

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Seeking the Spirit, Building Community, Changing the World

Approved **Congregational Meeting** Minutes

October 22, 2023



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Submitted by Regina DiLavore, Secretary

Opening

President Abby Gitlitz called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

President Abby Gitlitz thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and provided guidelines for the meeting. The purpose of the special meeting was to vote on adopting the proposed revision of the Bylaws released to the congregation on September 22, 2023. The significant revisions would be described section by section. President Gitlitz further described how to vote yes or no once the motion was on the floor. The vote would be yes or no for the Bylaws as published, there would be no revisions.

President Gitlitz further described that the purpose of the revisions is to improve clarity, consistency and accuracy of the Bylaws that reflect UUCB in 2023.

If the motion did not pass, the committee will revisit the ByLaws after the meeting and seek additional input. Any further revisions would be brought forward in the December 10, 2023, Congregational meeting for a vote.

Description of the Bylaws Revision Process

Mary Craig, a Board at-large member, and member of the Bylaws committee described the process of the Bylaw amendments. The committee reviewed the 2020 Bylaws and then re-arranged the sections and revised to make the Bylaws more precise. The first proposed revision was released by the Board in August 2023, followed by a comment period for the Congregation. The majority of the feedback from the Congregation was reviewed and incorporated into the Bylaws. Two areas were not addressed at this time:

1. Renaming the church
2. Evaluation of the Special Purposes Fund

The final proposed version was released in September.

Significant Revisions of the Bylaws

A list of significant revisions was provided by President Abby Gitlitz

1. Expectation of members relative to financial contribution
2. Member removal procedure
3. Change notice of Congregational meetings from a proposed 30 days to 10 days
4. Change quorum from 10% to 15%
5. Ends of the church added to Section 5.9
6. Explanation of the lead minister if more than one minister is called
7. Required vote to call a new minister raised to 90%

Congregational Feedback of Revised Bylaws

President Abby Gitlitz led a discussion soliciting member feedback following the summary of significant changes to the Bylaws. Discussion on the following sections ensued.

Section 1 – Name, Affiliation & Definitions

The question of whether UUCB's full membership fees must be sent to the UUA was the focus of the discussion in Section 1.

Section 3.2 – Expectation of Members

Financial requirements were discussed, and several members provided positive feedback on the understanding that financial expectations are flexible. President Abby Gitlitz discussed implementing financial requirements over multiple years.

Pledging waivers will be flexible, but whether they will be verbal or written has not yet been decided. The purpose of the pledge is to obtain an accurate count of

members. Reverend Grant suggested that we determine this count before voting on a minister.

The difference between a pledge and a gift was discussed. If a member cannot give what was pledged, they should talk to the minister. A pledge is a financial commitment and giving is the act of giving of money and can be separate from pledging. It was suggested that members who have not pledged this year be contacted again.

Some members expressed concern that the pledging requirement is judgmental and that a waiver would create a negative power dynamic. It was reiterated that church employee salaries depend on pledges.

The discussion concluded with the reminder that it is acceptable to discuss money and ask for pledges, and that it is also okay to ask for a waiver. One member suggested that it might be helpful to explain to the minister why you are unable to pledge.

Section 4 – Congregational Meetings

The board and congregants discussed the future of electronic voting.

Section 7 – Lead Minister

President Abby Gitlitz explained that the CEO duties and responsibilities are laid out in a letter of agreement with a minister. A member suggested improving clarity around what a *called minister* is compared to other types of ministers

The board is negotiating on behalf of the congregation with a letter of agreement. Since this is a personnel document it is not shared with the public. The Church uses the UUA template that is recommended for the search process. The letter of agreement discusses salary, housing, and other benefits.

Section 9 – Amendment of Bylaws

A member asked when the bylaws are revised. President Abby Gitlitz explained that the Bylaws are revised when needed, there is no set schedule.

Section 10 - Reversionary Clause

In the event of dissolution of the church; Reverend Grant confirmed that all outstanding debts will be paid, and the remaining assets will go to the UUA as described in Section 10.

Quorum

At 2.25 pm President Abby Gitlitz announced that a quorum was reached.

Call to Vote

At 2:54 pm President Abby Gitlitz called for a vote. Ed Robinson seconded the motion. At-Large Board members collected ballots. Thirty-nine (39) yeses or 2/3 of the members present was required to pass the motion.

Vice president Jane McLeod announced that the motion carried.

Adjournment

Steve Dillon the parliamentarian, moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:57 pm and Ed Robinson seconded the motion.