

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2022

Attending:

BOD Attending by Zoom Meeting: President Linda Savard, 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi, 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms, Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt, Director-at-Large Rob Duwors, and Minister Reverend Ian Riddell.

BOD Absent: none

BOD-Elect Attending by Zoom Meeting: 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag, Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel, Director-at-Large David Carter

Congregational Members by Zoom Meeting: Nominating Committee Chairperson Jane Zaun, member Julia Alberg-Burbank

Meeting minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Linda called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. PST by Zoom Meeting. Rev. Riddell offered an inspirational reading.

2. Welcome and Check-in:

Linda welcomed the three new Board Members, and led a check-in of Board Members.

3. Approval of Board Minutes:

The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes for the May 17, 2022, regular Board Meeting.

4. Process Monitor and Timekeeper: Rob

5. Consent Agenda:

<none>

6. Voices of the Congregation:

Members raised no topics that are not on the agenda.

8. Board Reports:

a. President Linda Savard: Linda submitted a written report. There was no discussion.

b. 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi: Hiroshi submitted a written report. In the meeting he shared that he and Peter are selling their home and leaving the desert, and he is resigning his position in July.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms: Barbara submitted a written report. She commented that she will be leaving the Board. Linda asked about training people for Meminfo and Barb summarized options including getting more people trained and potentially shifting to a different software application.

d. Secretary Rod Belshee: Rod submitted a written report. There was a brief discussion about bank signatories.

e. Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt: Bob submitted a written report. There was no discussion.

f. Director-at-Large Rob DuWors: Rob submitted a written report. In the meeting, Rob added that he sent one additional Attitude of Gratitude last month.

g. Minister Reverend Ian Riddell: Reverend Riddell submitted a written report. In the meeting he commented that by April many people left early for the summer and stopped committee meetings so he will need to plan differently in the future.

h. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu: Jerry submitted a written report regarding our financial position and notable financial events. In the meeting, he asked for any reimbursements soon so he can close them within this fiscal year. He also proposed that we give Roberto a raise for our cleaning service (first increase in five years), which the Board approved by consensus. Jerry answered some detailed line item financial report questions. The Finance Committee is updating Financial Procedures.

9. Old Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude: Rob

Cards of Gratitude will be sent from the entire Board:

- Tracy Flynn for greeter/Covid table and organizing greeters
- LeGrand Velez for greeter/Covid table
- John and Diane Reseller for sharing their art
- Joni Paddock for minister portraits and taking on community art coordinator role

b. AV Update: Rod/Rob

Rod provided an AV update in his written report. Rod summarized the current status. Robert was thankful for the support he got from texting the AV phone.

10. New Business

a. Leadership Development: Jane

In 2020 we set a Strategic Goal of morphing from a Nominating Committee to a Leadership Development Committee and that is now becoming the main focus. The group promoted a great seven-session leadership development UUA course with three participants. The course was excellent and dovetails well with Widening the Circle.

LeGrand submitted a wonderful write-up on his experience. Julia thanked the Board for paying for the course and described it as masterful, with excellent discussion facilitated by Jane. Julia summarized the themes, particularly faithful risk taking. Julia added that it is not about Board positions or professionals but is instead for everyone to find their passion and offer that to the congregation. Jane summarized the course, including that it was not restricted to a church setting but was instead how to find and use your gifts.

Jane also mentioned the extensive LeaderLab resources at the UUA website.

b. Building Use Policy, Rental Forms and Fee schedule review: Barb

The Board approved a motion to adopt the new Building Use Policy, and thanked Barb, Rob and Linda for the long effort to complete this update.

Discussion of the Rental Forms and Fee Schedule centered around the requirement for liability insurance. Rev. Ian also mentioned that we need a list of volunteers who can open the doors for one-time renters. The Board approved a motion to adopt the Rental Forms and Fee Schedule.

c. Board Position Description/Responsibilities: Barb and Linda

The Board had an interactive review of the 220517 Board Bylaw Description Worksheet.

Detailed discussion included the 2nd VP as Stewardship Chair, the disconnect between the bylaws regarding the Secretary role versus Membership, Treasurer duties including ByLaws items not currently done, and the role of Board Members-at-Large. The worksheet discussion will be used to evolve the Bylaws this summer and fall.

d. Assistant Minister Job Description: Rev Ian/ Linda

The Board reviewed the draft job description.

Jerry asked if there are minimum qualifications (e.g. Divinity degree) rather than just preferred, and suggested combining some bullet items. Discussion included skewing the workload to Religious Education and other support rather than sermons. Jerry pointed out that candidates might want more opportunity for preaching, that congregants might want the familiarity of seeing them in the pulpit to be comfortable with crisis care, and that there are expense implications of needing more guest preachers. That skew was partly due to combining Lifespan/RE Coordinator and Assistant Minister and increasing the time from 20% to 30%.

Rev. Ian will distribute a revised version next week for approval by email.

e. Lead Minister's Housing allowance: Linda

The Board needs to approve the Housing Allowance each year in January. No action now.

f. Board Orientation: Linda

The July Board Meeting Agenda will be light so will include an Orientation, e.g. how to read financial reports, roles and responsibilities, etc. In August Linda will meet with the three new members for a more detailed on-ramping.

g. Board Retreat:

The new Board will aim for a retreat potentially in September.

h. Board Meeting:

The Board Meeting will remain on the third Tuesday each month at 5pm. They will also remain on Zoom because we get so many more participants.

11. Process Monitor Report: Rob

Stayed on track. Spent time where needed, everyone was heard, stayed in covenant and got the work done.

12. Extinguish Chalice and Adjournment of Regular Board Meeting

Reverend Riddell offered closing thoughts and Linda adjourned the regular Board meeting at 7:06 p.m. PST.

Respectfully Submitted,

07/19/2022

Rod Belshee, Secretary

Approval Date

Addendum to Board of Directors Meeting
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 Hiroshi Yamaguchi's written report
- C) 2nd Vice President Barbara Storm's written report
- D) Secretary Rod Belshee's written report
- E) Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu written report
- F) Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report
- G) Director at Large Rob Duwors written report
- H) Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell's written report

No Committee Reports were submitted

a. President Linda Savard's written report:

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM)

The majority of our last meeting was spent discussing ways to implement the 8th Principle. We discussed ways to include other groups and committees in the work. We discussed things we could do locally to increase our understanding of oppressions in our area. We discussed having things in writing in the newsletter, on the website and posted at church. We discussed the possibility of continued messages from the pulpit, possible discussion and study groups, movie discussions and possible Adult RE classes.

We decided that at our next DIBM meeting we would focus on developing our goals for the coming year.

Nominating Committee

Since the election the focus of the Nominating Committee has been Leadership Development. Some members of the congregation will share about their experience with Leadership Development this year at the coming board meeting.

Personnel

Rev. Ian and I have been working on a job description for a part time minister and hope to post it soon. Rev. Ian and Vanessa Ament developed a job description for an accompanist for Sunday services.

Additional

I continue to participate in the AV work related to our Sunday Services.

I continue to participate with the Covid Response team and keep the records of those who attend Sunday service and their vaccination data. I help out as a greeter on Sunday mornings when not helping with AV.

I continue to meet monthly with Rev. Ian and with Hiroshi to plan our board agenda and to discuss business of the church. I participate in the stewardship committee. I've continued to work with a small group on updating our facilities policy, procedures, and fee schedule for rentals.

b. 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi's written report:

It has been a quiet month as our congregation life moves into a time of year when many are away in more temperate climates. I have also been away for much of the past month, but I've been able to stay connected by Zoom in the committees and groups I am involved with including, facilities, stewardship and our DIBM.

Upon my return to the desert, I worked with John and Diana Ressler to display their work in our "congregation gallery". It is so good to see our community room going from a neglected storage area to a creative space for us to meet, gather and enjoy the creative work of our congregation. Since this is a rotating display, we will need to purchase and install some additional gallery hanging system track and hardware so that the remaining portion of the concrete block wall can be included in the rotation. The large montage that I hung a couple of months ago should be taken down to make room for other work, if additional wall space is needed. In my absence, Joni Paddock has agreed to be the contact person for our "Creative Arts Ministry."

As the 1st VP, I am working on compiling a list of members in all standing committees, committees of the staff, committees of the community and other committees. We are certainly a group of dedicated volunteers.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storm's written report:

Stewardship plans to identify and encourage participation in activities and experiences to broaden inclusion efforts and deepen relationships among community members.

