

# Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua

**Date of Meeting:** November 14th, 2024

**Attendance:**

**Present:** Rev. Allison Palm, Erin Scott (Ministerial Intern), Lindsey Hedrick (President), Burns Fisher (Vice President), Karen Murray (Clerk), Emma Rearick (Treasurer), Cecile Bonvouloir (Member at Large), Victoria Agnew (Member at Large), Paul Cardone (Member at Large), Robin Trudel (Member at Large)

**Absent:** Amanda Banner (Member at Large)

**Board Minutes Review Log:** *Five Board Member reviewers are needed to approve as a consent agenda at the next available meeting. This is just a spot for recording these reviews and are not intended as the overall approval.*

Continue to next pages for minutes.

FYI Template wording for motions:

- Making a motion: "I move that we adjourn the meeting."
- Seconding a motion: "I second the motion."
- Approving a motion: "The motion is adopted" or "The motion carries."

## Agenda

6:30 (20)      **Check In**

6:50 (5)      **Chalice Lighting: Story Telling (Practice - Emma)**

6:55 (5)      **Follow Up Story Telling (Open)**

Various ways to practice - an instrument, a regime, continuous thinking, a practice of living out our values, practice the motions, practice to get better especially during times we need a distraction, dancing - do you lead or follow?

7:00 (5)      **Consent agenda (Lindsey)**

- **Cecile moved to approve the minutes.**
- **Victoria Seconded a motion and the motion passes with a vote 8-0-0**

Note: Process question, if changes are made after approval will those that previously approved be notified. Karen said that if updates are made that change intent/information, she will communicate that to anyone who previously approved.

7:05 (20)      **Minister's Report (Rev Allison)**

Some curiosity questions about talking with Kelly Ayotte, success of the auction.

The auction was very successful and the goal was \$10,500, and there is still a possible donation from the sale of a motor bike. Feedback can be given to the team. It would be great to get new families to join, but there were still some new people. Might be neat to have a highlight reel.

**(Karen will send a note to David Price.)**

Rivier, how is it going? Rev. Allison said things are going well. One small interaction was that teens were asked to quiet down in the lobby but other than that all has gone well. Rev. Allison reached out this week to ask for an extension for the use of the space.

Question about have we found a place for Christmas Eve? Rev. Allison explained it's still in progress, some no's have come. We will need space for more than 150, so Rivier would be tight. There were some fun choices, including Martha's Exchange which is something to look into. If you have a connection let Rev. Allison know :) **Paul will try reaching out to a friend.** Deadline to find a place is about 1.5 weeks to allow time for sending invitations.

7:25 (10)      **BOV/Grant Update** (Rev Allison)

Demo has started today with the room that is the link between the sanctuary and the parish house! Working on getting the tree scheduled. The construction Manager seems on top of things. The projection for completion is about 5 months. Future plans to look at if we could get back in before completion.

Grant application was submitted. It has potentially a lot of competition.

7:35 (15)      **Endowment - Institutional knowledge transfer** (Burns)

Burns and Lindsey discussed the work that the Endowment Review Team had done in 2022. Endowment conversation happened 2-3 years ago, where work was done on policies related to where the funds were invested. Most of the other board members have joined since then and are not familiar with the work.

Endowment committee was a subcommittee of the board. There was a policy created at the end of 2022 on the board Google drive. A governing policy was created, however it was never officially moved to the policy documents.

The Endowment can be used for several things including adding to the church budget, and borrowed secured loans (ie covered by pledges). It also is important for us to have policies around Investments and how the endowment should be invested. (There was a reading of excerpt 2. Investment Strategy. See excerpt below) the suggested updates to the wording in 2022 is intended to be more specific about how the investments should be used to support things that match our values.

## **[2. Investment Strategy**

Endowment funds must be invested in such a way as to support UU values by the investment itself. The types of investments may include, but are not limited to:

- Investments that support companies that are in agreement with the majority of UU thinking, promoting the inherent worth and dignity of all people.
- Investments made with the goal of gaining leverage as a stockholder to influence a company's actions in the direction of UU values or principles.
- Investments that aim to follow resolutions passed at UU General Assemblies or other rules established by the UUA. (For example, the UU Common Endowment Fund.)
- Investments that support local businesses or affordable housing. (For example, the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund.)]

