

**Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist (CCUU) of Palatine IL
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

Date: March 19, 2025

Location: CCUU, Room 1

Attending: Lisa Gilley (President), Mike Berry (Vice President), Debbie Lee (Treasurer), Pat Wydell (Secretary), Nancy Frenk, Jerome McDonnell, Ryan Schaeffges, Peggy Simonsen, Dan Yokas (Trustees); Reverend Pam Rumancik (Minister)

Absent: Gary LaBedz (President-elect)

The regular monthly meeting of the CCUU Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Lisa Gilley. Nancy shared an opening reading and the Board members recited the Board Covenant. A quorum of trustees being present, the meeting proceeded with business.

Last Month's Minutes: Dan moved to accept the February 19 minutes; Nancy seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

New Business

Stewardship Update: Debbie reported that we have received 149 pledges. Of those, 74 households increased their pledge, 55 were the same as last year, 14 were less than last year, and 6 were from new members. Overall, pledges increased by 6.93% over last year. 25 current members have not submitted a pledge yet. We are assuming these will all come in at the same level as last year. The Stewardship team will contact these households.

Budget 2025–26 Discussion: The 2025–26 budget was based on receiving \$539,926 in member pledges. Assuming that the 25 outstanding pledges come in as anticipated, we will be short \$23,052. The Board discussed various options for funding the difference or cutting costs. Options discussed included reducing Ministry expenses (i.e., Worship, Study, Service costs), running an end-of-year Giving Tuesday fundraiser, asking for a cut of the Time & Talent auction income, reducing our UUA dues, and/or cuts to the landscaping, RE, or music program. The Board agreed that these decisions should be presented to the members of the congregation for their input. A **Congregation Meeting on March 30** is planned to present the budget shortfall and solicit congregation input. Meanwhile, several options were presented for ways to partially fill the gap in the budget:

- Ministry/DRE proposal for 2025–26: Rev. Pam Rumancik and Rev. Karen Mooney have proposed a way to share ministry and RE management next year, thereby saving money on health insurance and RE manager hours. Linda Berry is also looking into the possibility of lowering the cost of health insurance for our staff.
- Ryan has been soliciting quotes for lower building insurance from several brokers. He has one quote so far that is significantly lower than our current insurance. He plans to get one or two more quotes and investigate the companies before making a final recommendation.

Outreach Steering Committee: Questions have been raised about whether the Time & Talent auction could be used to support the operation of the church. Pat reported that the CCUU Operations Manual states that the mission of the Outreach Steering Committee (OSC) is to “provide leadership, planning and oversight for CCUU congregation-wide service projects or

fundraising events.” The “sole purpose” of these projects or events is “to benefit organizations beyond our church.” Any discussion as to whether to expand the goal of OSC fundraisers to include supporting CCUU has been deferred to the fall, when we plan to hold a congregational meeting on OSC, social justice, and fundraising.

Landscaping: Siri Laurin has a quote from the company Green Guerilla for roughly \$10,000 to install a native plant garden on the west-side façade of the building. The scope of the work is to enhance the landscape surrounding the west side of the church building, north of the main entry and east of the parking lot. The area will be replaced with a landscaped native plant design. This change will reduce weeding since native plants will crowd out the weeds. As we see the effects of climate change in our area, with increased heat in the summer, native plants will thrive. They are effective at absorbing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and they anchor the soil with their long roots. Native plants also provide numerous other ecosystem services, such as soil conservation, water filtration, and wildlife habitat. An anonymous donor has offered \$5,000 to pay half the cost. Siri is looking into a potential grant that might help pay the remainder, but a Board member said that the grant looks unlikely. Board members proposed using the Time & Talent Raise the Paddle to raise funds for this landscaping initiative. In the meantime, CCUU will provide a check for a 50% deposit on the work. *See below for the motion and the vote, which took place by email the following day.

Raise the Paddle for CCUU: The Board discussed ideas for Raise the Paddle requests for CCUU as part of this year’s Time and Talent auction. Options include funding to help improve the gardens/landscaping in front of the building, increasing our UUA dues, or raising \$2,000 to pay a sitter to watch infants during church services on Sundays. The Board reached consensus on the landscaping goal, but was divided on UUA dues vs. a sitter. Lisa moved that we use the second Raise the Paddle to pay for a baby sitter rather than to increase UUA dues; Ryan seconded the motion. The vote was 8 yes, 1 no. The motion carried.

Financial Update: Debbie reported that there are no surprises in last month’s income and expenses. While pledges are above budget right now, she anticipates that pledge income will drop in March–June, as it does historically, and expenses will rise. However, we will probably have excess funds at the end of the fiscal year. Debbie plans to put some of that money in reserve to pay for a minister search next year. Other amounts in excess will be added to the Capital Reserve.

Social Justice Task Force Update: Lisa reported that the social justice task force presented a plan on Sunday, March 9, for a structure to enable speedy responses to action on social justice issues. A Service Ministry leadership team was formed with two co-chairs (Bill Scown and Wendy Wittkamp), along with 3 Action Teams that will focus on the areas of immigration, environment, and LGBTQ+ issues.

Ongoing Business

Congregational Meeting on Future Ministry: A congregational meeting is planned for **June 8** to discuss options for future ministry.

Safe Congregation Team members: Lisa reported that Matt Myren, duRee Bryant, and Karolina Kozakiewicz have agreed to serve on the Safe Congregation team.

Spiritual Journey Affirmations: Christine Organ is still looking for Board members to give affirmations at church services.

Update on Website/Marketing: Jerome reported that the new website is coming along.

Improv Proposal: Countryside members Tracy Boland and Deb Quentel have proposed that their Improv group, My Improv Buddies, perform monthly at CCUU in Atherton Hall. They would ask for a \$5–\$10 donation at the door, the proceeds of which would be split with the church. The Board expressed support for this idea.

Closing Reading & Adjournment: Nancy shared a closing reflection and the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Submitted by: Patricia Harrington-Wydell, Board Secretary

REMINDER--Extra BOT meeting to discuss future ministry: March 26 at **6:00 p.m. (new time!)**

Next Regular BOT Meeting: April 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Readings for Future Months

April 2025	Mike Berry
May 2025	Peggy Simonsen
June 2025	Ryan Schaeffges

Announcement Schedule link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cL9tX5RcRXxviYHs-CCfIsNEfsx5aEkPHCdLjs45cWg/edit?gid=1298353949#gid=1298353949>

*Motion sent to the Board by email on March 20, 2025:

Lisa moved

- to sign a landscaping contract with Green Guerilla for installation of a native garden, at the west side of the church building, north of the main entry,
- for an amount not to exceed \$10,000 and
- to provide a check from CCUU for a 50% deposit on this work, so that the company can schedule and proceed with this work this spring.

The motion carried unanimously.