

WESTSIDE UU CHURCH
Board Meeting Minutes – July 11, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. Present: Liz Campbell, Jana Canard, Glenda Hood, Michael Muñoz, Dianne Nixon, Dwight Robarts, Jeff Rodriguez, Rocio Sarmiento, Melissa Trask. Also: Sue Anderson, Reed Bilz, Matt Craig, Ridge Dickey, Nicci Kennedy, Karen Moore, Caroline Nixon. A Zoom option was available.

I. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. The minutes from the May 9, 2023, meeting were previously approved via email.

II. CONTINUING BUSINESS

- a. Karen Moore read a statement regarding the departures of Kim Hart and Rev. Don Strickland.
- b. Motion regarding censure: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the Board censure him for his June 9 email to Kim Hart and demand that he apologize to her and further, should he refuse to do so, he be removed from the Board. There being no second, the motion died.
- c. Communications and Board transparency: On June 20, Jeff Rodriguez made a motion requesting the Board receive copies of all emails between Dayna Tooley, Kim Hart, Don Strickland, and the Right Relations team for the period between May 9, 2023, through June 11, to review *prior to* the church town hall meeting on July 1. The motion was never voted on, so at the July meeting, Jeff amended the motion, requesting that, after the Board had reviewed the emails, they would make them available to the full congregation for their review. Dianne Nixon moved that the Board table the motion until after the Board has held a retreat at an unspecified future date. Seconded and **CARRIED**.

III. DLRE REPORT: Nicci Kennedy

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT: Dwight Robarts

V. NEW BUSINESS

- d. Risk assessment – Dwight: An independent company has completed a risk assessment report regarding possible hazards at the church. One of the primary concerns is the paver stones in front of the church, which are uneven and create a tripping hazard.
 - a. Apology from the Board to the members: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the motion be tabled until Dayna Tooley has completed her recuperation and is able to participate in the discussion. Seconded and **CARRIED**.
 - b. Communication to committee members: Jeff Rodriguez moved that, effectively immediately, each Board meeting should conclude with a brief discussion of whether any committee members and/or individuals might be impacted by decisions made by the Board and, if so, how they will be notified. Seconded and **CARRIED**.
 - c. Next town hall meeting: 10 a.m. Saturday, July 29.
 - d. Nominating Committee procedures: Jeff Rodriguez moved to have the Board create a task force to research and possibly draft an amendment to the bylaws, clarifying the authority of the Board in relation to the recommendations of the Nominating Committee—specifically, clarifying the process on how the Board and Nominating

Committee should interact in the event the Board has objections to one, some, or all of the individuals presented on the Nominating Committee's slate. Dwight attempted to move the motion to Executive Session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.

- e. Nominating Committee and Covenants: Jeff Rodriguez moved to have the board create a task force to research and possibly draft an amendment to the bylaws, prohibiting members who are out of covenant from being added to the current nomination slate for consideration as board members, further moving that the amendment, if presented for vote, should include a process to preclude the possibility that someone might initiate a false Right Relations complaint against an individual out of spite, and use the complaint to prevent the individual from serving on the board, further noting that, if it is the Board's preference, this task force could be the same one assigned to the prior motion. Dwight attempted to move the motion to Executive Session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- f. Process for conducting reference and background checks: Jeff Rodriguez moved to have the board create a task force assigned to clarify and codify the process for conducting background and reference checks for church employees, including the minister, further noting that if it is the Board's preference, this task force could be the same one assigned to the previous motions. Dwight attempted to move the motion to Executive Session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- g. Process for evaluating the minister: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the Board create a task force assigned to research and possibly draft an amendment to the bylaws clarifying the process for evaluating the minister, further noting that this policy should address the frequency of evaluations, the methods to be used, and specify quantitative data that shall be collected; further noting it should make clear if, and how, this evaluation process will apply to the various types of ministers, e.g, settled, interim, contract, etc., further noting that, if it is the Board's preference, this task force could be the same one assigned to the prior motions. Dwight attempted to move the motion to executive session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- h. Monthly report from the president: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the Board formally adopt a practice that the board president shall be required to submit a report at each monthly Board meeting, and that this report shall specifically address any significant concerns or issues the president may have, including but not limited to, the minister, the staff, committees, or other key issues; allowing that the report may be as simple as saying, "No concerns at this time," or, if necessary, allowing that if the president's concerns are of such significance, they may be addressed in executive session, and further requiring that the president shall regularly remind other Board members that they also are welcome to share any significant concerns they may be aware of in a similar manner, with this practice to take effect August 2023. Dwight attempted to move the motion to executive session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- i. Potential settlement agreement: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the Board, in the event they should decide to pursue a legal settlement with the Rev. Don Strickland in lieu of his resignation, be prohibited from keeping the terms of the settlement confidential from the congregation, specifically including any payment proposed for the Rev. Strickland, and further requiring the board to formally share this draft document with the congregation in

