

RVUUF Annual Meeting Agenda

June 2, 2024, 11:45 am - In-person

1. RVUUF Board Congregational Meeting

Call to Order Jim Meckel - President RVUUF Board

Chalice Lighting - Rev Sean

Presentation Minutes of June 4, 2023

President's Report - Jim Meckel

Presentation Budget (2024-2025)

Joe Martone, Finance Committee Chair
Jim Meckel, Acting Treasurer

Nominees to the RVUUF Board

Tom Ferrel	Two Year Term
Harley Eblen	Two Year Term

Adjourn

2. RVUUF Endowment Trust

Michael Ross, Chair, Endowment Trust

- Call to order by Michael Ross, Chair
- Comments about Endowment Annual Report
- Time for questions/further comments
- Recognition of Trustees:
Joanne Cleckner, Joan Dean, Lois Pettinger, Rosalie Wolff
- Election of New Trustees:
Carole de Cordova, Jeff Platt

RVUUF Board Nominees

Tom Ferrel

I first found my way through the doors of the Sierra Foothills church in Auburn, CA thirty years ago. I quickly became an active and enthusiastic member. The seven principles and the non-dogmatic approach to fellowship resonated, and still resonate with me. I moved away from Auburn about 15 years ago, but have maintained a relationship with other UU fellowships and societies ever since.

Four years ago, I retired to the town of Mount Shasta. It is a place I have been drawn to since I first climbed the mountain in 1982. I thought I could perhaps find community in one of the denominations in my small town. None felt like a place where I could honestly discuss or find acceptance for my oft evolving beliefs. I appreciate the warmth and vitality at RVUUF, and hope that in offering service I can find a sense of belonging.

Harley Eblen

Harley Eblen is a cellist, string arranger, and music producer originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, now living in Ashland, Oregon. He's worked on dozens of albums, including a Billboard #1 and a Grammy nominee. Through classical, bluegrass, folk, and pop, he's been making music in one form or another since the age of 10.

He grew up attending the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu, where he served for a time as the youth group's liaison to the board of directors. Since then he's attended service at UU churches as he moved around the country, first in Denver, then Seattle, and now here at RVUUF.

RVUUF ENDOWMENT TRUST

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Carole de Cordova has been nominated by the Trustees for a three-year term as a Trustee of the RVUUF Endowment Trust, effective July 1, 2024.

Education:

Attended Boise State University, majoring in Business Administration and Tax.

Employment:

Worked for 20 years in the Internal Revenue Service.

Served as an Internal Revenue Tax Auditor/Business Tax Auditor. Senior Revenue Officer in Collection and a Senior IRS Taxpayer Advocate.

Community:

Neighborhood Coordinator, Ashland Food Project.

UU Background:

Member of San Dieguito Unitarian Fellowship (Solano Beach, CA), then Unitarian Church of San Jose, CA. Joined RVUUF with husband, Alan Hersh, in 2021, when moved to Ashland.

Jeff Platt has been nominated by the Trustees for a three-year term as a Trustee of the RVUUF Endowment Trust, effective July 1, 2024.

Education:

ITT Technical Institute, Lewis and Clark College. Physics, Calculus, Electronics design, Robotics and Embedded software.

Employment:

Stained glass design, film projectionist and Rock and Roll roadie. Electronics and software engineer for two special visual effects companies: Boss Films and Warner Brothers. Currently a partner in three manufacturing companies in Medford, writing embedded software and designing electronics.

UU Background:

New to Unitarian Universalism after moving to Ashland and joining RVUUF in 2010. Served on the Board, sang in the choir, member of the Tech committee, Buddhist group and Covenant committee. Built the stained glass window for the sanctuary.

RVUUF Board President Annual Report - 2023-2024 Fiscal Year

This has been a year of repair and growth for RVUUF. We have modified the front and side doors to comply with fire code as well as being compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The two furnaces that heat the Great Hall were replaced. We installed a dolly under the piano so it can be moved easily. Committed volunteers painted and/or organized the RE class rooms, the gallery, the area under the balcony, the front office and the facing of the balcony. The Spruce Up Team volunteers are: Cheryl Leeth, Mica and Marilyn Thompson, Kenny and Suzanne Andersen, Alex and Krynn Lukacs and Julie Crooks.

Jan Waitt and Bill Montfort are consistently working with the BAG volunteers to keep the building and grounds in good working order.

RVUUF Builders now staff the front office from 9am to 12pm, Monday through Friday. The building that had been so quiet for the Covid years is now full of activity and community. The new RUVVF Builders are: Victoria and Roy Kindell, Barbara Dow, Renee Goetz, Cheryl Leeth, Peg Kern and Nancy Roberts.

Emerson House keeps providing a community outreach by housing families in need. The father with two middle school twins has now moved on to his own apartment. We are currently cleaning the house so that a Ukrainian family of four can have a place to live in peace.

The Congregational Administrator position has been problematic for most of this fiscal year but is now stable. We lost two Administrators in 2023 after the one that quit after nine days. In February of this year we hired Shawn Saleme as an acting Congregational Administrator. The Board just made him a permanent full-time Administrator effective July 1, 2024. The stability is very noticeable. Shawn has become an important, skilled and dedicated part of the paid staff and RVUUF community.

At last year's Annual Meeting the congregation authorized the Board to take \$58,000 from the Endowment Trust if needed. That was in addition to the \$42,000 grant from the Available Distributable Amount of the Trust. The Board was committed to making every effort to not take the

additional money and we succeeded. The additional money was not needed and remains in the Trust.