- Began identifying a broader range of cultural activities around the valley that we would publicize and encourage small groups to attend e.g., Tolerance Center activities and Pow Wows. Note: Sheryl Eaton is collecting ideas.
- Brainstormed about tours that we might set up like Tolerance Center and the New Cahuilla Museum (set to open in Fall)
- Plan to work with Lifespan Spiritual Growth to identify speakers around a range of topics to spark discussion.
- Working with the Nominating Committee to devise ways to increase committee involvement.

Membership

- Our major work is about the directory. We have contacted people who have not been active to check on whether to include them and also have been searching down new friends to see if they wish to be included. This directory is expected to be completed by October.
- We now have only 1 committee member who knows how to access MemInfo to make our database corrections. This is a concern.
- Reviewed Covid protocols for check in
- Discussed greeter schedule as well as ushers

Additional Efforts I'm engaged in

- Worked with a subcommittee of the Board to revise the Facilities and Grounds policy, fee schedule and forms that are coming to the Board tonight.
- Continue cleaning up our membership database
- Working with Fran and Pam to revise the format of the newsletters to 1) organize information by broad categories, 2) include links to the webpage for longer or more detailed announcements (e.g., what to bring for Food on the First).

d. Secretary Rod Belshee's written report:

SECRETARY

The **Fictitious Business Name** (dba) filings need to be updated every five years. The dba renewal for Screen2Stage2Screen (aka S2S2S) was filed last week. The one for UUCOD is due next year.

The **bank signatories** need to be updated with the change in signatories. The S2S2S changes last year were not completed (Terry and Bill did not go into the bank and sign the cards). We are trying to get that completed in this fiscal year (within Rod's term as Secretary). We then need to switch the bank Secretary role to Bob on July 1 and we will need to change signatories on the main UUCOD account with the departure of Hiroshi.

COVID RESPONSE TEAM

We continue to monitor weekly data from the Palm Springs wastewater testing, Riverside County Public Health, and Eisenhower Medical Center. Infection rates are increasing, though the hospitalization and death rates remain low. With vaccination and prior Covid infection, the severity of the pandemic is greatly reduced. No changes to Covid Protocols are anticipated at this time.

Rod will retire from the Covid team at the end of the Board term on June 30.

SACRED GROUNDS

The first component of the Sacred Ground Initiative, the mister system, started installation today (June 21) with on-site help from Mel W and LeGrand V. There are a number of other Sacred Grounds elements that are ready as volunteers step forward to manage the projects, perhaps in the summer or perhaps in the Fall.

AV

Rob Duwors has led the AV Programming and Operation in Rod's absence. Huge gratitude!

Streaming Worship Services

The switch to streaming services through our website (via Vimeo) has been very well received. The quality is considerably higher and the operation less troublesome for the AV team. A couple of people are still having audio issues – Rob set up a burner phone texting system so viewers

can report any remaining problems, and he was able to solve issues for the two people who texted. We intend the phone to be used to notify the AV Team in real time of issues, not to provide user technical support since we are not set up for that. Two other viewers previously reported low audio volume – both were using laptops with no external audio (earbuds, TV, or speakers) so Rod recommended using cheap earbuds.

Rod will return to the Coachella Valley the second week of July and can start looking at improvements we might make in the Fall.

Professional Backup

We are still looking for Professional backup. Several leads have proven fruitless.

Social Media – YouTube

The services are also being streamed to YouTube. While we have not communicated the UUCOD YouTube channel to people, a few people have found it (it shows up in google search) and the prior services have 6-12 views. That shows the opportunity for future Social Media efforts such as outreach, playlists and search engine optimization.

Personal

This is my final month on the UUCOD Board. It has been a great experience and I have enjoyed serving the community. I am also done. I need to step back and reduce my commitment – I will just focus on the **Sacred Grounds Initiative**, and support for the AV Team. Those will still be quite a bit.

e. Treasurer's Written Report. Jerry L'Hommedieu

As of May 31, UUCOD held deposits of \$268,420.97 which includes \$50,000 invested with UUA in the UUCOD Investment Fund. Of this amount, \$261,660.90 is held in either dedicated or restricted funds which leaves \$6,760.12 in unrestricted funds. As of month end, \$31,245 in pledge payments for next year are held in reserve which will convert to revenue on July 1, reducing total restricted funds and increasing unrestricted funds by that amount. Sufficient funds are available to address an unexpected event.

