulnerable during the service, and it was well received
 - 3. Example 2: Directly asking people to do big jobs. Being more forward in that way
 - 4. Example 3: Being open and honest in Board meetings when talking about striving for the big visionary plan
 - ii. Publishing the book (finally) in 2023
 - iii. Potential to engage in some book related speaking engagements? (another opportunity to be bolder)
 - iv. Potential to do a workshop based on the book
 - 1. This goal may extend past calendar year 2024

8. Delegates Update for GA, Lindsey Hedrick

- a. Ask the board to approve six delegates
 - i. Joyce Trudel
 - ii. Kevin Ross Emory
 - iii. Jeff Beland
 - iv. Erica Agnew
 - v. Danielle Van Duesen
 - vi. Marissa Volpe
- b. **MOVED** by Robin Trudel, **SECOND** by Burns Fisher, **PASSES**

9. Salary Discussion, Lindsey Hedrick

- a. Rev. Allison and Caro dismissed from the meeting
- b. **MOTION**: To enter executive session for ministerial salary discussion
MOVED by Lindsey Hedrick, **SECOND** by Burns Fisher, **PASSES**

10. Closing Words

Appendix A: Agenda

Appendix B: Minister's Report

Agenda

Board of Trustees, Unitarian-Universalist Church of Nashua

April 13, 2023

- 6:30 (20) Check In**
- 6:50 (5) Chalice Lighting: Burns's Story**
- 6:55 (10) Follow Up Story Telling**
- 7:05 (5) Consent Agenda - March (Brenna)**
- 7:10 (15) Minister's Report – (Allison)**
- 7:25 (15) Capital Campaign Update (Karen?)**
- 7:40 (15) Bank Account Questions/Updates (Allison)**
- 7:55 (5) BREAK**
- 8:00 (20) Initial Budget Conversation (Allison)**
- 8:20 (30) Self-Evaluation (Allison)**
- 8:50 (5) Delegates Update for GA (Lindsey)**
- 8:55 (20) Salary Discussion – Allison dismissed (Lindsey)**
- 9:15 (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?
- 9:20 Closing Words (Brenna)**

Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees
Rev. Allison Palm
UU Church of Nashua, NH
April 12, 2023
Covering March 8 – April 12, 2023

The Leadership phase of our Combined Campaign is in full swing, and we launch the General phase this Sunday. The Capital Campaign Team has been very busy, creating beautiful materials, hosting two Visiting Stewards Trainings and a Leadership Reception. We are starting to receive pledges and commitments, and I am so grateful for the thoughtfulness and generosity of our early donors. You'll hear more from the CC Team at the Board meeting.

Our Summer Service calendar is almost finalized. It is once again a diverse and exciting set of service. My Summer Worship Workshop starts later this month. We also have some great plans for worship for the remainder of the church year, including Flower Communion, Pride, Coming of Age, and an outdoor Animal Blessing. We had very robust attendance on Easter, when we dedicated 7 children. We also hosted an egg hunt after the service that nearly 30 children participated in.

The Music Team is focusing the next couple of months on transitioning leadership, as Geri Davidson, who has been in the role of chair and chief music organizer for 18 years is stepping down at the end of the this year. Geri is being very thoughtful and thorough about this transition and I hope it will provide a good opportunity for some new music leadership to emerge.

Workshops continue to work well for PreK-4th grade. They will be focusing on activities related to the Capital campaign this month, including hosting a lemonade stand on April 30. The Coming of Age group went on a Boston history trip on April 2. They visited Arlington St Church, where they got to ring the bells and take a tour, and I led a brief walking tour of UU history sites in downtown Boston. They will be having a late night at church this weekend to start working on credos.

Sadie put in a ton of work to coordinate a K-6 Our Whole Lives training in our building March 17-19. 16 people from across the region attended. We got some of our volunteers trained and will be offering 5-6 OWL in the next couple of months. We also plan to offer K-1 OWL next fall and a class for 4th and 5th graders in the spring.