In 2022 the board did vote to adopt the draft policy, however as an oversight we did not move it to the official policy document nor start to implement it. There was a question about why we did

not leave Bank of America already. There are two answers to this question: We did not start to implement the policy partly because the Building Our Vision project had started and we had made a number of arrangements with Bank of America for accepting securities donations as well as discussing how to arrange borrowing from the endowment for cash flow. In addition both BOV and the end of the year left too many decisions for the board to make immediately.

It was pointed out that while the discussion of this policy mentioned the UU Common Endowment Fund as an example, and while the committee and the board from 2022 supported using the UUCEF, the policy does not require it. Thus another discussion would be required to determine whether the UUCEF should actually be the destination for our endowment.

The current board felt that the right time to revisit moving the endowment would be in 2027.

7:50 (20)      **Financial Policies Clean up** (Lindsey)

- Insert Confidentiality form
- Remove H.2. from Governing policies [Invested Funds Policy]
- Insert new policy N. Investment Strategy

Lindsey went over suggested edits to the Policies document: H2 - Remove section. Replaced by the work that the endowment subcommittee had done two years ago which is currently labeled Policy X, and is on the Board drive to Policy N of doc: Final Endowment Policy voted 6-9-2022.docx [LINK](#)

- **Burns moves to update the policy, Victoria seconded, and the motion passes 8-0-0**

Bottom of policy G - "Insert confidentiality form here is still there", so that still needs to be updated.

- **Karen will get the form from Ericka LaValley to insert that.**

There was a monitoring committee at the time of the 2022 work, however they did not review section 2 because they knew a subcommittee was working on it. Therefore the policy was not updated.

Rev. Allison explained that if in the future we change to the UUA Endowment fund, then at that point the Invested Funds Committee's (IFC) job would change, and might eventually be eliminated.

Question was raised to ask if new Board Members were asked to read the Policies. Discussion the idea to have a checklist of what new Board members should review as they join. For example - policies, where to find them, grievance process, budget summaries.

- Suggestion was that this type of training could be part of the retreat, and **Cecile has volunteered to organize a learning section to train on important documents and procedures, and perhaps use a teach back method where we each get assigned a topic to cover with each other.**

8:10 (5)      **BREAK**

8:15 (15)      **Subcommittee/Liaisons Check ins**

- Bylaws
- Financial
- Nominating/Cemetery: Victoria has joined meetings. In the spring they will keep gate open, lock at night. Landscaping, they have a better company. There were not enough flags this year for placement on Veteran's Day.

8:30 (45)      **Minister Review Form Sub-Committee**

Karen, Robin and Paul reviewed the progress of the team to gather initial feedback. This included the Who, What, When, and How.

- WHO: The form will be sent to those that directly interact with Rev. Allison which includes the Board of Trustees, Staff, Committees/Teams - BOV, Pastoral Care, Worship Associates, Stewardship, Social Justice (not the groups under SJ), White Wing (Chair of the Board, Director of the School)

We will not send the form to Nominating, music, Smooth Sunday leaders, and not to members/friends because we are getting the perspective of broader members from the above list, and the annual congregation wide survey can be used to gather broader feedback.

Format Discussion: Two formats were reviewed where the job description elements were pulled directly, this was favorable. The scale of three was favorable, with using the word "Developing" for the first level. Comment fields - most favorable to have asked at the point of each question and not any miscellaneous open ended questions at the end to make sure the feedback is directly relevant to only what is in the job description. There was an option proposed that had wording as a rubric for every element, but that was quickly determined to be too much text that would lead to more confusion rather than less.

The team will now look more at the details and transform it into a digital form such as Google Forms.

Timelines: Final form and process for use for administration 2nd week of January

- Form to be electronic by team
- Drafts early to Rev. Allison
- Draft out to Board for comment 1 week prior to Dec meeting (December 5th)
- Final approval at December Board Meeting (December 12th)
- Any updates based upon review (by Jan 9th)

9:15 (5)      **Check Out** (Lindsey)

- 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** (Rev Allison)

### **Addendum 1: Minister's Report**

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Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

Rev. Allison Palm

UU Church of Nashua, NH

November 12, 2024

Covering October 7-November 12, 2024

The past month has included quite the variety in our worship styles – including 2 services that featured multiple speakers, an all ages service with reader's theater and a guided reflection time, and 2 services that featured ritual. We've also had a wide variety of music to go with it, including a beautiful oboe piece, and adding in some drumming to several of our songs. Our children have begun preparing for their Solstice Story Service, and the staff are beginning to think about Christmas Eve services. Our biggest challenge this year will be a location. I am hoping to get that nailed down in the next week. We finished up our exploration of Authenticity in October, and are now focusing on Practice for November.

