

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Board Meeting  
Minutes November 9, 2023  
Approved December 14, 2023

Board Members present:

Bobbi Pace, President	Joan Ciano
Sue Trotta-Smith, Vice-president	Becky Reeve
Tom Ward, Treasurer	Kyle Manning
Terry Bohnhorst Blackhawk, Clerk	Alissa Chapin

Board Member absent: Kathy Haskins

Also present:

David Stagg, Management Team  
Sunny Joy McMillan, Ministerial Intern, Yale Divinity School

1. Call to order: President Bobbi Pace called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Chalice lighting: Bobbi Pace lit the chalice.
3. Reading: Joan Ciano read from “Beginners” by Denise Levertov.
4. Board members responded to Bobbi Pace’s question to identify their most significant life accomplishments. Responses included experiences of parenthood, making unexpected life changes, breaking barriers, overcoming trauma, and pioneering in ways that make a difference in people’s lives.
5. Covenant reading/ discussion. After reading the Board Covenant, Board members gave various feedback to “taking responsibility for the consequences of our words and actions.”
6. The agenda was approved, with the addition of a memo from the Worship Committee.
7. Bobbi Pace moved and Terry Blackhawk seconded the approval of minutes from the October meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
8. David Stagg reported that the Management Team has signed a contract for snow clearance with event pricing, rather than a blanket sum for the season. MT has no formal report in November.
10. Minister’s Report. Rev. Stephen was absent. Kyle Manning reported that a Context Learning team has been formed and the “New to UU” group is going strong.
11. Treasurer’s Report. Tom Ward reported that USNH is in the black, with \$10,000 in income ahead of expenses at this point in the Fiscal Year. Current expenses include upkeep on the parking lot.
12. Fall Congregational Meeting. The agenda for the meeting (to be held on November 19<sup>th</sup>) was sent to congregants on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Sue Trotta-Smith will monitor the chat.

13. Re: The recent USNH Council of Chairs meeting, Bobbi Pace has asked Becky Friedkin to send the Board her report on the meeting. She shared that the Connections Team has “New to UU” sessions (for those interested in learning more about USNH and possibly becoming members) about six months apart, and discussed the topic of “radical welcoming” vis-a-vis newcomers. Bearing in mind the prediction, per Rev. Stephen, that 65% of UUA congregations will not be viable in five years, the Board considered ways of welcoming newcomers and creating radical hospitality, which, Bobbi Pace stressed, means being open to change.

Board members are encouraged to become familiar with the proposed UUA revision to Article II and share input at the Spring Congregational Meeting.

14. Speaker’s Series. In crafting a Speaker’s Series it was suggested that USNH communicate scheduling with affiliated groups, the New Haven Chorale and others, and coordinate with one or more area bookstores.

15. Bobbi Pace read and the Board discussed a memo emailed from the Worship Committee regarding feedback by some congregants that applause (as opposed to waving hands) disrupts the service. Board members discussed waving-vs-applause without making a recommendation. The discussion will continue at a later date.

16. Regarding Participant Process Observer input, the Board agreed that the meeting stayed on track.

17. Bobbi Pace moved and Alissa Chapin seconded a motion to adjourn, which was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

18. The next meeting will take place in person on December 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Bohnhorst Blackhawk (she/her), Clerk