

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown, NY
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Saturday, April 25, 2026

Board Members Present: Robert South, President; Harriet McMillan, Vice President; Eleanor Allen, Treasurer; Janine LaClair, Secretary; Rob Blankemeier, Trustee; Pat Sutherland, Trustee; Mimi Litsche, Trustee; Rev. Cindy Terlazzo

Board Members Absent: Erica Gardner, Trustee

A member check-in was completed and the board covenant was read.

In the presence of a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 9:44 a.m.

Acceptance of Agenda: completed by consensus.

Acceptance of Minutes: Eleanor moved, Pat seconded, to accept the minutes of the March 28, 2026 meeting. Motion passed.

Officers' Reports

- **President's Report:** None
- **Minister's Report:** Rev. Cindy referenced recent new ministry start-up as just a beginning and feels the church members need to determine where we want to go and put our energy there. Minister's contract for the coming church year discussed and compensation remains the same, changes made to dates of contract. **Mimi moved, Rob B. seconded, contract will be approved as written with Rev. Cindy receiving \$20,000 in housing allowance, \$3,000 for professional expenses. Motion carried.**
- **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer's report was filed for audit.

Committee Reports

- **Finance:** Eleanor reports a tentative budget for the upcoming church year was created by the committee. It will be discussed during new business.
- **Membership and Activities/Fundraising:** Robert provided the report after new business was discussed, reporting a Panera fundraiser dinner is being planned for every other month, and the committee is ordering pamphlets and pocket guides for visitors/potential new members explaining Unitarian Universalism.
- **Religious Exploration:** None
- **Worship:** Eleanor reported all is going smoothly.

Task Forces

- **Groundskeeping:** Robert states mowing season will begin shortly.
- **Housekeeping:** Robert noted the custodian employee evaluation is due soon and next Saturday will be a roadside clean-up and interior church cleaning day. Repair to the men's room floor is currently on hold.
- **Acoustics:** Robert reports committee is progressing, but slowly. Harriett reports she contacted ClearSonic.com and they referred her to Zac Novac from Media Net in Rochester. She expects him to come to the church and evaluate our needs and provide recommendations.
- **Building Envelope:** Ontario Shores has ordered materials. Robert is planning to temporarily place Black Lives Matter banner in the windows of the formal lounge. Building numbers will be replaced and moved once the siding project is done.

- **Pledge Drive:** Eleanor stated Warren reports \$24,190 received in pledges so far. She noted we had several late pledges last year and expects this to happen again.
- **Office:** Robert noted the annual fire inspection is due. He reported the fire extinguishers have been checked, next the fire alarm system gets checked, followed by a fire department inspection. He recommends security code to building be changed at the same time. Robert will contact Chimera to arrange the alarm inspection and security code change.

Orders of the Day:

- **Appointment of Maintenance Committee:** Robert is seeking volunteers. Mimi and Harriet volunteered. **Eleanor moved, Rob B. seconded, the maintenance committee will consist of Mimi, as the chair, and Robert and Harriet as members. Motion passed.**
- **Bylaw Amendments:** Board reviewed proposed changes. Minor clarifications added, grammatical changes and reinsertion of a sentence (which was accidentally omitted) were recommended. Most discussion was centered on the reduction of trustees from four to two and how to achieve this. Current trustees will continue the term they were elected to, so complete transfer to two trustees will not be achievable in the coming year. **Eleanor moved, and Pat seconded, we put on the agenda for the annual meeting the proposed by-law changes the board discussed today. Motion carried.**

New Business:

- **Minister's Discretionary Fund Policy:** Janine moved, Mimi seconded, Rev. Cindy's submission for an All Souls Minister's Discretionary Fund Policy be adopted. **Motion passed.**
Policy reads as follows: **All Souls has established a fund to be used at the minister's discretion to support individuals in need who are related to the All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church. Because the minister is part time and does not reside in the vicinity of the Church, the board chair is also able to access these funds via the treasurer and disperse them after being in consultation with the minister. Funds are to be dispersed in a discretionary manner, therefore only the board chair, the treasurer and the minister are typically involved in the circumstances for which they are dispersed. Should a request be made for more than \$500, the executive team of the board, in consultation with the minister, would consider and decide upon such a request. Best practices encourage that cash not be given directly to the recipient, rather that a bill be paid directly by All Souls or gift cards are obtained to be used for a desired amount. This fund will be replenished by gifts made by friends and members of All Souls as well as from a special offering that is collected by the congregation during the board designated services.**
- **Tentative Budget for 2026-2027:** Reviewed tentative budget and by consent, board agreed to put the tentative budget before the congregation at a congregational conversation to be held on May 17th.
- **August Board Meeting/Retreat:** It was suggested the board focus on fundraising ideas.
- **Pledge Amounts:** Harriet feels we should be able to know pledge amounts. Rev. Cindy recommends a chart of pledge ranges with no names attached. Eleanor will speak to the collector and see if this is possible, if so, Harriet will create a chart. Board also discussed follow-up with those whose pledges haven't yet been received. Rev. Cindy will create a script and Robert will conduct follow-up calls.

Note the May date change from the fourth to the fifth Saturday:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be on Saturday, May 30th, by Zoom, at 9:30 a.m.

Regular meetings will continue to be by Zoom, on the 4th Saturday of the month, at 9:30 a.m., with in-person meetings, at 9:30 a.m, at the church, the 4th Saturdays of April & August.

Adjournment was at 12:12 p.m.

Collective review process occurred.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine LaClair
Board Secretary