Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist (CCUU) of Palatine IL
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Date: April 15, 2026
Location: CCUU, Room 1

Attending: Gary LaBedz (President), Mike Berry (Vice President), Rick Rayborn (Treasurer), Pat Wydell (Secretary), Bailey Pierce, Ryan Schaefges, Elizabeth Van Orden, Peggy Simonsen, Dan Yokas (Trustees); Reverend Karen Mooney, Reverend Pam Rumancik (Co-Ministers)

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

Last Month's Minutes: Rick moved to accept the March 18 minutes, Elizabeth seconded the motion. The motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

New Business

Ratify Contract with Dr. Emma Farrell: Gary moved that the Board ratify the Ministerial Agreement signed by the Board President and Dr. Farrell on 3/29/2026. The agreement is for a 23-month contract ministry beginning Aug. 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028, that may lead to a call process after one year. Mike seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ministers' Report: Rev. Pam reported that this month has had a lot going on with the hiring of Emma Farrel as contract minister, a detailed search for the new Director of Religious Exploration, a Plastics workshop sponsored by the Green Sanctuary team, the annual Seder meal, an Easter egg hunt, and beautiful music at services. We will be welcoming seven new members on April 26 and dedicating two children at the April 19 service. The Spark folks met and have decided to continue the Sunday evening experiment with some changes. Spark will now meet once a month on the Second Sunday and the potluck will be reduced to finger foods for easier clean up. Mark Bruns, Maggie Coons, Deb Coe, and Mary Freemire are stepping up into leadership with Paul and Kim Ostrowski offering support.

Hiring RE Director: Rev. Karen gave an update on the search for an RE Director. We had four people apply for the position from posting to LREDA, UUA, Regional Ministers, and live announcements. One dropped out. The committee (Linda Berry, Natalie Krastev, and duRee Bryant) determined to move forward with three people in an initial round of interviews. We have two candidates that are qualified and very promising. The following interviews will be completed by April 26th:

- Dr. Emma will interview both candidates. If they have a preference only one set of secondary interviews will ensue. Other interviews planned are with these teams:
    - Lead teachers: Elizabeth Prenger, Crystina Smith, Chris Smith, Kim Frank

- Community: Debbie Lee & Lisa Gilley (RE Council), Ryan Schaefges (Board)
- Previous DRE: Rev. Karen Mooney *(if desired by the candidate)*

The hope is that after April 26th an offer will be made. Both of these candidates bring Director-level experience. The new person will likely start June 1st.

Nominating Committee Update: Gary reported that the Nominating Committee has submitted the following nominees for positions on the Board for 2026–2027: Alan Greenland (President-elect), Ed Munson (trustee), Joy Simon (trustee), Mike Berry (beginning a second 2-yr. term as VP), and Bailey Pierce (beginning a second 2-yr. term as trustee).

Ongoing Business

Current Financial Status: Rick reported that we currently have a surplus of $38,970 over budget. Pledges that are still to come total $106,269. There are no significant negative budget deviations forecasted, and our financial viability continues to be sound.

Stewardship Campaign/2026–2027 Budget: Rick reported that we are shy of our "ask" on pledges by $57,413. The 2026–2027 budget has therefore been adjusted in these ways:

- No planned buffer (a buffer of 3% is usually used with the assumption that not every pledge will be paid).
- UUA and regional UU dues have been cut from $20,500 to $11,892.
- Grounds budget was cut from requested $22,000 to $10,000.
- We will transfer in $9,148 from restricted monies that have been held more than 3 years. (In the interest of fairness, Rick recommends that by end of this calendar year we roll over to the Operations Reserve all restricted funds that have been held for over 3 years, aside from money that is dedicated to a plan.)

Rick recommends that we keep 3 months of budget in our Operations Reserve for emergencies. He is aiming for $150,000 to be in that Reserve. He also recommends that the budget include a line item for capital planning going forward, so that another capital campaign will not be required in a few years.

Solar Panels/Roof Update: Rick reported that the roof is nearly complete. We are hoping to begin the solar array structure soon, but still awaiting diagram finalization / approval from ComEd and then a structural permit from Palatine. So far no delay issues of concern; the project should be done by early June.

Capital Campaign: Laurie Lantz, Debbie Lee, and Rick recommend that the capital campaign begin on October 4th in conjunction with a 70th Anniversary Celebration and Solar Project Completion Celebration (including thank you to our donor). We can use the solar donation as a "motivational lever" to kick off the capital campaign. Rick recommends that we tentatively think of our capital campaign as running for three years, with a goal of $750,000 ($250,000 per year).

Of course, we are still waiting for an Atherton bequest, which may be substantial, but there is no telling when that money will come. Should Atherton money come in, wise management of it may ensure that we do not need another capital campaign going forward.
Rick is working to keep momentum going on planning for the capital campaign. Next step is to involve the Nominating Committee in finding a Capital Campaign Manager. Elizabeth pointed out that a marketing team should be involved early on, because images will be a powerful communication tool.

