

FCUCC Board Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2023: 12:30- (~)3:15

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF ASHEVILLE



Board Members: Chris Cain, Larry Burke, Peggy Grant, Maggie Thomas, Carol Austin-Janssen, Joanne Roudebush, Chris Nealis; Other Participants: Rev. Derryberry

FCUCC's mission is to:

1. **Embody a forward-thinking, courageous, and diverse Christian community.**
2. **Follow the ways of Jesus the Christ as a grace-filled, spiritual congregation.**
3. **Practice affirming and radical hospitality.**
4. **Engage our local and global community with acts of love, mercy, peace, and justice.**

FCUCC's vision is to be an embracing community, public sanctuary, and prophetic Christian voice.

PLEASE NOTE: The Dropbox referenced in these minutes can be viewed at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/7tjyi2rjayae6khe9agcx/h?rlkey=q2oc8slxvvoxeudgvfb7au7c8&dl=0>

Moderator: Chris Cain

Start Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Room 204 at FCUCC

Note Taker: Kathleen Carter

Agenda:

12:30 Welcome & Facilitation – Chris Cain

The meeting was called to order at 12:35. The following were in attendance: Chris Cain, Peggy Grant, Maggie Thomas, Carol Austin-Janssen, Joanne Roudebush, Chris Nealis, Rev. Derryberry. Larry Burke attended by Zoom.

12:35 Devotion – Chris Cain

Consent Agenda (if a report is provided)

12:40 Approval of Minutes from August 13, 2023

Verbally approved unanimously.

The term "Council on Ministries", proposed in last month's minutes, has another meaning, greater than a Board. Currently when the Board meets with the ministries, it is called the Staff and Ministry Teams Planning Team.

12:45 Pastoral Report (Dropbox)

Verbally approved unanimously.

12:50 Plans and Proposals for Ministries

Separate plans and proposals for ministries have been replaced by the Ministry Team Calendar, a spreadsheet (available on the main page of the website as Ministry Planning Calendar).

12:55 Approval of EOM August Financial Report (Dropbox)

"Greening the plate" is very effective – about \$5K over budget so far this year.

Some upcoming expenses:

Geothermal repair issues

Replacing microphones in Friendship Hall

Verbally approved unanimously.

1:00 Personnel Committee Report

Shall all job descriptions be posted on the website for member access?

Chris C. moved, Peggy seconded, motion approved.

When a job is open, could have non-members contact a designated person to get a job description (as opposed to putting the job description on public site).

1:05 Approval of August Building and Grounds Report

No written report.

Recent accomplishments include the structure that Doug Williams built for the trash, recycle, and brush containers, and the repainting of the choir room.

The capacity of the sanctuary is 250 on the floor, 50 in the balcony.

There is a weak spot in the narthex, just inside the front door of the church, that needs to be repaired.

Discussion Agenda

1:10 What are our next steps in securing an Audit?

Chris C got the names of one audit group and one individual auditor for non-profits, and passed those names to Joanne.

There are different types of audits – we need to decide what type(s?) we want.

An auditor who doesn't specialize in non-profits listed four types:

- the glaze-over for up to five years in the past

- year-to-year audit

- if haven't had audit in more than five years, a stage 3 audit is recommended

- line-by-line audit

She recommended the stage 3.

Joanne will get some options by the next Board meeting.

Joanne moved that the Board approve Eric Barbour as a member of the Finance Committee. Peggy seconded. Approved.

Eric has agreed to succeed Joanne as Treasurer after her term ends next year. According to our by-laws he must be elected to the 2024 Board of Directors. He is not currently an active member, so he must join FCUCC prior to being nominated for the Board Election in January 2024. Joanne will discuss his membership status with him.

1:15 Vote on Safe Conduct Policy and Procedure Training edits: Maggie

Maggie has updated the document, will pass to Kathleen Carter for formatting, and Kathleen C will pass it to Chris C.

At the next meeting, the Board will need to re-approve because of changes.

1:20 Based on the "Annual Ministry Proposals" calendar sheet (updated in Dropbox).

What are the thoughts on a focus for ministry in 2023-2024?

The Stewardship Committee sees more possibilities for using the tree image. "Branch out and grow" – focus on a growth mindset. Can be biblically based – for instance, fertilizing roots with our tithes and giving.

During this time of transition, should the Board set a goal? For instance, increase average worship attendance by 10% or 20% – or increase the percentage of people who are actively involved. Specificity can attract candidates.

People will come to this church if we meet their needs.

Is our goal to expand our programs? our outreach?

Having a programming calendar isn't sufficient.

We're expanding internally as well as externally. We need more participation. (The Benevolence Team has already got two new members.)

Branch out and grow could be suggested as a general theme. Then challenge the ministries: How do you interpret that within your ministry? For instance, Laundry Love has already grown, but we need to grow more.

To measure growth, we need a baseline. We have those baselines.

We can increase outreach by providing goods and services to people – but that doesn't increase our membership. We need to figure out our target audiences and figure out their needs and how we can meet them. When we were growing fastest, we were highly involved in marriage equality and LGBTQ justice – growth will come if people are involved (emotionally) in our program.