Our new Young Adult group continues to meet, with a small core group. Our Caring Circle continued in March with two breakout rooms – one for caregivers and one for folks who are parenting teens and young adults. In April we will once again have a caregiver group and have a room for folks who are parenting ages 0-12. Caro led a two session Centering Practices group online in March. It was small but definitely appreciated. I met with the Huntington Group twice in March (one was a Feb. make-up date) – they continue to be a steady and grateful group.

We have continued to have a number of people joining the church officially. This past month I met with seven people who signed the book.

The legislative session has continued to offer lots of opportunity for advocacy over the last couple months. We have tried to highlight some of these opportunities and I know some people have taken us up on that, especially with the ability to sign in online to support or oppose bills. Folks in our congregation have also continued to be active participants in the organizing to oppose the proposed asphalt plant in Nashua. I spoke at the last public meeting, on behalf of 8 clergy who serve in Nashua.

Caro is helping to organize a second 603 Equality Nashua Hub meeting for this Saturday. This time it will be held at the Nashua Public Library. I hope we get a good showing of UU Nashua folks again.

We have signed on as a sponsor for two community events – the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner on April 29, and Nashua Pride, coming up in June.

We have now been operating with our new Covid policy for a month and people seem to be acclimating well. We have had the least amount of negative feedback about this change that we have had about pretty much any policy change over the last three years.

Professional Development/Collegial Connection

- Attended NH UUMA March Cluster meeting
- Attended NNE UUMA retreat
- Continued to work on ritual book (now expected to be published in Summer/Fall 2023!)
- Attended weekly meetings with Nashua clergy

Community/Social Justice Activities

- Participated in GSOP Clergy Caucus planning call, and facilitated monthly Clergy Caucus Call
- Facilitated 2 NH Council of Churches Exec meetings and one NH Council of Churches board meeting, plus one extra small group meeting
- Participated in Planned Parenthood Faith Leader Coalition, including 2 meetings, and being present once in Concord (hoped to testify but could not stay until the end of the hearing)
- Attended one Interfaith Housing Justice meeting
- Testified at Asphalt Plant Hearing on behalf of several local clergy
- Attended monthly NAIC meeting

Children's Winter Garden with White Wing School

- Registration is still going strong for next year. As of this week, there are only 4 spots left.
- Two teachers (one lead and assistant from the same classroom) are leaving for next year. Chris is already in the process of filling the position.
- Chris and the Board are in the process of budgeting for next year. Numbers look great.
 - The Board approved a 10% raise for the teachers for next year after doing some analysis of salary history and realizing that the current average rate per hour was not much more than the average had been for White Wing teachers before the

merger, and hearing feedback from applicants that the hourly rate was lower than their current position.

- o I spoke with Chris about increasing the preschool contribution to the church budget from \$30,000 to \$33,000 to cover increasing costs. She and the Board agreed that this felt very fair and could fit in their budget.
- There was an Open House for parents and kids on March 29.

Minister's Schedule

- My Sunday off for April is April 30

MONITORING REPORTS

Policy B: Treatment of Church Members, Visitors, and Groups

The Executive shall not cause or allow conditions or procedures that are unsafe, disrespectful, or unnecessarily intrusive to members, friends, or visitors, including children. Accordingly, the Executive shall develop and maintain a Safe Congregation Policy that formalizes and details the necessary systems, policies, and procedures to support this goal. The Board of Trustees will approve this policy and any changes, but implementation will be the responsibility of the Executive, except when issues arise that require Board involvement as noted in the policy itself.

Interpretation: I interpret “unsafe” conditions to mean conditions that jeopardize a person’s physical or psychological well-being, recognizing that we cannot guarantee safety, but will do our best to mitigate risk. I interpret “disrespectful” conditions to be those that do not honor the worth and dignity of each person. I interpret “unnecessarily intrusive” to mean conditions that invade someone’s privacy without cause.

Data: Our Safe Congregation Policy can be found here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Safe-Congregation-Policy-10.1.2020.pdf>. As per the policy, we held a Safe Congregation Training in September and provided online options for those who could not attend.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance

The Executive shall not allow Church groups (committees, task forces, and other groups) to operate without their authorization and supervision.

