

UU Westport Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: April 28, 2026

Time: 7:05 p.m. – 10:27 p.m.

- **Board Members Present:** Beth Cliff (Chair), Felicia Keeton, Rev. Carlton Smith, Dayle Brownstein, Sari Bodi, Mark Corcoran, Julyen Norman, Jon Gage (arrived 7:07 p.m.)
- **Absent:** Alexa Marshall, Ravi Sankar
- **Staff/Guest Presenter:** Angi Haen (Faith Formation)
- **Observers:** Alison Smith

Opening

- Meeting called to order by Beth Cliff at 7:05 p.m.; observer rules reviewed.
- Reflection and chalice lighting by Dayle Brownstein.
- Welcome and check-in with board members and observers.

Consent Agenda

Motion: Approve minutes from 03/24/2026 v3

- **Moved by:** Felicia
- **Seconded by:** Beth
- **Discussion:** Jon emailed a revision regarding moving to monthly pledge payments. The Board agreed to amendments with the understanding that Jon and Felicia would omit a sentence.
- **Outcome:** Passed unanimously (7:0)

Minister's Report (Rev. Carlton Smith)

- Rev. Carlton shared that Frank A. Hall's wife, Lori Neurenburg, intends to contribute \$10,000 in Frank's honor.
- Rev. Carlton consulted with Ken Vogel regarding naming and confirmed the congregation may rename the existing Building & Grounds endowment fund in Frank's honor.
- The Board discussed completing the fund naming decision prior to Frank's memorial service so it could be announced and additional support encouraged.

Motion: To approve Rev. Carlton's recommendation to rename the Endowment fund designated for Building & Grounds (currently approximately \$5,000) as the *Frank A. Hall Preservation Fund*. This fund will remain unrestricted, and its purpose is to support preservation of the campus and buildings.

It was further noted that Frank's wife, Lori, has expressed an intent to contribute \$10,000 in Frank's honor, bringing the fund total to \$15,000 for FY 2027. The fund will be announced at Frank's service on Sunday to encourage additional contributions.

- **Moved by:** Beth Cliff
- **Seconded by:** Mark Corcoran
- **Discussion:** Jon asked for clarification on the difference between the smaller fund with about \$5,000 and the larger one with about \$65,000 in it. Mark clarified the fund under discussion is in the Endowment and a bit more than \$5,000. The \$65,000 is the Building and Grounds Reserve.
- **Outcome:** Passed unanimously (7:0)

Faith Formation Report (Angi Haen)

- Angi shared "Lessons Learned in Faith Formation," referencing a vision statement developed by the congregation and highlighting themes including community, leadership development, spirituality, and education.
- Reported average participation of approximately 24 children/teens and engagement across approximately 33 families, noting that attendance varies while connection remains strong and the congregation is growing.
- Program highlights included curriculum development for younger children, OWL programming ("recipes for relationships"), and adult faith formation involvement (including facilitation of Adult OWL due to limited volunteer bandwidth).
- Shared that the Faith Formation role continues to evolve, and raised upcoming employment agreement considerations (term structure, compensation, study time, and sabbatical language) for review with leadership/HR.
- Noted an ongoing challenge in finding Sunday volunteers; last-minute cancellations are frequent and coverage impacts staff family time.

Financial Report (Jon Gage)

- Reviewed the draft FY2026–27 budget, including staff compensation assumptions and items needing additional verification.
- Jon noted a positive variance. The board discussed treatment/presentation of the one-time pledge matching gift so it is not assumed to recur annually.
- Staffing/finance transition noted: Sue's last day is Thursday; she will continue as a contractor as bookkeeper. Bob Bailey serves as the congregation's CPA.

- **Next steps:** Finance team will update and recirculate the budget; Rev. Carlton to follow up with the HR Committee regarding outstanding staff-related requests.

Operations Council (Beth Cliff)

- Beth reported that the Operations Council structure is more robust, including a revived volunteer “work brigade” list that can be activated for projects. Ben continues to coordinate the Council; additional volunteers are expected to help complete needed work more efficiently.
- Mark noted that Steve Grathwohl has been added to the Preservation Advisory Group list; potential additional volunteers discussed included Chuck Colletti and Jay Lubin. Mark and Steve have been meeting with engineers and contractors. The Board anticipates repairs identified by the nursery school and noted that funding will need to be identified.

Additional Updates

- **Treadwell team:** Beth reported that the team is underway and clarified that the funds are not fully unrestricted; the monies are designated for Faith Formation and the Library (with interpretation of “library” open for discussion).
- **Website RFP:** An RFP was sent to eight website providers; three proposals were received as of the meeting, with remaining proposals due May 6. Beth will convene a small review team (including Eileen and Ruth) to recommend finalists. Early feedback suggested the initial project estimate of \$17,500 may be above market.
- **Linkage:** Dayle reported that surveys have been distributed and posted on the website; feedback will continue to be collected. Trustees will help publicize the survey in announcements.

Executive Session

An executive session was held; discussion was not recorded in these minutes.

Closing

- **Closing reading** by Jon Gage.
- **Next meeting dates:** May 14, 2026 and May 26, 2026.
- **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.