

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF THE DESERT
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2023

Attending:

Board Members Attending by Zoom: President Linda Savard; 1st Vice President Bill Masco; 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag; Treasurer Jerry L’Hommedieu; Secretary Bob Rancourt; Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel

Minister Attending by Zoom: Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Board Members Absent: Director-at-Large Dave Carter

Congregational Members Attending by Zoom: Rod Belshee; John Ressler; Sarita Gonzales; Barb Storms

Meeting Minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting: Linda called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. PST by Zoom. Rev. Riddell offered an inspirational reading for our chalice lighting.
2. Welcome and Check-in: Linda welcomed everyone with a summary of Rev. Riddell’s reading and led a check-in of Board Members.
3. Approval of Board Minutes: The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes for the January 17, 2023, Board Meeting.
4. Process Monitor and Timekeeper: Carol
5. Voices of the Congregation: Rod Belshee advised that Sacred Grounds is looking for direction on some matters pertaining to the campus landscaping. John Ressler presented proposed plans for concrete at the Celebration Garden. Everyone discussed and Bill volunteered to work with John Ressler and assist him with planning for costs as the project moves forward.
6. Board Reports:
 - a. President Linda Savard: Linda submitted a written report.
 - b. 1st Vice President Bill Masco: Bill submitted a written report.
 - c. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag: Fran submitted a written report.
 - d. Treasurer Jerry L’Hommedieu: Jerry submitted a written report.

- e. Secretary Bob Rancourt: Bob submitted a written report.
- f. Director-at-Large Dave Carter: Dave submitted a written report from the Sacred Grounds Initiative.
- g. Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel: Carol submitted a written report.
- h. Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell: Rev. Riddell submitted a written report.

7. Old Business:

- a. COVID-19 Protocols: COVID-19 protocols were discussed following the Board's consideration at its recent retreat. Motion was made and carried that, effective immediately, proof of vaccination will no longer be required, and masks will no longer be required of the worship leader and the worship associate. This morning, the COVID-19 Protocols Team discussed masking becoming optional effective 05/11/2023 with which there didn't seem to be a lot of disagreement. Protocols will be reviewed again with the proposal to make masking optional effective 05/11/2023, and the team will be invited to attend next month's meeting when an agenda action item will be consideration of this last point.
- b. Attitude of Gratitude: This month, the Board acted to have cards sent to: Sheryl Eaton and Rod Belshee for helping to pull together the weed pull on January 28, 2023, which was a success; additionally, Rod Belshee's card will include appreciation for his AV assistance; Steve Kerr for his work on the microphones and exterior lighting and also for reinforcing the platform in the sanctuary; and McKenzi for her work on helping to reinforce the platform too.

8. Unfinished Business:

- a. "Do the Work! An Antiracist Activity Book:" Rev. Riddell led a discussion of the second half of the second chapter of this workbook by asking Board Members questions about their reading. Members discussed and shared their experience. Rev. Riddell asked Board Members to have pages 63 to 73 of Chapter Three read and reviewed and to be prepared to discuss this content at next month's Regular Board Meeting.
- b. Budget/Pledge Drive: Jerry reported that as of today, there are 105 potential pledges, and only 29 haven't yet been received. He added that as of today, \$136,000 has been pledged and \$52,000 remains to be pledged. Jerry stated that a good many of our congregants have increased their pledge amounts, there has been some slippage, and some other pledges seem rather aspirational. He updated the Board on upcoming proposed budget plans, and he anticipates presenting a proposed budget at the March 2023 Board Meeting. Discussion ensued about possible necessary budget adjustments.
- c. Conversations with the Board: Linda addressed subject areas that might be

included in future Conversations with the Board sessions. Possible areas of focus that were discussed include new strategic goals and the pending revisions to Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Bylaws. Dates for future sessions were considered.

- d. Church Council: Bill reviewed the last church council and thought it was productive. Announcing future church councils was discussed.
- e. Contract to Call Update: Sarita Gonzales, who was elected the Chairperson, summarized the status and work of the Settled Minister Selection Committee. Subgroups were formed and plans made for moving the committee's work forward in a timeline consistent with the policy of the Unitarian Universalist Association in the selection of a settled minister. She believes that the committee has good direction and is on target for its work.

