

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF THE DESERT
Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2023

Attending:

Board Members Attending by Zoom: President Linda Savard; 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag; Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu; Secretary Bob Rancourt; Director at Large Carol McDaniel; Director at Large Dave Carter

Minister Attending by Zoom: Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Board Member Absent: 1st Vice President Bill Masco

Congregational Members Attending by Zoom: Rod Belshee; David Emmerson; Ginger Hemingway; Diana Leslie; Mel Wilkinson; Jane Zaun

Meeting Minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting: Linda called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. PST by Zoom and lit a chalice.
2. Welcome and Check-in: Linda welcomed everyone, and she and everyone checked in.
3. Approval of Board Minutes: The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes for the March 21, 2023, Board Meeting.
4. Process Monitor and Timekeeper: Jerry
5. Voices of the Congregation: Rod Belshee spoke to update the Board on the Sacred Grounds Initiative. Rod advised that a Steering Committee was formed to manage governance of the Initiative and prioritize its projects. Questions were asked and answered. David Emmerson gave a quick overview of his team's thinking on proposed demonstration gardens, mostly a conceptual overview, and sought Board feedback. David's comments were a preview of his Earth Day Sacred Grounds Initiative presentation to the congregation during service this Sunday, April 23, 2023. Feedback was given and comments were made. Ginger Hemingway updated the Board on the Finance Committee's ongoing financial audit and invited the Board to review its submitted report and internal financial review matrix. Questions were asked and answered, and discussion ensued.
6. Board Reports:

- a. President Linda Savard: Linda submitted a written report, parts of which she highlighted.
- b. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag: Fran submitted a written report, parts of which she highlighted.
- c. Secretary Bob Rancourt: Bob submitted a written report, parts of which he highlighted.
- d. Director at Large Dave Carter: Dave submitted written reports for the Facilities and Furnishings Committee and the Sacred Grounds Initiative.
- e. Director at Large Carol McDaniel: Carol delivered an oral report that the Secretary memorialized.
- f. Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell: Rev. Riddell submitted a written report, some of which he highlighted.
- g. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu: Jerry submitted a written report and answered questions concerning expenditures.

7. Old Business:

- a. Attitude of Gratitude: This month, the Board acted to have cards sent to: Roger and Margaret Beaman for their hosting of a year-end UUCOD Choir potluck party; Ingrid Pratt for her significant work on the A/V Team, including helping cover Bill Masco while he was out on vacation; Barb Storms, Margaret Beaman, Tracy Flynn, Randy Steele, and Legrand Velez for a lot of time spent and work done finalizing the membership list so that the ballots for the upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting could get distributed properly; and Jeffrey Lesser for his extra work leading the choir upon Dr. Ament's premature resignation.
- b. Sacred Grounds Initiative Update: See Item 5, above.
- c. Finance Committee Audit Subcommittee Update: See Item 5, above.

8. Unfinished Business:

- a. "Do the Work! An Antiracist Activity Book:" Members discussed the first part of Chapter Three, pages 63 to 73, regarding history. Rev. Riddell asked Members to continue working on Chapter Three for the next Board meeting.

9. New Business:

- a. Church Council Debrief: Linda asked the Board for feedback about the success of last Church Council. Discussion ensued and consensus seemed to be that it perhaps was one of the most efficient and productive church councils in recent memory.

b. Annual Congregational Meeting: Linda discussed preparation for the upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting, noting the voluminous amount of time and work involved in finalizing and distributing ballots and getting prepared. Linda advised that she is still fine-tuning preparation for the hybrid in-person and online format of the meeting and making sure that everything is ready. Jerry suggested that the Secretary be involved in future preparation for annual congregational meetings regarding which Members seemed to agree is appropriate.

10. Process Monitor Report: Jerry advised that the Board did very well on time, finishing early.

11. Extinguishing Chalice and Adjournment of Regular Board Meeting: Linda adjourned the regular Board meeting at 6:35 p.m. PST and extinguished the chalice, and Rev. Riddell offered inspirational closing words.