Faith formation workshops continue to go well at Rivier. OWL for 7th and 8th graders is now in full swing as well, and will continue throughout the year. On Election Day, Sadie, Erin and I, along with some wonderful volunteers, hosted an Election Day Camp for 10 kids. We also had one other younger child who joined us for parts of the day with his parent. The kids were super engaged and seemed to have a lot of fun. Our big project for the day was creating a video based on the Kid President YouTube. Sadie is working on some final edits and then will share with the families.

A lot of work went into lead up and follow up to the election. I've certainly been doing more pastoral care over the last couple of weeks. There have also been a number of community events, including 2 NAIC gatherings after the election, and a small group meeting with Nashua clergy and Governor-elect Kelly Ayotte. We have UU Nashua folks in attendance at both the NAIC gatherings.

We had a great turnout for the CROP Walk on Nov. 3, and raised more than our goal of \$2000. We had a nice number of families attend with kids, and at least a couple dogs! Erin was our coordinator this year, along with Sue Cooper.

We had a great set of Circle Dinners on Oct. 26 – 4 dinners with a total of 32 adults. At least 10 kids attended the Movie Night at church that happened at the same time. This included , for the first time, a room for teens/tweens with role-playing games. They had a lot of fun and want to do it again.

Our Auction went very well – both online and in person. Pilgrim Church was a great location, with plenty of room for everything to happen in one space. We had a little under 60 adults attend, along with about 8 kids attending the Movie Night. This is very similar to last year's numbers. We raised \$10,591, and folks seemed to have a lot of fun. Some of the logistical details went much more smoothly this year, though we are still figuring out the best way to do checkout using Auctria.

Our construction is basically underway. We have a site supervisor who has set up an office in the Fellowship Room and is working on our project, getting all the sub-contractors and schedule lined up. We hope to start weekly progress meetings with him soon. We have a temporary fence set up at the church now, to separate off the construction zone. I have ordered a large banner for the fence to make it clear that the school and church office are still open and directing people where to go. A salvage company came and took several doors and other items. We received \$1000 for these items. They will be back when we are ready to get rid of pieces of the front fence. We are also working out changes to our alarm system with the removal of doors, and preparations to remove the link between the Sanctuary and Parish House.

I submitted a grant application (as discussed via email) for \$100,000 for the White Wing Windows. I did consult with our window donor and they are fine with repurposing money. We should know by mid-December if we have received the grant. I do believe it will be pretty competitive, as 1000 people signed up for the informational webinar about it last month.

#### Professional Development/Collegial Connection

- Attended weekly meetings with Nashua clergy
- Attended Northern New England Ministers Retreat.



- Sadie and I are attending a 6 week course called “Embracing Race for UU Families” – it is both content around talking about race with children and caregivers, and a facilitator training if we want to lead it in the future.
- Attended first Pastoral Innovation Network of New England (PINNE) gathering as a coach for the new cohort.

#### Community/Social Justice Activities

- Attended 1 Nashua Housing Justice meeting and a Housing Authority Board Meeting
- Led the NAIC Exec meeting for October and NAIC general meeting for November
- Attended GSOP Nashua Chapter Meeting
- Attended & spoke at CROP Walk
- Attended & spoke at 2 NAIC Post-Election Gatherings
- Attended the UU Action NH Annual Meeting
- Small meeting with Nashua clergy and Governor-elect Kelly Ayotte after the election

#### Children’s Winter Garden with White Wing School

- School Year continues to go smoothly.
- The Preschool Board just approved tuition prices for next year. Chris is already leading tours for next year. Registration will open for current students in December.
- The Fall Open House took place at the end of October. It was well attended by parents.
- There are various holiday events that will have to take place in classrooms, rather than
- Chris purchased some new wooden equipment for the front and back playgrounds with grant funds.

#### Minister’s Schedule

- I am not taking a Sunday off in November as I took 2 off in October.
- The Church Office is closed November Nov. 28 & 29 for Thanksgiving.
- I will be attending a Faith in Action gathering with others from GSOP in Washington DC December 3-5.