9. New Business:

- a. Board Retreat Debrief: Linda reviewed the last Board Retreat.
- b. Rev. Riddell Housing Allowance: Rev. Riddell brought up the issue of his housing allowance, stating that it must be addressed in the minutes annually. The following resolution was duly adopted:
 - Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits ministers to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated housing allowance paid to them as part of their compensation to the extent used for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and
 - Whereas, pastor Rev. Ian W. Riddell is compensated by the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert exclusively for services as a minister; and
 - Whereas, the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert does not provide pastor Rev. Ian W. Riddell with a parsonage; therefore, it is
 - Resolved, that the compensation designated as a housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, paid to pastor Rev. Ian W. Riddell for calendar year 2023 shall be \$56,000.

10. Process Monitor Report: Carol advised that we started late and were running late in the first hour but that we caught up to become on time during the second hour. Carol felt that everyone was heard and got the opportunity to speak and participate.

11. Extinguishing Chalice and Adjournment of Regular Board Meeting: Linda adjourned the regular Board meeting at 6:55 p.m. PST and Rev. Riddell extinguished the chalice.

Respectfully Submitted:



Robert L. "Bob" Rancourt, Jr.
Secretary

March 21, 2023
Approval Date

Attachments: Written Reports Addendum

Addendum to Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
Written Reports of Board Members and Committees

Written Reports of Board Members and Minister:

- a. President Linda Savard's Written Report
- b. 1st Vice President Bill Masco's Written Report
- c. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag's Written Report
- d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's Written Report
- e. Secretary Bob Rancourt's Written Report
- f. Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel's Written Report
- g. Minister Rev. Ian W. Riddell's Written Report

Committee Report:

- a. Sacred Grounds Initiative Report

a. President Linda Savard's Written Report:

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
President's Board Report
February 16, 2023

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM)

This month we had McKenzi, the chair of Facilities, attend our meeting. We discussed possible changes to our facilities to make them more welcoming to different groups of people. A large part of our discussion was around having gender neutral bathrooms. McKenzi will explore what is possible to do with our space. We also discussed how we could meet the needs of neurodiverse individuals. This topic needs more exploration. We decided to support DRUUMM, as we have the past two years, by giving them some of our funds during their annual fundraiser.

Rev. Ian shared his plan for leading the discussion of Mistakes and Miracles with the congregation. We also discussed plans for the Culture Corner. We would like to reenergize that space.

Nominating Committee

The committee has candidates that they would like to put forth for the Board of Directors for the 2023-24 fiscal year. They have also been working to rewrite some of the By-laws to change the committee to a Leadership Development Committee. New language will be voted on at the congregational meeting in April.

Personnel

All our personnel have been doing a fabulous job serving the church. The UUA is changing the organization that handles their retirement benefits. As a result, Jerry and Walter have been working to make sure there is a smooth transition and to make sure we are following all the guidelines.

Hospitality

Hospitality needs additional members to organize and serve Sunday coffee hour.

Additional

I attended the February President's meeting. The majority of our discussion centered around self-care.

I attended the recent Contract to Call Task Force meeting, so I could answer any questions that the members might have. Before the meeting, the members had submitted questions they

had. Sarita put the questions into a grid and time was spent going through the questions and identifying which entities would be responsible for providing answers to those questions. Some of those questions are directed to the board.

I also planned and chaired the mid-year board retreat. It was very productive and fun.

Over the past month, I participated in the Covid Response team, production meetings, chalice circle, the pledge drive, and the stewardship meeting. I continue to keep the records of those who attend Sunday service and their vaccination data. I continue to meet monthly with Rev. Ian to plan our board agenda and to discuss business of the church.

Submitted by: Linda Savard, Board President

b. 1st Vice President Bill Masco's Written Report:

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
1st Vice President Board Report
February 16, 2023

In addition to the Church Council and Conversations with the Board, here are the activities I was involved in since the last meeting.