Respectfully Submitted:



Robert L. "Bob" Rancourt, Jr.
Secretary

MAY 16, 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. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag's Written Report
- c. Secretary Bob Rancourt's Written Report
- d. Director at Large Carol McDaniel's Report
- e. Minister Rev. Ian W. Riddell's Written Report
- f. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's Written Report

Committee Reports:

- a. Facilities and Furnishings Committee
- b. Sacred Grounds Initiative
- c. Finance Committee Audit Subcommittee Report
- d. Yard Sale Summary Report

Written Reports of Board Members and Minister:

a. President Linda Savard's Written Report:

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
President's Board Report
April 18, 2023

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM)

This month Steven Toporoff joined our group. Mel Wilkinson joined us this month to report on her exploration of what is needed to add Gender Neutral Bathrooms at the church. We discovered that there is significant work that needs to be accomplished by the congregation before we are ready to pursue this. We will investigate recertification as a Welcoming Congregation before moving forward with establishing gender neutral bathrooms. We reviewed how we did on our goals this year and will put together a report for the board for the June meeting. We discussed programs within the church supporting diversity, such as the Galilee Center, Social Justice initiatives, and Super Senior needs.

Nominating Committee - Nothing new this month

Personnel - Nothing new this month

Hospitality

The hospitality chairs, Margaret and Sandy, will be away July – mid October. We need someone to facilitate running the kitchen during that time.

Additional

The contract to call task force has held almost all its small group meetings and individual interviews. They are putting together their recommendations for the board.

The Covid Response team has disbanded until it is needed again.

Over the past month, I participated in a small group discussion on the contract to call process, I also facilitated 2 groups. I attended production meetings, ran V-mix for services, attended Church Council and organized materials for the annual congregational business meeting. I continue to keep the records of those who attend Sunday service and 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. 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag's Written Report:

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert 2nd Vice President Report

April 18, 2023

Stewardship Meeting on April 6: This was a very productive meeting covering many topics.

Outreach within: The easiest segment to attract to the community is the people who come in the door – First time and repeat visitors as well as new members. These ideas will be shared with the larger group focusing on outreach strategy expanded over the summer months.

- Ask newcomers to introduce themselves during the Worship Service. This will enable Stewardship and all members to introduce themselves during the coffee hour.
- Sponsor new member potlucks. From the comments during the Settled minister talks, we are ready for more social interaction.
- Re-instate the buddy system for new members to help them navigate the community.
- Send personal emails to friends and new members about Chalice Circles and Lifespan offerings encouraging them to participate. These small group sessions are a great way to make new people feel more welcomed by the community.
- Send personal emails inviting them to events – Auction, Pledge Drive, and Pledge Drive fun events.
- Send personal acknowledgments to first time Pledge Drive donors.

Engagement:

- A subset of the committee is assembling participation data for events and classes.
- A subset of the committee is also assembling a list of new members who have slipped away Church from the classes of 2020, 2021, 2022.

Volunteers: The Yard Sale was very successful in recruiting volunteers. We can keep this in mind as we develop our volunteer program. This was attributed to

- clearly defined roles
- people didn't have to make a long-term commitment like they would if signing up for a committee
- the shifts were short

Reflections on the Yard Sale with Jane Betts-Stover: Jane presented a document that is now on the Google Drive Board Meeting folder.

Reflections on the Pledge Drive Cheesecake Social: We should start planning earlier so that we have fewer conflicts with other events.

Website: The website was under maintenance for a few days in the last week. We hired a professional team of Web Developers to repair the database. We are still addressing issues which slow the speed down.

Respectfully submitted by Fran Hoag

c. Secretary Bob Rancourt's Written Report:

Monthly Report
UUCOD Secretary Bob Rancourt

- A memorandum addressing AB 506 (revised requirements for adults working or volunteering with a youth organization effective 01/01/2022) remains in progress
 - An accompanying lobby flyer/poster is drafted
 - Further review and implementation are pending
- On April 9, 2023, the UUCOD Choir (of which the Secretary is a part) performed in service for the last time this choir year
 - On April 12, 2023, Margaret and Roger Beaman hosted a year-end choir potluck party
 - A thank-you card to Margaret and Roger from the Board for coordinating and hosting this event is suggested
 - Jeffrey Lesser attended and played, and the choir sang informally
 - The choir presented Jeffrey with a certificate of appreciation, a thank-you card, and a prepaid \$100 MasterCard gift card for his additional efforts mitigating Vanessa's early resignation
 - Separately from the Board, a year-end bonus of a reasonable amount—\$150, the amount paid to the accompanist for two of his regular working sessions—is suggested to recognize Jeffrey's assumption of additional work outside the scope of his contracted work
 - Remuneration of reasonable amounts should be provided to the accompanists temporarily working the choir practices

d. Director at Large Carol McDaniel's Report:

Nothing has changed since the last Facilities and Furnishings Committee meeting. The A/V Team has a new person working on S2S and hopefully he'll be interested in working on the church side of the A/V Team.

Carol McDaniel
4-18-23

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

Minister's Report to the UUCOD Board

April 18, 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 continued making phone calls with the goal of calling all members and friends for a pastoral check in in the next few months.

B. Administration, Governance, and Staff

- I continue to meet with the DIB Ministry team.
- I meet weekly with Pam Bibo to check in on work expectations and how things are going.
- Jeffrey Lesser continued to lead rehearsals with our choir through Wednesday, April 5. We decided that Easter Sunday, April 9, would be the choir's last singing performance this church year. I joined in their final rehearsal and led the choir at that service while Jeff accompanied. I will work with the Board and choir to make plans for filling our choir director position for the fall.
- The Committee on Ministry is working in teams on our upcoming offerings: "Living into Right Relations in our Congregation" [April 20 and 27 at 6:30pm on Zoom] and "Microaggressions and Loving Communication" [May 7 in person after Sunday service].

- 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 our Safety Task Force to work through a safety checklist assessment provided by Church Mutual to determine areas we need to attend to in terms of physical safety. We will do a physical walk-through of the building this Thursday morning.
- I worked with Sue Caspari to update our reporting of copyrighted music use through our Christian Copyright Solutions account. We continue to do this quarterly.
- I participated in the Church Council meeting on April 8

C. Membership and Committees

- I met with the DIB Ministry team for our monthly meeting. We assessed our work for the past year and welcomed new member Steven Toporoff.
- I met with the Chalice Circle leaders. We began assessing the past year and beginning to imagine our work in the next church year.

D. Lifespan Faith-Development

- The second offering of my class on our Common Read, *Mistakes and Miracles* was poorly attended. Only 1 person came to the first and second offerings. I cancelled the third offering. I will work to find other ways to engage the congregation in this material over the coming months.

E. Worship

- We have service leaders planned through the end of June and the Worship Team and I have begun filling the calendar for the summer and early fall.
- 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 led or participated in worship several times these past months:
- April 2—I Brought My Spirit to the Trees: Our Camp de Benneville Pines with the Peet Paduano family!
- April 9— Returning to Life (Easter) with Derek Moore as Worship Associate and our Choir
- April 16—Curioser and Curioser: Questions Newcomers As of Us with Ginger Hemingway as Worship Associate (Auction sermon topic)
- We continue to welcome guests and old friends to our pulpit: Rabbi Mark Borovitz and his wife, Harriet Rossetto (March 26).

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 attended the Spring retreat for the Pacific Southwest chapter of the UU Ministers Association. I serve our chapter as part of the nominating team.

G. Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration

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

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:

- Vacation: May 2-8
- Study Leave: June 12-18
- UUA General Assembly and Ministers Days: June 19-26 (I am attending virtually from home)

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

UUCOD Treasurer's Report

March 2023

As of March 31st, UUCOD held deposits of \$290,716.22 which includes \$150,907.03 invested with UUA in its UUCOD Investment Fund. Of the total amount, \$241,754.86 is held in either dedicated or restricted funds. This leaves \$48,961.36 in available, unrestricted funds.

Excluding changes in fund values, UUCOD's March revenues were \$16,427 and expenses were \$23,566, a deficit for the month of \$7,139. A successful yard sale brought in \$6,470; forty percent of total revenues. UUCOD collected \$365 for S.C.R.A.P.E. Galleries as part of March's Share the Plate and \$1,148 was collected in February for Safe Schools Desert Cities' scholarship fund. The only exceptional expenses were \$2,300 for tree trimming and Vanessa Ament's final paycheck which included accrued vacation time. Year to date, UUCOD has excess revenues of \$56,094.