Stock Liquidation: The Finance Team recommends a policy update (provided at the end of these Minutes) with respect to liquidating stock donations. The purpose of the change is to become more cost-effective and efficient in our management of stock donations. Rick moved that we accept the new policy for stock liquidation. Dan seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ministry Council Organizational Team: Mike reported that a team consisting of Bailey Pierce, Leslie Peet, Tom MacTavish, Laurie Lantz, Karen Mooney, and Mike Berry have been working to update the CCUU organizational chart. While this work is laying the foundation for an eventual updating of CCUU's strategic plan, there are several other reasons for this organizational chart update:

1. More accessibility to CCUU's organizational structure for both established members and especially for newcomers.
2. More information about who we are, what we do, and areas of interest, as well as points of contact for our various activities, clubs, etc.
3. More capability to address emerging needs, such as when an opportunity arises (solar panel donation) or someone is unable or unwilling to lead an activity any longer (circle suppers).

The Board reviewed a top-level organizational chart that aligns with our mission statement to inspire, heal, and belong. Mike and Rev. Karen fielded questions and comments from the Board. The full Ministry Council will meet on April 18 to consider the new organization proposal.

Board Secretary on Executive Team: Gary provided wording for a proposed change to the by-laws to add the Secretary to the Executive Team. This by-laws change will be voted on by the congregation at the May annual meeting. Mike moved that the Executive Team include all Board officers. Peggy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Other Potential Changes to the By-Laws: Rev. Karen suggested that we also add to the by-laws that we follow Robert's Rules of Order at our meetings. This proposal was tabled for the present, as more study is needed. Gary added that we may want to add to the by-laws something about how a contract minister or interim minister is hired, as currently the by-laws say nothing about that.

Closing Reading & Adjournment: Gary shared a closing reflection and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

Submitted by: Patricia Harrington-Wydell, Board Secretary

Next Regular BOT Meeting: May 20, 2026

Readings for Future Months

May 2026	Dan Yokas
June 2026	Pat Wydell

Announcement Schedule link (2025–26):
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1187K56z2yJZMCM1fQiCrSm1whh1Pdp8g/edit?gid=700670809#gid=700670809

260318 Stock Liquidation Policy Update v3

1. **Purpose**
    a. To update the CCUU Operations Manual with a more cost-effective and efficient process for the liquidation of donated securities, ensuring the highest standard of stewardship for member contributions, while institutionalizing the roles responsible for execution and oversight.

0. **Procedure Change**
    a. CCUU will transition from broker-initiated sales to a "client-initiated" liquidation model via the **Oberweis Securities**[1] **online portal**. This shift reduces the brokerage commission from a variable **$20–$80** down to a flat **$14 per transaction**, regardless of volume.

0. **Execution & Delegation of Authority: The TSL Designation**
    a. **Authorized Traders:** To ensure operational continuity, the role of **Trustee of Securities Liquidation (TSL)** is established. The CCUU **Controller** and the **Board President** are **independently authorized** to act as the TSL and execute trades on the portal.
    a. **Notification Redundancy:** To ensure timely action, notification of a pending stock transfer shall be coordinated through three overlapping channels: the Donor, the Congregational Administrator, and the broker.
    a. **Non-Discretionary Mandate:** To remain compliant with "ordinary prudence" standards, the acting TSL shall liquidate all gifted securities **immediately** upon notification of receipt in the brokerage account. This ensures the trade is a ministerial act of liquidation rather than an investment decision.

0. **Conflict of Interest & "Interested Person" Protocols**
    a. Per the standards of our covenant and governance best practices:
        . **Disclosure:** The TSL is considered an "Interested Person" for the purpose of this transaction. Before executing a sale, the TSL must ensure no "Close Relationship" (as defined by family, domestic partner, or business affiliation) exists with the donor that could create an appearance of impropriety.
        . **Recusal & Alternate Execution:** Should a conflict or close relationship exist, the acting TSL shall recuse themselves from the transaction. The **Board Vice-President**, who shall maintain active portal readiness and trading

authorization for this explicit purpose, shall act as the alternate to execute that specific sale.

. **Self-Dealing Prohibition:** No staff member or trustee shall derive any personal benefit, commission, or "private inurement" from the execution of these trades.

0. Internal Controls, Oversight, & Third-Party Verification

a. **Donor Anonymity & Board Transparency (Full Disclosure Communications):** Following a transaction, the TSL will report the volume and timeline of the liquidation to the Board of Trustees via general email distribution, strictly protecting the donor's identity. The transaction will subsequently be formally logged in the Treasurer's Report.

a. **Independent Broker Verification:** While the TSL initiates the transaction, the broker retains responsibility for generating official trade confirmations, monthly statements, and the annual 1099-B.

a. **Segregation of Record-Keeping:** To cleanly separate the execution of the trade from the official record-keeping, the **Congregational Administrator** shall be responsible for receiving and filing the 1099-B, broker trade confirmations, and the timestamped internal records of the transaction.

[1] Note: The procedures outlined in this policy apply to the current brokerage relationship with Oberweis Securities, as well as any future brokerage firm CCUU may engage for the purpose of receiving donated securities. Effective Date: March 18, 2026.