

East Shore Unitarian Church

Board of Trustees Meeting

November 16, 2023

Minutes

Our East Shore Unitarian Church Board Covenant

We covenant to hold the Eight Principles of Unitarian Universalism, the Mission of ESUC, and the ESUC Right Relations Covenant as the touchstones for all actions and decisions we make as a Board. We recognize that how we hold and treat each other, and the congregation is the spiritual ground from which grow the actions and decisions that support the health and welfare of the church now and in the future. We aspire to lead by example, filled with good will for all present and the full congregation, and calling forth the best in all congregants and empowering their strengths and contributions. We pledge to support the entire congregation by contributing our best selves and our best gifts in trust for future generations.

Board Members Present: Rev. Maria Cristina, Rebecca Chatfield, Nicole Duff, Amanda Alice Uluhan, Signe Lalish, David Langrock, Geri Kennedy, Martin Cox, Evelyn Smith, Keely Cofrin Allen, Taya Montgomery.

Board Members absent: none.

Visitors present: Ryam Hill, Grace Colton, Bill Austin, Craig Nelsen, Ann Fletcher

Support roles:

<i>Facilitator:</i>	Signe Lalish, President
<i>Time Keeper:</i>	Nicole Duff
<i>Process Observer:</i>	Martin Cox
<i>Tech Helper:</i>	Taya Montgomery

Meeting commenced at 3:30 PM PST.

Chalice Lighting and Opening Reading

Signe read The Abundance of our Lives Together by Katie Sivani Gelfand

Land Acknowledgement

Check-In

Each person present shared a word or phrase to express what they think needs our attention and focus as we move into the new year.

Consent Agenda

1. Approve the October 2023 BOT meeting minutes
2. Accept the proposed COLA policy

Geri moved to approve the consent agenda. Evelyn seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item #1: Discuss and vote on the 2024 Budget

Rebecca presented the proposed 2024 operational budget.

Geri shared that this budget went through the budget committee, 4 town halls, and the financial stewardship committee. Many eyes were on it.

In response to questions about what forces shaped the current budget, Geri said the budget was shaped by an effort to keep the endowment allocation to a minimum. The endowment allocation in this budget is \$50,235 which is just a little over the 3.5% guideline in the charter.

In response to a question about trade-offs between the church mission and goals, on the one hand, vs. the budget constraints, on the other, Geri noted that an effort was made to minimize money going to entities outside of the church by various ministry teams. Initial drafts cut budgets for ministry teams, but after town halls and feedback, the committee restored ministry team budgets. These budgets came back at the expense of the endowment. There is future work to do as we need to sort out how we support outside entities in 2024. All staff members have reduced their program and professional expenses. We've kept things to the lowest that we can do. The one thing on top of this budget is funding the building reserve which will have to be a capital campaign. We are a bit more than halfway toward the building reserve goal.

A couple of notable new changes to the budget this year include:

1. We have included Legacy Gifts at an average of previous years.
2. Minister Reserve Fund was created for the 2024 budget and \$8000 will be funded out of the operating fund. The 2024 budget shows the minister reserve as its own line item.

Geri moved for the board to approve the budget as presented.

David seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item #2: Approve the Agenda for the Dec 10 Congregational Meeting

Signe presented the agenda for the Bi-Annual Congregational Meeting.

The core business of the meeting is the three votes:

- Approval of the amendment to the ESUC Bylaws Article X, Section C
- Approval of the 2024 Operating Budget
- Approval of the Holly House agreement with Channel Place Community Club

Martin moved that the board approve the agenda for the congregational meeting as presented. Keely seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item #3: Follow Up from the UUA Disclosure

Martin asked board members, staff, and guests to share an experience from the UUA town hall meeting of November 9, 2023 about the disclosures regarding the ministry of Rev. Furrer.

Martin also asked what actions or next steps might be needed. Each person present shared an insight or takeaway. No specific decision or motion was made. However, discussion identified the need to examine how East Shore deals with complaints.

Announcements:

- Rev. Maria Cristina announced that the Indigenous People's Day conversation has begun. The suggestion is to consider making Indigenous People's Day (second Monday of October) a paid holiday for ESUC staff, without taking away any previously-existing paid holiday. This idea has been proposed and staff, board, and Personnel Committee will discuss this suggestion in the future.
- Nicole gave a status update on the Mission Fund Drive (MFD). The fund drive is "doing fine". The numbers are about the same at this stage of the fund drive as they were a year ago.
- Rebecca gave an update on the status of the sanctuary beam repair. The project is unfolding. There is a fresh beam in place. The brackets will be done in the next few weeks.

Process Reflection

Martin shared some reflections on how attendees at the meeting interacted.

CLOSING

Rev. Maria Cristina offered closing words about gratitude; truly listen to each other. Be ready in every moment to disarm your heart.

Regular Board meeting went into executive session at 5:30 PM PST

Minutes compiled by Martin Cox
Secretary, Board of Trustees
East Shore Unitarian Church
Bellevue, WA
November 17, 2023