Pledge Drive

- Contacted 10 members/friends soliciting pledges for the 23-24 Pledge Drive
- Provided testimonial with Joni Paddock on pledging and volunteering
- Manned the plaza table to receive pledges and hand out forms/envelopes

Finance Committee

- Worked with Sarita Gonzales to tweak the proposed budget to permit a full-time settled minister – Participated in monthly meetings. Introduced Julia Bell as a potential member of the committee

Script2Stage2Screen

- Provided to the Finance Committee written documentation on S2S2S's cash handling to comply with the church's cash management policy
- Helped with attendees and clean up in recent "All About Moonbeams".
- Attended S2S2S Executive Committee Meeting

Sacred Grounds

- Participated in the Weed pull with 17 other members of the community
- Group discussion followed regarding pathways around the memorials
- Possible creation of 5 separate climate zones on the property
- Discussed with Leslie Gebhart the AV needs for the upcoming drive

Audio Visuals

- Participated in group discussions regarding needs of the committee and training - Hard wired electrical extensions. Helped Steve Kerr repair exterior lighting. - Ongoing programming and assisting in Sunday's service

Worship Committee

- Sat in to observe workings of the committee

Respectfully submitted

Bill Masco

c. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag's Written Report:

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert 2nd Vice President Report February 16, 2023

Stewardship

We reflected on the success of the **Bingo Bash**.

-Publicity was 1 constant Contact , 2 Sundays on the patio and 2 newsletter notes. Carol also made a special invite to new people. Mailed to those worked, don't come to church.

-50 people attended and they seemed engaged.

6 games vs. 7 was right amount of time

Bingo balls were too small—invest in a better bingo ball system

Prizes—cards and cards, picked up or mailed.

Trophy & presentation-- were good additions

Viewing Party—about 7—it was last minute and some technical issues.

If we do it again, announce it earlier so more people can attend.

Volunteers—Diana L, Jane Z, Carol, Sheryl (viewing party), Linda, Lee (trophy), Sarita (cards donation)

Total Cost --\$180

Things that might limit participation-

- technical issues would be able to attend viewing party if they can get to church at night

- Hearing Impaired—no visuals for numbers —should figure something out for next time.

- Pledge drive kickoff language was confusing and some thought they had to give a donation. Maybe not in the phrase confused people

Women's Night Out: we decided to change the events in winter to lunch time. This will allow those who can not drive at night to attend.

Article II

I worked with Jane Zaun on events to expand congregational awareness of the Article II Bylaw changes. She and other GA delegates will staff a table on the patio after services. I am creating an interactive poster to explain the changes. They hope to gather input from congregants on how they should vote in June.

Board Retreat

I attended the Board Retreat on February 11.

Respectfully submitted by Fran Hoag

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's Written Report:

UUCOD Treasurer's Report

January 2023

As of January 31, UUCOD held deposits of \$277,445.86 which includes \$146,598.81 invested with UUA in its UUCOD Investment Fund. Of the total amount, \$219,019.54 is held in either dedicated or restricted funds. This leaves \$58,426.32 in available, unrestricted funds.

January was an unremarkable month for both revenue and expenses. The one exception was \$14,100 received in pledge payments for FY 23-24. Investments in the MacLean Endowment Circle and the UUCOD Investment Fund lost roughly 2% in value but both funds have performed adequately over the past seven months. The January Share the Plate campaign netted \$494 for the UCR Palm Desert Partners Fund.

The Finance Committee completed a second draft of a FY 23-24 balanced budget at \$289,000 for both revenues and expenses. The draft budget proposes 100% ministry with a projected pledge target of \$188,000. The next revision of the budget is scheduled for early March when the Pledge Drive ends. The pledge drive was launched during a Bingo Bash activity on January 28. As of month end, one-third of potential pledging units had returned their pledge forms totaling \$90,100. An end of pledge drive celebration will be held after services on March 12.

During the month I finalized and distributed the 2022 Annual Contribution Statements to members and friends, distributed 2022 tax documents to vendors and staff, and attended multiple meetings relating to budget development and the pledge drive. I also worked with the Office Administrator to develop the mailing list and communications for the pledge drive. I attended the Facilities', Stewardship, and Finance Committee meetings as well as Church Council and a Conversations with the Board meeting and participated in the Sacred Grounds Weed Pull.

Jerry L'Hommedieu
February 3, 2023

e. Secretary Bob Rancourt's Written Report:

Monthly Report
UUCOD Secretary Bob Rancourt

- The secretary filed the affidavit of publication of the Script2Stage2Screen fictitious business name renewal with the county Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder
 - Finally, the Script2Stage2Screen/S2S2S fictitious business name renewal is complete

- A memorandum addressing AB 506 (revised requirements for adults working or volunteering with a youth organization effective 01/01/2022) is in progress
 - An accompanying lobby flyer/poster is drafted
 - Rev. Riddell and Board Members discussed the status of implementation at the just-completed Board Retreat

- Our annual congregational certification with the Unitarian Universalist Association (member congregations report a current certified membership number plus statistical and financial information from the previous fiscal year) was successfully updated by the due date of February 1, 2023

f. Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel's Written Report:

Audio: This is just a short synopsis. Rod Belshee sent an in-depth page to most last week. There are 5 new volunteers. More of the equipment has been moved into the closet. The choir mics are in place. An audio professional has checked all the audio systems. All are good.

Social Justice: The team reviewed the \$500 match for Safe Schools (2-19-23) and the upcoming environmental film. They are canceling the March 19th film. The April film will work with Sacred Grounds. Since the board is getting a table for May 11th, Harvey Milk breakfast, Social Justice is considering doing something more to recognize transgender youth on May 17th. They also want to continue the wearing of red noses on the 28th. In June they are looking at encouraging wearing orange for Gun Violence, doing something on/for World Refugee Day, and possibly joining Palm Springs in their June Nineteenth Celebration.

Carol McDaniel
2-15-23

g. Minister Rev. Ian W. Riddell's Written Report:

Minister's Report to the UUCOD Board

February 16, 2023

The Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Summary Outline of the work I've been involved with for the past month. This is not an exhaustive list, but is meant to give you a general idea of what I've been up to as your minister.

A. Counseling and Pastoral Care

- The Care Team met for our regular meeting on Zoom this month.
- We continue to check in and share our contacts with congregants and offer each other guidance and support in our support of congregants' needs.
- I continue to meet with congregants in need of connection and conversation by phone and Zoom and in person.
- This month, I begun making phone calls with the goal of calling all members and friends for a pastoral check in in the next few months. My calls have been greeted with appreciation and gratitude so far.

B. Administration, Governance, and Staff

- I continue to meet as needed with our Covid Response team and monthly with the DIB Ministry team.
 - I meet weekly with Pam Bibo to check in on work expectations and how things are going.
 - I meet weekly with our choir director, Vanessa Ament, to check in on how things are going with the choir, make plans for the future, and continue to communicate about her role and our collaboration. On Monday, February 13, I shared her first annual review, which was resoundingly positive.
- The Committee on Ministry met for our monthly meeting and moved forward our plans for two upcoming learning opportunities: “UUCOD Right Relations” 101 and “Microaggressions and Loving Communication”. We will be announcing the dates of these events soon.
- I meet monthly with President Linda Savard and First Vice President Bill Masco to plan the agenda for the monthly Board meeting and coordinate on other issues.
 - I met with Linda, Jerry, and Walter to discuss personnel and benefits issues.
 - I met with Walter Gendell to discuss HR issues and issues around SB506 and what steps we will need to take to be compliant.
 - I participated in both the Church Council and the Board Retreat gatherings.

C. Membership and Committees

- I attended the February meeting of the Membership Committee planning for our upcoming newcomer classes and membership ceremony.
 - I attended the meeting of the Social Justice Committee.
- I participated in the February meeting of the Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Ministry team.
- As Vanessa was out of town at a professional gathering, I led the choir practice on Feb 15. It was enjoyable to flex some old muscles.
 - I had the joy of calling Bingo with Linda for our Pledge Drive Kick Off!

D. Lifespan Faith-Development

- I began my 3-session class on our Common Read, *Mistakes and Miracles*. Five people are participating in the class. I will offer the class again (probably in April) on Zoom during the day so that more can participate.

