

**Borderlands Unitarian Universalist
Board Meeting Minutes, June 16, 2026**

In attendance: Nancy Murphy, Judy Harmer, Martha House, Susan James
Guests: Larry Parker, Jan Lathrop, Mary Arrigoni, Judy Sullivan, Sheila Stewart Glover, Lorna Holmes; **Staff:** Jermain Lowe; **Via Zoom:** Jim Lund, Lorelei Schober, Denise Lund Smith, Rev. Samantha Wilson

Chalice Lighting and Reading: Nancy

Welcome to Members of the Incoming Board & Other Guests

MOTION by Martha to approve May 7, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes, July 2nd.
Approved.

Treasurer's Monthly Report: Because the Treasurer was unable to attend in person, Board members reviewed and discussed his written report for May. The reports states that "Net Revenue minus Expenditures for the eleven months is a negative (\$22,922). Increased spending in April and May together with declining Revenue has accelerated the trend towards the Estimated deficit of (\$24,500) and the Budgeted deficit of (\$34,500). The Expected Revenue shortfall taken together with Personnel and other cost savings combine to forecast an improvement in the projected result from the (\$34,500) deficit. The 'guesstimated' result to be supported by the 4% Distributable Endowment funds has been reduced to (\$24,500)." It was noted that Sunday plate receipts have increased to 106% of budget for the first 11 months.

MOTION: Judy moved to approve the May Treasurer's Report. Susan 2nd. Approved.
The Board expressed its appreciation to Charlie for his work as BUU Treasurer.

Connections Project Final Report

Rev. Sam presented the report via Zoom to support discussion among the current Board, incoming Board, and other member attendees. The report had been distributed to the current and incoming Board Presidents before the previous week's Work Session. It was decided to hold distribution to the whole congregation until after today's joint meeting of the Boards.

Congregational Identity and Appreciation: Rev. Sam described the congregation as a deeply committed community of people who want to thrive where they are, with both pride of place and pride in one another. She expressed deep appreciation for the congregants who volunteered with the Listening Team and the Connections Team over the past year, offering gratitude to them as well as to current and incoming Boards.

Key Reflections: Based on the compiled comments from Connections Team participants, Rev. Sam concluded that in-person gatherings are a stronger way for people to work together. She also noted that the Congregational Patterns section of the Appendix.

Rebuilding Trust and Connection: Attendees discussed how to interrupt the disconnection process and rebuild trust within the congregation. Several noted that Town Halls and Sunday services may not be the best settings for vulnerable conversations, especially when people are experiencing mistrust. There was also a call for congregants to participate more actively by attending meetings and reading the *Messenger*.

Suggested Supports for Difficult Conversations: Participants suggested possible structures to help people speak honestly and supportively when conflict, misunderstanding, or mistrust arises:

A Listening Guide or Right Relations Team made up of trusted people who could offer supportive conversations in moments of mistrust.

A monthly Circle where congregants could share where they are emotionally in a setting designed for understanding.

A Community Building Circle where people could hear one another's perspectives after misunderstandings arise.

"Feeling Spaces" where talking about emotions becomes a natural and woven-in part of community life.

A Compassionate Communication Team, with a facilitator, to support private conflict-resolution conversations.

Accountability, Communication, and Process: Attendees emphasized the importance of acknowledging when harm has been done and being careful not to treat hearsay as fact. They encouraged asking about the source of information, recognizing that it may be confidential or inaccurate, and making space for differences of opinion. While consensus may not always be possible, participants stressed the need to keep finding ways to remain in relationship with one another.

Concerns About Existing Structures: Some attendees expressed concern that Caring Clusters can sometimes create cliques. Others suggested that Town Halls could be reshaped into more open forums where people can speak honestly; they may also need a different name and a more regular schedule. Participants also raised questions about why some congregants mistrust the Board, noting that trust had not always been a concern in the past years.

Pastoral Care and Emotional Support: The group identified a need for stronger support for those experiencing end-of-life issues and noted that the congregation does not currently have a Bereavement Group. Rev. Sam suggested that the Men's and Women's Groups can provide places to process emotions, though not everyone connects through those groups.

Next Steps and Possible Follow-Up: Participants noted that unprocessed breaches of trust can accumulate into a larger "pile of mistrust," and they emphasized the importance of tending to those concerns rather than ignoring them. One proposed approach was for

leaders to begin with a Listening Process: choose a conflict, work through it together, build the practice into the culture, and then introduce it more broadly to the congregation. **Several additional follow-up ideas were raised:** Participants observed that the congregation's Covenant is not fully understood and that everyone needs to take personal responsibility. Rev. Sam also mentioned Transitions Planning, including deep listening with outgoing Board members so they can share from the heart and experience a sense of release. The Connections Team expressed interest in holding a listening circle on trust and mistrust of the Board, possibly in Fall 2026 or early 2027. A Right Relations Team could help people talk through these concerns.

Before a short break was taken, Nancy was honored with gifts from the Board for her exceptional service this past year.

Building & Grounds Report

B&G Chair, Kathy Creten, submitted a detailed Report to the Board. A Plumbing Bid was previously approved by the B&G Committee for \$1,975, but they wouldn't do the work until they were paid upfront. The President approved the check authorization after B&G had approved the expenditure. Electrical work is first needed to convert to 220 AMP (cost is unknown). 60 Sanctuary Chairs from the shed need to be cleaned after a lengthy storage. A respirator is needed for Jesus to remove them. Steamy Concepts will charge \$15/chair, There are cremains in the Meditation Garden. They may be part of this year's Day of the Dead commemoration. Lorelei and the Board appreciate Vice President, Martha House's efforts on behalf of the B&G Committee, including attending HOA meetings. B&G did not submit any requests for approvals or funding at this time.

Nancy's list with issues for next Board:

Nancy compiled a list of the current Board's suggestions. She will give that and her files to Mary.

New Zoom Information: to be sent out by Susan

Chalice Extinguishing and Reading—Nancy

Submitted by Susan James, Board Secretary,
with edits by Nancy Murphy, President and
Charlie Golec, Treasurer

Approved by BUU Board on 6/30/26