A focus on ministry is what our programming is built around.

But that's not sufficient. We need to look at our programming.

Some groups are already taking this slant. Choir has grown – Chuck had a goal of four more this fall. Revitalization of the Earth Justice Team. Contacting people that are still on the books but haven't been here in three years. What will appeal to candidates for ministry – what makes our search different from the search of a different UCC church?

Looking at the goals and objectives that the ministry teams put together would help the Board. For the annual report, each team was asked to provide that info. As of May or June, they hadn't done.

Chris N will talk to Kathleen Stigmon to get the ministry team goals and objectives. Chris C will put them on Dropbox. Board members are to read them by the next meeting.

1:30 Pastor Parish Relations Team – Do we need to name three members for this team and is this team part of the personnel policy?

Gene has reached out to Cara Pollard, Joyce Rhymer, John Mercer, and they've all agreed.

Ann Marie Woffindin would be interested, as would Cathy Whitlock. Carol moved that they be nominated, Chris N seconded, motion approved.

Gene will contact them: You've been nominated, are you willing to serve?

This team is only for while Gene is here. The new pastor is likely to choose people from the Search Team.

Yes, the team is part of the personnel policy.

1:40 John Whitener suggested we have a congregational conversation that could include further work on a congregational covenant and talking about why 8.0 was changed around the Pastor Parish Relations Team

We have nowhere on the congregational conversation calendar to put these topics.

Carol will tell John that the PPRT is an interim group.

1:45 Living Wage Certification – Update – Joanne

We were certified for 2021. Our application for certification for 2022 was declined. We are figuring out what it would take to be certified going forward. At the same time, we're looking at compensation for a new minister.

We will need an estimated \$15K more than our current budget for the new minister. Will need more than that if we want to be certified again.

1:50 Stewardship Team Report – Chris N.

The Stewardship Team wants to be more intentional about thanking people for what they do – an attitude of gratitude, plus more of a focus on aspirational giving. David will be asking Joanne about what isn't funded – if we want to branch out and grow, how do we fertilize the roots?

Also looking at redesigning the pledge cards – considering a step up campaign.

The team wants some time on the calendar for early October (presumably the first worship service) to update the congregation.

1:55 Behavioral Covenant – Update: What support can we provide Carol and her team?

The team now has four members and will have its first meeting on September 24. We're on schedule for presenting in the congregational conversation in February.

2:00 Review Finance Policies and Procedures – Joanne (Dropbox)

Joanne has reviewed and made some comments and revisions. She created a single document from the several on the website. The combined document now reflects (or is intended to reflect) what we're actually doing.

Joanne updated the policies and procedures during the meeting. Based on those pending changes:

The Board approved section 1, The Budgeting Process. Joanne moved, Chris C and Chris N seconded, approved.

Ditto section 2, Bill Paying Policy. Carol moved, Peggy seconded, approved.

Section 3 was deferred based on a rewrite that Kathleen C will do.

Section 4, Fiscal Sponsorship – Chris C moved, Carol seconded, approved.

Section 5, FCCUC Building Fund – Joanne moved, Chris C seconded, approved.

Section 6, Contributions – Chris C moved, Joanne seconded, approved.

Joanne will bring section 7, Collections, next time.

Although section 5 was approved, we will probably need further discussion later regarding clause 5.5, which requires that unrestricted Memorial Gifts and Bequests pay down the mortgage, as opposed to, for example, funding an endowment.

Normally only 2 or 3% is disbursed annually from an endowment, and that if we do have an endowment, we will need policies regarding how it's used. For example, it should not be used for operating expenses. A legacy gift could be designated for an endowment, even if one does not yet exist – or maybe we could start a campaign for an endowment – or maybe an endowment is not what we really want.

A question that comes up regarding the search: the pastor's involvement in receiving pledges and gifts to the church. Some pastors want to know what various people have pledged and whether they're meeting their pledge. Do we want the senior pastor of the church to know what people are giving? To be added to next month's agenda.

Conflict of Interest policy – Joanne moved, Chris C seconded, approved.

All staff must read the following policies: Conflict of Interest, Personnel, Safe Conduct

3:00 Policy on Policy discussion – (can be found on FCUCC website) – What suggestions do we have for this Policy?

As we're running short on time, we will vote on this policy via email.

3:05 Rental Policy and Procedure – Joanne

Tabled. When next discussed, Larry will be the designated presenter.

3:10 – Do we have questions / concerns on the Revised travel form for FCUCC? – Chris C

The proposed Medical and Travel Authorization Form has limitations based on being 21 or older. Does our liability policy have a different limit? Joanne will check, and we'll discuss next time.

3:15 delegates to the convention

We need to select two delegates for the convention on Saturday, October 7. Chris N volunteered, will ask Chuck if he wants to go.

3:20 Any other items?

devotion next meeting: Chris N

closing next meeting: Joanne

3:25 Closing Prayer and Adjourn: Carol

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Carter