advance of concluding the agreement, and further allowing the members seven days to review the proposal and submit their comments regarding the proposed settlement to the Board. The Board voted to go into executive session at approximately 9:35 to discuss the motion. The Board came out of executive session at approximately 9:50.

- j. Ongoing suspension of committee work: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the Board formally and publicly acknowledge actions taken during the April 2023 board meeting, wherein the Board went into executive session and voted to immediately suspend one of the primary tasks of one of the church's longstanding committees, further asking that they acknowledge that they took this action without consulting with the UUA for guidance, without consulting the church bylaws to ensure they had the proper authority, and without consulting with key members of the committee—specifically, the chair of the committee in question, who was prohibited from participating in the discussion, and further noting that while it has been three months since the Board took this action, information regarding this action still has not been shared with the congregation; or, conversely, requiring the Board to explain to the congregation why they are compelled to keep the actions taken at this meeting a secret, and how much longer they anticipate the actions must be kept secret. Dwight attempted to move the motion to executive session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- k. Dianne Nixon moved that the Safe Congregation Committee be allowed to resume their work of handling safe congregation concerns. Seconded and **CARRIED**.
- l. Thoughtful respect for feelings of members: Jeff Rodriguez moved that the board formally acknowledge that actions taken by the Executive Team during their February 2023 meeting upset one of our highly respected, longstanding members so much it caused that person to cry and lose sleep for a night. Dwight attempted to move the motion to executive session without first calling for a vote; he then withdrew his action and the motion was tabled.
- m. Board Retreat: No action taken.
- n. How to handle emails to the board from members: No action taken.
- o. Need for a third party to facilitate healing? No action taken.
- p. Meet with Right Relations to discuss if there is a way to improve the process? No action taken.
- q. Board member/topic for monthly board communication to congregation: No action taken.
- r. Decision Review and communication: No action taken.

BACK BURNER

Welcoming Statement that specifies our priorities - Worship Team/

1. Providing a home for religious refugees
2. Creating a safe space for fellowship and community
3. Actively working to curb gun violence
4. Demanding justice for LGBTQIA+

[Draft of Sue Anderson apology to congregation](#)

[Response to Reed Bilz's Letter](#)

[Budget Percentage Report](#)

[Treasurer's Report](#)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jbow5_OvQNrnocU0icktZr-e-3m0uuiL/edit