At the March board meeting, the board approved a proposed budget of \$307,000 which will be submitted for approval by the congregation at the annual meeting on April 30. The budget includes \$35,000 from reserves for parking lot repair and approved work on Sacred Grounds. Leslie Gebhart led a workshop which brought in nearly \$4,000 for Sacred Grounds. The Sacred Grounds interest group is developing plans which initially include extending the patio and pouring new walkways in this fiscal year and additional planting of native plants in the fall. The group is initiating new fundraising to support these efforts.

The transition from TIAA to Empower as UUA's retirement program administrator continues and should be completed by mid-April.

Jerry L'Hommedieu
April 5, 2023

Committee Reports:

a. Facilities and Furnishings Committee:

There is much happening on Sacred Grounds, but I'll let Rod go over that.

The irrigation has been getting an update by Dave Emmerson (thank you).

There is much chysmus growing and we need a large weeding party. To be arranged later, with Sacred Grounds.

Within the building, we are needing to replace the door mechanisms for both the front door and the community room door. This will cost over \$3,000 each. (This amount is not the final price, but only mine, with no paperwork to look at).

Everything else seems to be working fine right now.

Mel Wilkinson
Facilities Chair

b. Sacred Grounds Initiative:

Sacred Grounds report to Board, April 18, 2023

Steering Committee

We have formed a Steering Committee. The intent is to provide a body for decision making (or making recommendations to the Board), coordinate communication, and keep projects moving. The members are Rod Belshee, Diana Leslie, Mel Wilkinsen (Facilities), John Ressler, Dave Emmerson, and Jack Fitzsimmons (starting in the Fall). We'd also like a member of the new Board.

The new Steering Committee will reexamine projects and priorities. In particular there will be a focus on planting season next October-November.

Phase One Projects

The Celebration Garden walkway design has continued to evolve. John now has a very attractive design, and he is engaged in deep conversations about materials to create something without maintenance issues. Gene Kain is very excited about the project and offering suggestions to John as well.

Our contractor has missed multiple dates for responses and bids. We are re-starting the process of engaging concrete contractors, which is quite disappointing. We hope to find one with experience in design projects, not just plain flatwork.

The new Steering Committee is questioning whether the patio expansion fits under the Sacred Grounds vision (the original impetus was a patio water feature and patio garden). Having spent \$13K of donation on the misters, there is a desire to focus more on the grounds and developing

native gardens. The patio concrete extension is a project that Facilities may wish to pursue. Similarly, the sidewalk through the Garden of Hope to Via Vail is also being questioned since we do not have nearly the same need for overflow parking on the street that we did when that project was first proposed.

The Steering Committee will be developing priorities and will present new direction to the Board.

Demonstration Garden

The heart of Sacred Grounds vision is providing native habitat. Three congregants (Mel, Dave E, Sue E) in the UCR California Naturalist class drew up concepts for our demonstration plant communities.

Their concept includes four different demonstration plant communities, each with small educational signage. We can have a demonstration of desert wash, blow sand, canyons, and stabilized sand. Each has its own plant species, pollinators, and critters. Species that are particularly attractive, such as chuparosa and desert lavender are being proposed to help balance the goal of native habitat with an attractive landscape. The hope of the three designers is to provide a demonstration that native landscaping can be attractive, and encourage homeowners and landscape designer to move to native species. Given the reduction of native habitat and climate change, these little refugia in our own yards may become critical habitat for our native species.

Our planting season is Oct-Nov so we will be focusing on what we can accomplish this fall.

c. Finance Committee Audit Subcommittee Report:

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT TO BOARD

April 2023

This report is a follow-up to the report provided to the Board in Jan. Our plan continues to be to meet and review different areas of our procedures quarterly. Our objective remains to review our procedures and where there is a finding in the application of the procedures (our practices), we will develop a corrective action plan. This will be done at the completion of our audit. We are using a format from the UUA website. Our first session was a review of our procedures in the Income area.

The audit committee met in March for our 2nd review of the procedures for expenses (specifically the Authorizations for Expenditures). Our next meeting is scheduled for September.

Respectfully submitted.

Financial Board Audit Sub Committee

d. Yard Sale Summary Report:

2023 UUCOD Yard Sale Summary

Dates: March 13- March 16th : Donations received and priced
March 17, March 18, 2023 : Actual sale
March 19th : Left over items put in Community Room for congregants to peruse after Sunday Service. Donations were accepted
March 20th: Galilee Center collected what remained

Time of Sale: 9 am- 4 pm

Money netted:

\$2,500 donation from private sale of a stove.
\$6,383.05 from sale proceeds from 3/17, 3/18, 3/19.

Total was \$8,883.05

Yard sale Committee:

Jane Betts-Stover (Chair), Janice Dunn, Marilyn Walsh

Volunteers:

Many thanks to: Randy Steele , Dave Carter, Jerry L'Hommedieu, Rob DuWors, Bob Rancourt, Reuben Gallardo, Deborah Mandigo, Andre Dunn, Tracy Flynn, Carol Lavoie, Carol McDaniel, Barbara Ketay, Maxine Ziebarth, Karen Yanney, Ginger Hemmingway, Susan Hannon, Sarita Gonzales, Joni Paddock, Katy Faas, Larry Rogers, Margo Perry, Sue Engle, Dave Emmerson, Kris Huges, Ingrid Pratt, Mel Wilkinson, Carol Scanny, Myra Bielby, Lisa Spencer, Jane Zaun, Rusty Kaplan, Claudia Simmons, Ellen Tierney, Linda Moreno, Lynn Fisher-McCanne, Tom McCanne, Roger Beaman, Margaret Beaman, Ken Highman, Dick Vemables.

The sale was held for two days this year, rather than one day as in previous years. It was found that the amount of items donated could not be sold in one day, necessitating them to essentially be given away. Two days proved to be a good decision as multitudes of wonderful items were donated again this year, even more than in 2022.

However, holding the sale for two days also cause a dilemma- how to safely store the sale items the nights of 3/17 and 3/18. The suggestion of volunteers taking turns watching the items throughout the night was not used. The committee was afraid for the safety of these volunteers. Instead, volunteers were recruited to pack up items and move the tables inside the church. This necessitated taking the tables out again Saturday Morning and once again arranging items on the table. At the end of the sale on Saturday the 18th, volunteers packed up what remained and took it to the Community Room to be available to people after Sunday Service.

Advertising:

The sale was advertised in Tidbits magazine, Desert Sun Paper, Facebook for the public and Facebook UUCOD Community page, Market place, Craigs list, NextDoor.com, PostMYGargaeSale.co, (which posts to Gsalr.com, Yardsalesearch.com,

Garagesalefinder.com, Yardsales.net, Garagesalestracker.com). Street signs were placed at important locations both days of the sale.

Donation of remaining items after sale.

Many charitable organizations are no longer picking up items after sales. Those that do, will not pick up later in the afternoon. Galilee Center was available for morning pick up on Monday 3/20.

Some after thoughts from the committee are:

- Ask for use of a vacant building for a week for set up and sale. Community Room is too small. Must keep Church doors locked during the sale which is impractical. Have to haul items in at night, take out in the morning which is too labor intensive.
- Alternate solutions to safely storing items overnight if another location is not found might be, hiring a security guard or organize an overnight party for congregants in the parking lot.
- No Sunday sale after Service, it is too labor intensive for a small return.
- Hold sale on Thursday & Friday (best days for sales) in March before snowbirds leave.
- Advertising was great, it paid off.
- Consider starting sale earlier in day, possibly 7 am. End earlier in afternoon.
- Ask that donated items be cleaned first. Pricing volunteers had to spend too much time cleaning donated items.
- Include a card with what the Unitarian Universalist Church IS with the business card. Such as: *'The Unitarian Universalist Church is a theologically liberal religion characterized by a "free and responsible search for truth and meaning" and a belief in the inherent worth and dignity of everyone. UU's do not share a creed - rather, they are unified by their shared search for spiritual growth and by the understanding that an individual's theology is a result of that search and not a result of obedience to an authoritarian requirement. UU's draw on many different theological sources and have a wide range of beliefs and practices.'* Learn more at uua.org. Shoppers asked.

Additional information from Jane to Linda in an email: Presuming the Board would like a Yard Sale next year, who would be Chair of running it? I have not been approached about it, but if I were, I would have to think about it. Whoever does run it, cannot do it alone. There were three of us this year and I think that is a good number. We each took a part - Janice did the advertising- Marilyn did signage- and I did general organization

and recruited volunteers. We met regularly, starting in November. I started in September. Worked well! So, I suggest something similar in the future.