

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Durango**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 18, 2020**

**Board Members Present:** *Frank Lockwood (President), Elizabeth Long (V-P), Julie Jordan (Member-at-Large), and Becky Malecki (Member-at-Large).*

*Opening words read by Elizabeth. Covenant read by Nancy Check-in was done. Julie was the process observer.*

**Consent Agenda**

Elizabeth moved to approve the consent agenda, Nancy seconded it. All were in favor.

Prior meeting (November) minutes were approved (the minutes contain the exact dollars from Frolic proceeds and the requests for funds from the church).

**Minister's Report** None.  
Minister is on sabbatical.

**Public Comment:** None

**Financial Report (Tim Miller)**

Tim Miller: presented Finance Commentary Jan 2020 and FY 20 YTD. Spending tends to pick up about now (half-way through the fiscal year). Donations tend to decrease as the year progresses, but we're doing well collecting pledges and predict 97-98% of pledges will be collected. Misc income has been buoyed by items such as UUA's and acting choir director donating her salary back to the church. Current priorities might include: increasing the midyear contingency spending budget, a percentage of health care coverage, and a mid-year effort to reserve the ministerial transition costs, and funding a larger Social Justice budget. Clarified what ratable expenses are, considering we are 7/12 of the way through the year - have spent 78% at 58% of the way through the year.

Investments in legacy funds? Dollar cost averaging is an investment strategy that aims to reduce the impact of volatility on purchases of financial assets. In line with this philosophy, we have invested some monies in the equity market, as well as CDs, but not all of the monies. Have made about \$25,000 which is approximately a 10% return.

Discussed pledge monitoring to ensure that all promised pledges are coming in as intended (by the pledgers).

Asked to authorize \$136.46 to John Schiffel to reimburse for AV equipment. Becky motioned to authorize this spending, and Julie seconded it. Motion passed.

### **Buildings & Grounds - John Redemske**

John presented the UFD Buildings & Grounds Proposal for renovation of the Columbine classrooms.” John stated that this idea has been developing for some time, as the student population has increased. Then, with the new interim Faith Formation director (since summer 2019), there were more specific recommendations for increased space, based on actual data of increased classroom sizes (for example, attendance in the 6-11 year olds age group has increased from below ten to seventeen children). The renovation proposal involves re-doing the stairway, installing a wall, stripping a closet and bathroom, creating a new hallway, adding a half-bath and a foldable acoustic wall, and reconfigure access to the existing storage room (see actual proposal for complete specifics).

The estimated timeline for construction would be June, July, and August, with completion by September 2020 when classes resume after the summer school break. John plans to pass the design by all interested parties. Rough cost of the renovation is estimated to be \$8,100. At the April 2020 board meeting John will present actual costs and ideas for funding this expense.

Discussion ensued as to whether or not these plans are compatible with the 2018 Master Plan proposal that was never adopted, but still exists as a future possibility. This is an example of real optionality - being flexible as we proceed with a small part of the larger possibilities. John stated that he is looking at a long term plan for **all** the needs, based on what’s most pressing, but doing this step by step (e.g., the kitchen sink needs replacing).

**John asked the Board for tentative approval of his plan as presented so far. Nancy made the motion to accept the tentative, conceptual, non-funded, plan as presented in anticipation of a more formal plan, with cost estimates, this spring. This would need to come up again for final approval. Julie seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

### **IT Proposal for the Breeze Church Management System - Eb Redford**

The Informational Technology (IT) committee was asked to evaluate Breeze software as a replacement for PowerChurch software. After extensive consultation with affected parties, their summary is that they are ready to proceed. Cost is \$600 annual cost, which is a savings of \$130 per year. Beyond the cost savings, the Breeze software is more functional in terms of meeting our needs. Eb explained that this software will allow us much greater access to board members’ information; “the user interface is vastly superior to PowerChurch.”

Becky made the motion to drop the PowerChurch system and implement the steps needed to accept the Breeze software. Nancy seconded the motion. All were in favor. The change will be in effect for the upcoming Sunday.

### **Process Observation**

Julie reported that there is mild talking over others. We occasionally got off track but only for short periods. All voices were heard. There was no observed conflict.

### **Environmental Justice Team Report - Tom Miller**

This committee will be pursuing a "Green Sanctuary" designation, which could take up to three years. This is in line with Goal 10 of the five year (2017-2022) Strategic Plan. Projects include education, Earth Day activities, working with Building & Grounds on energy use, and other projects yet to be explored.

We are also on line with our solar renovation (Sheryl Guy wrote an \$18,000 grant request, which was submitted in November, to help cover the \$38,000 cost. Note: LPEA awarded their entire \$18,000 grant to UUFD! Congrats Sheryl Guy for preparing and submitting the grant application. It is anticipated that this will take place this spring (by SolarWorks). The system will cover the sanctuary and Bowman Hall roofs, and two electric car charging stations. This will allow for a savings of approximately \$2,000 per year in electricity costs.

### **Stewardship Committee - Sheryl Guy & Kathleen Adams**

The timeline: Four weeks of 3-4 minute testimonials are about to take place during the Sunday service, then the 5th week will be Celebration Sunday. There are weekly bulletin announcements. March 21st, at the Fairgrounds, will be our congregational dinner/ celebration feast. Discussion - do we need to highlight the fact that there is a cost to the church for each member (approx. \$100 per member)? There is concern that some members are not able to donate, and may feel shamed or blamed for not contributing. Yet, there are currently approximately 50 members contributing less than \$100 a year and it is likely that some of those members are able to contribute, but have not been willing. Perhaps present the break-down of \$100 as \$8 per month. It was also acknowledged that there are other ways of giving, such as through service. It was also discussed that, in the past, the Board has been asked to pledge early in order to model financial commitment to the fellowship. There was discussion that it would be an advantage if we can say that the Board members have pledged in good faith. Last year we had stickers to symbolize that we had pledged, but that is not being done this year. We agreed that the focus will be on positive messages.

The question was raised - what's the difference between a guest and a friend of the church, and who will be invited to the celebration feast? A friend may be someone who pledges, but is not a member.

### **New Business**

#### **Guest at the Table Campaign - Richard Butler**

The total donations were \$1,643 which was down by approximately \$200 from last year. This is approximately 35% of our total membership of 171. If we assess this effort, what do we attribute this drop-off to? Perhaps the timing - at the holidays - is a factor. Do we have a fundraising calendar, including the Share the Plate fundraisers? Can we record our fellowship's total volunteer hours, and communicate

this to the members, as a way to inspire and motivate individuals to give more? Discussed involving the youth of the church. The value of the UUSC was also discussed, as it helps UUs simplify their donating.

### **Healthy Congregation Committee - Elizabeth Long**

Elizabeth shared a list of potential HCC members and presented the problem of there not being a chairperson at this time.

### **Photography - Elizabeth Long**

It would be helpful to have photographs of all the children and their names in the congregation. It was discussed whether we should pursue a membership directory that could also be a fundraiser, done with a professional photographer. Julie agreed to discuss this with the Faith Formation director - possibly to have photos of the youth in Bowman Hall.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

**Next Deep Chair Meeting:** Tuesday **March 10th** at Elizabeth's home.

**Next Board Meeting:** Tuesday **March 24th** at Bowman Hall

The regular meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm