

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence
Executive Board Minutes
July 16, 2026 6 PM at UUCL

Our Mission is to **love** inclusively, **nurture** spiritual growth and connections,
freely **explore** life's big questions, and **act** for justice.

6:00 pm	Chalice Lighting Assign Meeting Roles: Timekeeper, Process Observer Board Member Check-In
6:20 pm	Congregational Comments
6:30 pm	Approval of Consent Agenda • Minutes from May and June • Treasurer's Report and Financial Reports • Minister's Report • Other Reports?
Business Items:	
6:35 pm	Report from Financial Sustainability Committee Chair- Riley
6:45 pm	Report from RE-Clay
7:00 pm	Audit- do we need one? Committee? UUA Resource on Audit
7:05 pm	Rev Nori's Evaluation
7:30 pm	Board Evaluation
7:35 pm	Staff Job descriptions and duties
7:40 pm	Minister Housing Allowance
7:45 pm	Money not donated to Kifa and Link last year
7:55 pm	Board Retreat as
	Any final Thoughts/Concerns? Close
Next Board Meeting: Retreat Aug 1, 2026 from 1-4 pm	
Next Board Meeting August 20, 6 pm UUCL	

Items on Hold:

Alcohol policy

Workman's Comp (may need to do an email or zoom approval)

Property Casualty Insurance

B&G status of Building

As Executive Board of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence, we covenant together with mutual trust and support:

- To welcome and practice curiosity, deep listening, and joy
- To share the work that needs to be done
- To cultivate a culture of patience, open communication, and healthy boundaries
- To act for the good of the congregation and speak with one voice

Minutes

Executive Summary

- **Roof Repair:** \$4,000 quote received; mold and leaks require roof deck replacement; second quote pending for prompt decision.
- **Youth Programs:** Expanding with new clubs and 3-year curriculum; need a fifth assistant and increased volunteer support planned.
- **Financial Health:** Approved \$2,000 deficit spending; audit planned for last fiscal year; board retreat set for Aug 1.
- **Ministerial Care:** Boundaries set for workload; radical hospitality workshop proposed; UU apparel branding expanding.
- **Safety Concerns:** Hollow playground tree and bee colony addressed with non-removal solutions and beekeeper consultation.
- **Operational Issues:** Thermostat malfunction noted; Zoom meeting moved to Room 2; worker's compensation insurance review underway.

Notes

Facilities and Maintenance

The meeting addressed urgent building repairs and safety concerns to maintain a safe, functional environment for the congregation.

- **Roof Repair Quotes and Scope** highlighted a \$4,000 quote requiring roof deck replacement due to long-term leaks, with a second quote pending for comparison before approval
 - The roofing team found mold issues caused by improper drip molding installation, explaining persistent leaks.
 - The repair involves multiple steps including removing roofing and decking and installing new materials.
 - Prompt decision-making is planned after receiving the second quote to address water damage and prevent further issues.
 - The roof repair is critical to maintain building integrity and avoid worsening damage.
- **Tree Safety and Beehive Removal** focused on a hollow playground tree posing a child safety risk and an active honeybee colony near parking
 - Bill proposed filling the hollow with rocks and covering it to prevent children from getting stuck, avoiding immediate tree removal.
 - The bee colony in a tree cavity near the front parking area is a community safety concern, with plans to contact beekeepers for safe removal.

- Interim measures to secure the tree cavity and schedule professional consultation are underway.
- These actions aim to reduce hazards without drastic tree removal while protecting community members.
- **Water Spigot and Thermostat Issues** were raised, noting incomplete spigot installation and malfunctioning thermostat readings showing inaccurate temperatures despite AC being on
 - The thermostat is set to 69°F but displays 80°F, requiring further inspection and repair..
- **Food Donation Bin Proposal** discussed placing a donation bin for Just Foods at the church, encouraging congregation participation
 - The idea is to foster a habit of donating food items during store visits.
 - Logistics including bin availability and pickup frequency will be coordinated by Chris and Denise.
 - This initiative supports community outreach and resource sharing.
 - Brad will deliver food as needed

Religious Education (RE) and Youth Programs

The RE team outlined program expansions, staffing needs, and strategic curriculum planning to better serve youth and families.