E. Worship

- We have service leaders planned through the end of April. With committee member input, I have planned the Worship Associate schedule through April and the schedule for my preaching through June.

- I continue to lead the weekly Production meetings. In our production meetings, we continue the practice of reflecting on the service the day before and noting any issues we need to address.
- I spent a little time with Rod Belshee and the AV professional that we contracted to come in and assess our system and help us make it simpler and more robust and to perhaps be available to trouble shoot when our own leaders are away. Rod and Chris Reba, professor of live audio at COD, spent a half day going over our system, tuning and tweaking
- I led or participated in worship several times these past months:
 - Jan 29 – It is in Giving that We Receive (Pledge Drive Kick Off) with Tess Phillips as Worship Associate
 - Feb 5 – Mistakes and Miracles with Ginger Hemingway as Worship Associate
- We have been welcoming more guests and old friends to our pulpit these past months: Dr. Mignonne Pollard (Jan 15), Laura and Annie Meeks (Jan 22), and our Affiliated Community Minister Rev. Dr. Don Stouder (Feb 12). In the coming weeks we will have Rev. Sarah Millspough, our UUA Regional contact in the pulpit to talk about ministry and the call process and we'll welcome back Rabbi Jules King.

F. Denominational Activities

- I regularly consult with local and regional colleagues on issues affecting our congregations.
- I continue meeting monthly as a mentor to a person in the ministerial formation process for feedback, support, and context setting as they move through the credentialing process.
- I took part in a two-day-long class on managing staff in these new times organized by the UUA on January 20.

G. Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration

- I am part of the Desert Interfaith Council and am Zoom host for our monthly meetings. This month, I participated in a panel with two local colleagues (a Lutheran minister and the Priestess of the Goddess Temple) to share our perspectives on the role of clergy in our denominations and what a “typical” week might look like for clergy.

H. Personal and Professional Growth

- I continue meeting monthly with a coach for ongoing support, learning, and accountability as I minister to the congregation in our diversity transition work. My coach is Rev. Julica Hermann de la Fuente
- I meet monthly with a small group of colleagues in our region in reflection, sharing, and collegial support and learning.
- I also meet weekly with my therapist and continue weekly Spanish lessons.

in peace and deep love



My weekly schedule is as follows:

Currently, my days off are Friday and Saturday.

Upcoming Travel Schedule:

- My next time away will be to attend a ministers retreat in Phoenix in late March.

Committee Report:

a. Sacred Grounds Initiative Report:

Sacred Grounds report, Feb 14 2023

Weed Pull

The Weed Pull event in January was a big success. 18 people attended. Lots of work was accomplished but also we were able to gather as a group on the long patio break for fellowship and strengthen community. Dead bushes and a dead tree were removed, invasive fountain grass dug out, four irrigation circuits mapped out, weeds pulled, dry creeks lined with rock, and the entrance to the Celebration Garden opened through the short block wall.

We expect to have another weed pull perhaps the first week of March depending on the growth rate of the schismus (an invasive Mediterranean grass). After a couple of years of persistent work, we are finding very little of the other two major invasives (Sharan mustard, fountain grass).

Beautification

In January we added a number of horticultural plantings and irrigation near the entrance. Planting continues, with additional rocks and some new native Desert Sand Verbenas in the rock perimeter garden of the patio.

Native Species

Nine (tiny) native trees have been placed on the grounds, as well as a couple of jojoba and desert agave, and replacements to rush milkweed. We continue to expand the plantings.

Construction

Rod asked John Ressler to propose ideas for the sidewalks in the Celebration Garden that might be more interesting and appropriate for the Celebrations Garden. John bounced ideas off the Weed Pull group, met

with Stan Asaro (the concrete contractor) to assess which ideas are cost effective, and will present some ideas to the Board for feedback.

Fundraising

Leslie asked if naming opportunities exist for the Sacred Grounds projects, as she might be able to entice some non-UUCOD large donors. That could range from an acknowledgement plaque listing major donors to naming such as “the Joe Smith Celebration Garden”. UUCOD has a Naming Policy in place, though it does not have specific guidelines such as naming opportunities start at \$x. Rod will ask the Board to give guidance at the next Board meeting.