Per decisions in previous board meetings, UUCOD opened its new 1201 UUCOD Investment Fund with UUA in May with an initial \$50,000 investment. An additional \$115,000 will be invested over the next several months (in increments of \$50,000 and a final investment of \$15,000) to balance investment risk, for a total of \$165,000. These funds may be withdrawn at any time if required. There is short term risk for decreases in total fund value due to market volatility.

With a total of \$158,957 in pledge payments received (against a budget of \$173,690), we project a shortfall in pledge receipts for this fiscal year of approximately \$6,500; slippage of 3.7%. This is under the 5% slippage we routinely project, particularly given Covid and economic conditions. Excluding funds received to pay off the mortgage, we project we will end the year very close to our \$257,910 revenue budget.

There were a few exceptional expenses in May. We mutually agreed to prepay the solar loan payments through October and two months of phone/internet expenses processed in May. Unexpectedly, we incurred minor expenses to repair security equipment and the laptop used by the A/V team. In addition, we hired professionals to humanely remove and relocate swarms of bees from our irrigation valve wells on our Sacred Grounds. For the month, expenses exceeded revenue by \$7,822.

May Share-the Plate proceeds netted \$583.99 for the Community Food Bank at The Center. Congregants approved the FY 22-23 Annual Budget at the Annual Meeting on May 15.

f. Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report:

This report will be my last report as Director at Large. For the incoming 2022–2023 slate of the Board, the congregation has elected member Dave Carter to complete my two-year term and has elected me to serve a new, full term as Secretary. The current Secretary is coordinating with me to assume duties.

CHOIR

- Dr. Ament recently concluded the choir season for the summer
 - The choir enjoyed returning to live performances in worship, which, by all accounts, were well received
 - UUCOD Choir resumes in the fall, again with Dr. Ament
 - The choir responded well to Dr. Ament's direction, and she appears to be well regarded by everyone

WORSHIP

- Hybrid in-person and virtual worship continues
 - This style of worship seems to be working and is well received
 - This Director used the new AV Team Help Line (442-637-1117) during online service this weekend, and it worked and was helpful
 - In-person worship seems to be decreasing, perhaps due to summer and current upward COVID-19 trends
- Services are substantially planned through summer's end. Worship leaders include:
 - Dr. Vanessa Ament (yes, our choir director!)
 - Rabbi Jules King
 - Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray (recorded service)
 - Rev. Ian Riddell
 - Rev. Jen Simon
 - Lay leaders include:
 - Corbett Brattin

- Maxine Kaye
 - A streaming service presently is planned for the Sunday of the UUA General Assembly (06/26/2022)
 - For the 07/24/2022 service, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray's Woven in a Single Garment of Destiny, which explores the hallmarks of Unitarian Universalist theology, is planned
-
- The summer "Share the Plate" recipient is the Galilee Center

g. Director at Large Rod Duwors's written report:

Diversity Ministry

The work of this ministry continues to go well. We are working with Reverend Ian and Linda to incorporate the BOD Goals, DIBM Goals, and Beloved Conversations Among priorities. My term ends in November. The members of this group are working out a rotation plan perhaps similar to the one described in the Bylaws for the Committee on Ministry. I, along with Sandy Sladen, will rotate off on 12/31/2022.

Liaison with Social Justice Committee

No update other than they are a busy and productive group!

Attitude of Gratitude

Notes to Congregants: All the notes outlined in last month's meeting minutes were written and sent.

Term Expiration: Many thanks for the opportunity to help out on the board. It has been a pleasure and you're all an amazing group of people.

Other

- Attending the Covid Response Team Meetings on Wednesdays.
- Participating in programming, operating, and training on the audiovisual system. This is where I spend the bulk of my volunteer time for UUCOD.

h. Minister Reverend Ian Riddell's written report:

Hello, friends,

I want to share special thanks to those members of the Board who are ending your service to the Board with this meeting. You've been part of leading us through a year of great change and uncertainty, and you've done it with grace and commitment and some deep love. Thank you for your time, service, and the heart you've brought to the work.

I'm looking forward to continuing to work with those of you sticking around and, of course, with our newest Board members.