- **Youth Program Expansion and Engagement** detailed ongoing events like Summer of Heroes, OWL classes, multi-age movie nights, and new initiatives like the UCL Listening Collective and Mystery Card Club launching in September
 - These programs promote community bonding, identity exploration, and UU values among children and families.
 - The RE team actively recruits and incorporates new participants, including children returning after absences.
 - The diversity of offerings aims to sustain engagement beyond Sunday services.
- **Curriculum Standardization and Staffing Needs** highlighted plans for a three-year repeating curriculum cycle starting in September focused on myths, world religions, identity, and UU principles
 - RE staffing currently includes Clay and four teaching assistants, with a need to add a fifth assistant to accommodate growth.
 - Staffing adjustments aim to maintain quality instruction and allow dedicated teaching for older youth groups.
 - The team is addressing assistant turnover and seeking replacements, including candidates from local schools.
- **Volunteer Recruitment and Expectations** surfaced concerns about heavy reliance on paid staff due to low volunteer participation, with proposals to require parents to volunteer quarterly
 - The group discussed potential policies linking child registration with volunteer commitments or fees.
 - Volunteer shortages have led to burnout among existing assistants and staff.
 - A volunteer fair planned for fall aims to increase community involvement and balance workload.
 - This strategy is intended to sustain program quality and foster community ownership.

- **Age Group Clarifications and Attendance** provided clear distinctions between Tea Lights (infants to 3), Chalice Children (3–7), Flame Keepers (8–11), and Torch Bearers (12 and up), with approximately 20 children across groups
 - RE assistants support mixed-age classes during the summer, requiring flexible staffing.
 - Volunteer Logan Elder recently joined the team to help with Sunday sessions.
 - These details clarify program structure and resource allocation.

Financial Sustainability and Governance

The meeting covered financial health assessments, audit considerations, budget decisions, and upcoming board activities focused on transparency and strategic planning.

- **Finance Team Progress and Support** outlined efforts to understand current finances deeply, including confidential handling of sensitive information, with plans for a board finance deep dive facilitated by Riley
 - Collaboration with UUA representative Matthew Johnson provides guidance on revenue strategies and process improvements.
 - Scheduling a board finance workshop for late July or mid-August aims to build financial literacy and alignment.
 - Transparent communication and education are priorities to empower informed decision-making.
- **Audit Planning and Execution** agreed on conducting a financial audit, likely focusing on the prior fiscal year, to enhance accountability
 - The audit would follow UU guidance and leverage existing financial software like QuickBooks.
 - A committee or roundtable will be formed to identify qualified volunteers or professionals for this effort in September.
 - The audit is seen as timely given the upcoming finance deep dive and need for process improvement.
- **Budget Commitments and Deficit Spending** approved deficit spending of approximately \$2,000 to fulfill unpaid commitments to KIFA and LINK organizations from the prior year
 - The board acknowledged these payments as ongoing budget items contingent on ability and choice.
 - Social justice groups may be tasked with reviewing and advising on such commitments.
 - This decision reflects a commitment to honoring community partnerships despite tight finances.
- **Minister's Housing Allowance Approval** renewed the pastor's housing allowance at the same level as last year as part of the compensation package, consistent with previous years and tax regulations
 - The allowance must be approved annually before the fiscal year's first paycheck.
 - This non-taxable benefit supports the minister's living expenses.
 - Approval was unanimous, showing board support for ministerial needs.
- **Board Retreat and Evaluation Plans** set a retreat for August 1st focused on priority setting, committee engagement with volunteer coordinator Mary Pritchard, and board member evaluations from the previous year
 - Retreat location and parking details were provided to encourage full attendance.

- The agenda includes outreach, engagement, committee support, and covenant review.
- Board evaluation forms were distributed with plans for follow-up in December or January to capture ongoing feedback.
- These steps aim to improve board effectiveness and strategic focus.

Pastoral Leadership and Community Engagement

The pastor shared reflections on ministry challenges, boundary setting, and strategies for fostering radical hospitality and congregational identity.

- **Ministerial Evaluation and Challenges** praised Reverend Nori's pulpit mastery and activism, including a recent protest arrest, highlighting dedication to social justice
 - The minister described setting boundaries for office hours and emergency contacts to manage workload.
 - Emphasis on year-round church activity contrasts with other regions' summer shutdowns.
 - Professional development includes retreats and denominational leadership roles to enhance ministry skills.
- **Radical Hospitality and Inclusivity Workshop** proposed a fall workshop to train leaders and members on welcoming newcomers and fostering inclusivity
 - The approach involves personal introductions and connecting new people with multiple members.
 - Attention to visual representation and signage at events helps newcomers feel recognized.
 - Social justice efforts include branded apparel to identify UU presence at rallies.
 - This initiative aims to deepen community connection and retention.
- **UU Apparel and Branding** discussed expanding accessible UU-themed clothing options through local vendors and online platforms like Cafe Press
 - Current blue shirts are favored for design but limited in availability.
 - Side With Love yellow shirts are UU-branded and widely used at protests, with potential for local customization.
 - Plans include branded merchandise for specific groups like Women's Spirit and CUPS chapter.
 - Branding supports identity visibility and fundraising.
- **Pastoral Care Team Coordination** noted collaboration with volunteer member coordinator Mary Pritchard to organize teams utilizing congregant skills for pastoral care
 - Regular meetings are planned starting in August to assess committee needs and volunteer roles.
 - This approach distributes pastoral responsibilities and strengthens community support networks.
 - The volunteer coordinator's role is vital in engaging members effectively.

Operational and Meeting Logistics

The meeting covered procedural updates and technical issues to ensure smooth organizational functioning.

- **Zoom Meeting Room Changes** addressed the need to switch from Zoom Room 3 to Zoom Room 2 due to account limitations, with plans to update meeting links for all groups
 - Miscommunications led to participants being unable to join meetings.
 - Kristin was assigned to update links and communicate changes.
 - This ensures reliable virtual meeting access.
- **Thermostat and Temperature Control Issues** were discussed, noting that the AC system shows incorrect temperature readings despite being on, with plans for further investigation
 - Participants reported discomfort due to inconsistent cooling.
 - Possible causes include solar heat load and thermostat malfunctions.
- **Staff Job Descriptions and Evaluations** were reviewed to clarify roles and expectations, with plans to update as needed
 - Staff evaluations involved soliciting feedback from congregants and board members.
 - The process is designed to ensure accountability and professional growth.
 - Clear job descriptions help align performance with organizational goals.
- **Workers Compensation Insurance Review** is underway with Kristin tasked to compare current and new provider rates before August 1st for board approval
 - Timely review is necessary to maintain coverage and control costs.
 - The board expects an email or Zoom session to finalize decisions.
 - This review supports risk management and compliance.

Action items

Chris Brown

- Communicate with Denise to arrange placement of a food donation box for Just Foods at the church and coordinate pickup details

Bill

- Inspect and repair the malfunctioning AC thermostat in the meeting room to ensure proper cooling
- Fill the hollow in the playground tree with rocks and cover it with hardware cloth promptly to prevent children from getting stuck and ensure safety

Riley

- Schedule a finance-focused board session for a financial "deep dive" and circulate a doodle poll to determine availability after July 27
- Complete and return board evaluation forms during the upcoming retreat

Clay

- Continue planning and development of the Religious Education curriculum cycle starting in September, including staffing adjustments and onboarding new assistants
- Organize and run upcoming Religious Education youth events such as the multi-movie night and Summer of Heroes performance

Mary Pritchard

- Prepare a report and plans for volunteer coordination to present at the board retreat on August 1, and engage with committees to assess needs and strategize volunteer recruitment

Kristin

- Gather and compare information on current and potential new workman's compensation insurance policies to facilitate a decision before the August 1 board retreat
- Coordinate updating the Zoom meeting link from the old Zoom Room 3 to Zoom Room 2 to resolve technical issues for future meetings
- Doodle poll for financial sustainability

General

- Add a finance committee table to the September meeting agenda to recruit volunteers with audit and accounting expertise

Decisions

- **Food Bin Donation Decision**
 - The group agreed to place a **food bin** at the church for donations, with the possibility of arranging for pickups when the bin is full rather than weekly.
 - This initiative aims to engage community members and encourage regular donations.
 - Expected impact includes fostering a culture of giving and increasing community involvement.
- **Safety Issue with Playground Tree**
 - A tree on the playground has been identified with a large hole posing a potential safety risk for children.
 - The decision was made to fill the hole with rocks and cover it to prevent injuries, with further evaluation needed to determine if the tree should be removed. (B and G)
 - This initiative emphasizes the importance of safety in the community and involves consulting an arborist for best practices.
- **Minister's Housing Allowance**
 - Motion to approve at same level as last year: Chris Brown
 - Seconded: Robin Bowen
 - Voting: Unanimous
- **Fund KIFA and LINK according to prior commitments**
 - Motion: Chris Brown
 - Seconded: Brian Vancil
 - Voting: Unanimous
- **Evaluation of Minister's Performance**
 - A positive evaluation was recorded for the minister, highlighting effective communication and engagement with the congregation.
 - Plans to implement a **radical hospitality workshop** were discussed to enhance inclusivity and welcome newcomers effectively.
 - This decision aims to improve overall congregational engagement and ensure that all members feel valued and included.