Interpretation: All groups affiliated with the church should be operating with the knowledge of the Executive, and should have a staff point person who checks in on them at least twice a year.

Data: The following is a list of groups affiliated with the church and their staff point person:

- Worship Associates: Rev. Allison Palm
- Pastoral Care Associates: Rev. Allison Palm
- Stewardship Team: Rev. Allison Palm & Ericka LaValley
- Capital Campaign Team: Rev. Allison Palm

- Lead Greeters: Rev. Allison Palm
- Social Justice Team (and all but one sub-team): Rev. Allison Palm
 - Renewal of Welcoming Team: Caro Barschow
- CWG-WWS Board: Rev. Allison Palm
- Huntington Group: Rev. Allison Palm
- Building Our Vision Team: Rev. Allison Palm
- Music Team: Jed Holland
- Choir: Jed Holland
- Covenant Groups: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Faith Formation Teachers: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- COA Leaders: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Buddhist Meditation Group: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- All Adult Faith Formation groups: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Property Team: Ericka LaValley
- Tech Volunteers: Ericka LaValley
- Intern Committee: Caro Barschow

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance

Policy C: Treatment of Church Staff and Volunteers

With respect to treatment of staff and volunteers, the Executive Director may not cause or allow conditions that are unsafe, inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional. Accordingly, the Executive Director may not:

1. *Discriminate (as defined by city, state, and federal laws) among existing or potential staff or volunteers on other than clearly job-related criteria, individual performance, or individual qualifications.*

Interpretation: The Executive Director will make decisions about recruiting, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all similar employment decisions in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other classification protected by law.

Data: All staff decisions have been made in compliance with federal, state and local laws.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

2. *Operate without written personnel policies that clarify procedures for staff.*

Interpretation: There will be a Personnel Manual that is easily found and kept up to date on the website that spells out employment policies and practices, wage and hour administration and benefits. All staff will be provided with a copy of the Personnel Manual at the time they are hired and a signed acknowledgement of receipt will be kept in their file in the church office. All staff will be notified promptly of any changes to the Personnel Manual.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-April-2023.pdf>

. Staff received a copy of the updated manual by email on April 12, 2023. All staff have a signed acknowledgement of receiving the Personnel Manual in their Personnel file in the church office.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

3. Fail to inform staff of a complaint process

Interpretation: The complaint process outlined in the Governing Policies will be included in the Personnel Manual.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-April-2023.pdf>

. Reference to the complaint process found in the Governing Policies can be found in the Personnel Manual, Section 2.4.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

4. Fail to adhere to the Church's at-will employment policies

Interpretation: The Personnel Manual will include language that clarifies that the relationship between employer and employee is legally defined as “employment at will,” which means that such employment may be terminated without penalty by either party for any reason, with or without notice.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-April-2023.pdf>

. Section 1.1 includes this language

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

Policy D: Compensation and Benefits of Church Staff

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Executive Director may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image. Accordingly, the Executive Director may not:

1. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

The Personnel Manual will include language that clarifies that the relationship between employer and employee is legally defined as “employment at will,” which means that such employment may be terminated without penalty by either party for any reason, with or without notice.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-April-2023.pdf>

. Section 1.1 includes this language

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

Establish current compensation and benefits that:

- o Deviate materially from applicable UUA “Compensation Standards”, unless there are legitimate articulated reasons.*
- o Create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected.*

Interpretation: The compensation offered to UU Nashua employees should fall within +/- 5% of the recommended salary ranges provided by the UUA, unless the Executive has informed the Board prior to the acceptance of the budget about a variance. The benefits offered to employees should match the UU Compensation Standards, unless the Executive has informed the Board prior to the acceptance of the budget about a variance.

Data: This year’s compensation and benefits for all staff fall within the Compensation Standards available from the UUA last year.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

The Executive Director shall not allow members of the church, except youth, to be hired as employees of the church. This restriction does not prevent members from temporarily filling staff roles on an as needed basis.

Interpretation: Employees cannot be members of the congregation, unless they are 18 years old or younger. This does not apply to temporary positions.

Data: There are currently no staff that are members of the congregation.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.