I'm grateful that we've agreed to a new two-year contract and I know that we will continue to do the loving work of guiding and supporting this community into new possibilities and deeper connections.

I am, as always, grateful to be in this work with you all.

in peace and love

Rev. Ian

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.

1. Counseling and Pastoral Care

- The Care Team did not meet for our regular meeting this month as many were traveling.
- We continue to check in and share our contacts with congregants and offer each other guidance and support in our support of congregants' needs.
- We continue to encourage congregants to complete "Emergency Contact Forms" so that we have the information we need to help in times of challenge. We had a table outside on the patio and several times have provided links in the newsletter and on the website. I have been receiving these forms regularly.
- I continue to meet with congregants in need of connection and conversation by phone and Zoom and in person again, which is a wonderful change.
- I hosted two gatherings for grieving and reconnection following the shootings in Uvalde, Texas: Sunday, May 29, in person and Tuesday, May 31, on Zoom

2. 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. We will meet in early July for an end-of-year annual review conversation. I've received some glowing feedback from congregants on Pam's work this year.
- I continue meeting 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. I will also meet with Vanessa in early July for an end-of-year annual review conversation. I've received lots of enthusiastic feedback about the work Vanessa has been doing with the choir.
- I met with the Committee on Ministry and we continued work on our Destructive Behavior Policy. We will skip meeting in July and will reconvene in August to continue this work and to plan work with the congregation on our Covenant of Right Relations.
- I meet monthly with President Linda Savard and Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi to plan the agenda for the monthly Board meeting and coordinate on other issues.
- I met with Linda Savard to craft a draft job description for a second minister based on earlier conversations about the congregation's needs.
- I crafted and began distributing a job description/posting for Lead Pianist (to replace Kurt). I will work with Vanessa and a couple of congregants to interview and audition potential candidates.

3. Membership and Committees

- I attended the Chalice Circle facilitators monthly meeting in May.
- I attended the Social Justice monthly meeting on June 9.
- I attended the gathering on Thursday, June 16, to brainstorm ways committees can recruit volunteers.
- I attended the Membership end-of-year celebration honoring Mel and Randy for their service and leadership on June 14.

4. Lifespan Faith-Development

- I started my planning for a fall class on preaching for laypeople and contacted Rev. Tom Owen-Towle in San Diego for a possible workshop on Aging with Grace in the fall.

5. Worship

- The Worship Committee did not meet in May due to many members traveling.
- 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.
- Streaming of our worship services through our website continues to be a much more consistent way of sharing our services online. Most people have applauded the smoother experience. We have some audio issues which are a combination of our technology and individuals' home technology. Our AV team, led by Rod and Rob, have been diligent in troubleshooting and providing technical support to members and so the issues are being resolved quickly.
- I led or participated in worship several times this past month:
 - May 22 – Butler, LeGuin, and Okorafor: What Science Fiction Has Taught Me About Community. Worship Associate: Betty Bender
 - May 29 – offered prayer and joys and sorrows after Uvade shootings
 - June 5 – In Body and in Spirit. Worship Associate: Joni Paddock
 - June 12 – Everything is Holy: A Religious Naturalist Spirituality. Worship Associate: Bob Rancourt, Joni Paddock, and Mel Wilkinson

6. 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 attended the UU Ministers Association annual meeting on June 7 and 9
- This week, I am remotely attending the UU Ministers Association Ministry Days and the UUA General Assembly

7. Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration

- I am part of the Desert Interfaith Council and am Zoom host for our monthly meetings.

8. 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. This group grew out of attendance at a workshop at the February gathering for Excellence in Ministry.
- I am grateful for the week of Vacation at the end of May. This was my last of three contracted weeks of Vacation for this church year.

in peace and deep love

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dee", written in black ink on a light-colored background.

My weekly schedule is as follows:

Currently, my days off are Friday and Saturday; I'm in the office Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and available for meetings/appointments on Wednesday and Thursday.

For much of the month of July, we will be staying in Idyllwild. I will continue to work my full schedule this month: I'll be in the building/office on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday and working from home on Wednesday and Thursday

Upcoming Travel Schedule:

- I will be taking time away from June 29 through July 3 – this time is a combination of individual days left over from 2021-22 and my regular days off for this coming week.