ADDENDUM

- a. Via email, Jeff Rodriguez moved on July 18 that office administrator Linda Ice have her work hours and duties expanded until further notice, so that she is assigned to enter all financial transactions into the accounting software and generate checks, leaving the treasurer still responsible for managing cash flow, signing checks, providing board reports and updates to the congregation, and working with the finance committee, especially during the budgeting process. Seconded and **CARRIED**.
- b. Via text, the new slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee was approved on July 19. Dwight Robarts, president; **xxxx, vice president**; Janna Canard, secretary; Melissa Trask, treasurer; Matt Craig and Eric Johnson, directors.
- c. Via email, Jeff Rodriguez called a Point of Order on July 19 regarding a motion he had previously submitted on June 20, in advance of the July 1 town hall meeting, requesting that Interim Board President Dwight Robarts obtain copies of all emails between Dayna Tooley, Kim Hart, Don Strickland, and the Right Relations team for the period between May 9, 2023, through June 11, to share with the Board to review in advance of the church town hall meeting scheduled for July 1. It was noted that Dwight initially declined to call for a second to the motion, as required by the rules of parliamentary procedure; it was further noted that he agreed to call for a second only on June 25, five days later, after being informed that he was violating parliamentary procedure; Jeff also noted that, even after the second was called, Dwight declined to call for a vote on the motion, essentially rendering it moot before the town hall meeting, also a violation of the democratic process; further, that Jeff had then submitted the incomplete motion to be added to the Continuing Business items on the agenda of the July Board meeting, but Dwight left the motion off the agenda, another violation of parliamentary procedure; during the meeting, Jeff stated that the motion, after 21 days, still had not been voted on, and should be part of the Board's continuing business; Dwight then made the statement that Dayna had told him a couple of hours prior that she had already shared with the Board all of the emails between her and the other concerned parties, and there were no further ones to circulate; however, a couple of minutes later, Dwight referenced an email between Don and Dayna wherein Don apparently had stated that it was not in his contract to have to meet with the Right Relations team; it was then noted that no other Board members had seen this specific email, apparently directly contradicting Dwight's statement from only moments prior; and finally, when questioned about these statements, Dwight could not explain the apparent discrepancy. Dwight ruled that the Point of Order was well-taken and the motion to obtain the emails was tabled.
- d. Via email, Jeff Rodriguez made a motion at 12:13 p.m. on Friday, July 21, asking the Board to formally acknowledge that Board President Dwight Robarts had repeatedly violated Robert's Rules of Order regarding parliamentary procedure prior to and during the July 2023 board meeting, noting that, on July 6, within the required deadline, Jeff had submitted several motions to be added to the July meeting agenda; at 2:48 p.m. the day of the meeting, Dwight had sent Jeff an email, asking him to withdraw the motions, a request Jeff declined; Dwight then committed what Jeff claimed were a number of violations of parliamentary procedure, including: 1) He declined to email the meeting agenda to all of the members, instead, leaving it on the Board's Google Drive, thereby keeping the agenda of a public church meeting hidden from the full congregation; 2) He

also kept the document containing Jeff's motions on the Google Drive, again, preventing church members from accessing information which should have been readily available to them; 3) During the July meeting, to present Jeff's motions, Dwight independently attempted to take the Board into executive session without first seeking unanimous consent or calling for a vote, as required by parliamentary procedure; and 4) During the discussion of these various actions, Dwight acknowledged his position, openly telling the Board, "I don't want these motions to go into the meeting minutes." At 11:26 a.m. on Saturday, July 26, Dwight declared the motion had not received a second and therefore had died. Later that same day, Janna Canard sent an email asking if it was possible to have more time to review and consider the motion. Shortly after that, Liz Campbell sent an email stating she agreed with Janna. That evening, as part of the same discussion, Rocio Sarmiento sent an email noting that new board members did not know how to access the board drive and therefore had not had an opportunity to read and consider the motions. There being no response from Dwight, the motion died.

- e. Via email, on Thursday, July 27, Dwight submitted a draft of a proposed statement from the Board apologizing to the congregation. Rocio Sarmiento made a motion to adopt, modify, and distribute the apology to the membership. Discussion began via email. Late that afternoon, Dwight noted that there had not yet been a second to the motion, and therefore any discussion about the statement could not yet begin. The morning of July 28, Glenda Hood seconded the motion to accept the apology as written or with the proposed revisions. Shortly afterward, Dwight emailed that the motion had failed due to a lack of a second. Shortly afterward, Matt Craig emailed stating he thought Glenda Hood had seconded the motion, and if not, he was willing to second it. Shortly thereafter, Dianne Nixon emailed that she also thought the motion had been seconded. There being no further discussion, the motion died.