## Policy E: Financial Planning and Budgeting

With respect to planning fiscal events, the Executive Director may not jeopardize either the programmatic or fiscal integrity of the Church. Accordingly, the Executive Director shall not allow the Church to:

1. Operate without the guidance of an annual operating budget that
  - i. conforms to the Board's Ends,
  - ii. budgets for the Church's requested Annual Program Fund contribution to the Unitarian Universalist Association
  - iii. has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Bylaws
  - iv. has details sufficient for transparency

Interpretation: There will be an annual operating budget, reviewed by the Board and approved by the Congregation to guide spending.

- i. The budget will fund programs that advance our Ends. Money spent for worship, faith formation for all ages, music, pastoral care, community building, and social justice will be assumed to be money that advances the ends since they are the key programs of the church. Money spent for the building and grounds to maintain it will also be assumed to be money that advances the ends since our building is the primary physical resource for our program. Money spent for administrative support and fundraising are also essential for the advancement of the ends, because without those investments the rest of our ministries would falter.
- ii. The budget will include funding the total Annual Program Fund request from the Unitarian Universalist Association for that year.
- iii. The budget will be reviewed by the Board and approved by the congregation as per Article 4 of the UU Nashua Bylaws.
- iv. The budget presented to the Board and the Congregation will include a detailed breakdown of income and expenses. The presentation of the budget will include details about the source of each of the income line estimates. Sufficient details on the expense side is interpreted as no individual line item, other than staff salaries, making up more than 7% of the total budget.

Data: The 2024-24 Annual Operating Budget can be found [here](#).

- i. The budget linked above is broken down by programs, operations and staff. The operations and staff lines are assumed to be integral to moving us towards our Ends. The

program lines are broken down further by program. An interpretation of the budget based on our mission can be found in the 2024 Stewardship Brochure.

- ii. The Annual Program Fund request for FY2025 was \$28,108. You can see the full amount included in the budget linked above.
- iii. The budget linked above was approved by the Board on May 9, 2024 and by the Congregation June 2, 2024.
- iv. The largest single line item other than salaries in the linked budget is \$35,000, which is 5.5% of the budget.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

- 2. Financially plan or budget for any fiscal year or remaining part of a fiscal year that overspends the realistic expected inflows without good reason;

Interpretation: The budget presented to the Board and the congregation will be balanced, with expenses within 1% of the total income. Spending will stay within that budget. If circumstances necessitate spending beyond 1% more than budgeted, the Executive Director will inform the Board.

Data: The budget for this year (linked above) is balanced, with projected income at \$658,345 and projected expenses at \$652,587. At this point in the year, spending is not projected to go beyond the budget.

Statement of compliance: I report compliance

- 3. Operate without a sufficient liquid operating reserve to cover unanticipated expenses, unless otherwise approved by the Board;

Interpretation: Sufficient liquid operating reserve will be calculated as two months operating expenses or 1/6 of the annual budgeted expenses. Although there may be times when the checking account balance is above or below this threshold, the average checking account balance over the course of a fiscal year should be 1/6 the annual operating budget.

Data: The Average checking account balance so far this fiscal year is \$181,000. 1/6 of our operating budget this year is \$105,000.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

4. Operate without a multi-year facilities maintenance/replacement plan and restricted Building Maintenance Fund;

Interpretation: There will be a plan that details the facilities upgrades/maintenance needed over the next 10 years and the predicted costs. This plan will be updated every 5 years. We will budget money each year to go into a Building Maintenance Fund, which will be used as specified in Policy IV.F.14. Ideally, the money budgeted each year for that fund will be 1/10th of the total projected costs in the 10-year plan.

Data: We have a 20-year facilities maintenance plan that was developed 5 years ago. It will have to undergo a total revamp once we complete our building project, but it will be a good place to start. We do have a Building Maintenance Fund and budget money towards it each year. The current balance is \$52,655.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

#### Policy H: Fundraising

The Executive Director shall not fail to review all proposed fundraisers and fundraising activities proposed by church groups for any purposes, by any means, and at any location.

Interpretation: Any collection of money or goods or sale of goods or services sponsored by the church must be approved by the Executive Director.

Data: All fundraisers that have been sponsored by the church this fiscal year have been approved by the Executive Director. These include:

- Weekly Outreach Collections
- Church Auction
- Window Of Opportunity Campaign

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.