Accounting reports has been the major problem over the last year. While we moved from no consistent accounting reports to using Walsh Accounting the process has been slow. We have specific needs that have been difficult to translate to Walsh. We are now coming to the point where we are getting the complete/condensed reports we want.

The growth of the RVUUF community has been highly visible and dynamic. Every Sunday morning we are seeing new people visiting and often returning multiple times. Membership is increasing. The RE program is seeing more children consistently coming week after week. We are also seeing more younger families, couples and individuals coming to the Sunday services. As the fellowship becomes more diversified in its members it becomes increasingly more dynamic.

In Community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Meckel", written in a cursive style.

Jim Meckel, Board President

Board Members:

Kenny Andersen, Board Secretary

Donna Barrett

Stephen Concklin

Nancy Roberts



RVUUF Annual Meeting Minutes

2023-06-04, 11:45 AM — DRAFT

Aside from items that needed to be voted on by those attending the meeting, paper ballots were mailed to Members before the meeting. **61 ballots** were returned to the RVUUF Office by 6/16/2023. For the Board, Leadership Development, and Endowment Trust nominees and other ballot items below, **Approved** means a majority of Yes votes (93+%) on those ballots.

Members received by mail: a cover letter, agenda and ballot. Members received by email: Annual Reports (Tripod, Minister, Intern Minister, Treasurer, Endowment); Budget Summary; Endowment Trust Resolution; Restatement of the Purpose of the Restricted Building Fund; bios of Board, Leadership Development, and Endowment Trust Nominees; and Minutes from previous Annual Meetings. These documents were also available on RVUUF's web site.

This Annual Meeting took place — in-person and on Zoom — in 3 sections:

- RVUUF Congregational Meeting: called, recessed
- RVUUF Endowment Trust Meeting: called, adjourned
- RVUUF Congregational Meeting: reconvened, adjourned

These minutes provide highlights from the meetings. More details are available in Annual Reports and selected presentations in Appendices:

- A. Treasurer Presentation (Roger Howe)
- B. Finance Committee Presentation (Joe Martone, chair)
- C. Endowment Trust Presentation (Michael Ross, chair)

RVUUF Congregational Meeting

Light Chalice (Rev. Sean). Rev Sean lit the chalice and said a few words of encouragement for our work on difficult issues.

Calling the Meeting to Order (Donna Barrett). Board President Donna Barrett called the meeting to order at 11:45. Donna declared that there was a quorum, with more than 34 Members attending — more than the minimum required 25% of 133 current Members. Donna highlighted events and accomplishments from the past year — for more details see the Tripod Annual Report. Donna listed RVUUF's GA delegates who were appointed by the Board: Kenny Andersen, Katy Fox and Beth Gould; alternate: Alan Hersh.

Previous Annual Meeting Minutes: 6/5/2022, 4/2/2023.

There were no questions or changes — *ballot result: approved*

Report from the Treasurer and Finance Committee (Roger Howe, Joe Martone)

Recognizing that he will be leaving the Board after six years serving on it, Roger summarized major events of those six years, including the calling of Rev. Sean to be our settled minister followed by the advent of the COVID Pandemic. Roger acknowledged how hard the Board and the Committee on Fellowship Ministry worked to provide guidance during the early days of the Pandemic, when much was uncertain. He recognized and thanked Stephen Weyer, Julie Gillis, and Joan Crawford, who stepped up to Board positions in 2020, in the days of greatest uncertainty. Roger lauded the generosity of this congregation in response to the Alameda Fire. His report included the concern that the generosity of the congregation seemed to have tailed off this past church year to the point where the finances are in dire condition. He referred members to his previously distributed Treasurer's Report for more details. Joe summarized the budget development process and listed members of the Finance Committee — for more details see Appendices A and B.

Budget. Roger displayed a budget summary; the full budget was available upon request. Roger explained that \$100,000 from the Endowment was required to balance the budget, given decreases in pledge income and increases in expenses, including personnel, even with no Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA). \$42,000 of the \$100,000 is available as a grant from the Endowment Trust's normal ADA (Available Distributable Amount); however, the additional \$58,000 is available only upon a vote by Endowment members — all RVUUF Members are also members of the Endowment Trust.

One questioner asked about increasing rental income: the answer: rental fees barely cover the increased costs for building security and cleaning. Another asked how we could avoid requesting the additional \$58,000 from the Endowment; the answer: RVUUF would need to see substantial increases in pledge income. The Board is committed to reenergize stewardship, minimize tapping the \$58,000, and review the financial situation quarterly to restore COLAs for our staff if feasible.

Recess of meeting. Since proposing the 2023-2024 budget was contingent on approval of the Endowment Trust Resolution (next section), Donna called for a recess at 12:31 pm.

RVUUF Endowment Trust Meeting

Michael Ross, chair of the Endowment Trustees, called the meeting to order at 12:32 pm.

Endowment Trust Resolution: Excess Distribution. Michael Ross recognized Roger Howe, who moved the adoption of the Endowment Trust Resolution as distributed in the agenda packet. The motion was seconded. Dave Baker spoke passionately about Stewardship. He began to propose an amendment to the Endowment Trust Resolution, but since this issue related to the Board rather than the Endowment, it was deferred to the resumption of the budget discussion (next section). Jim Meckel emphasized the importance of having a commitment of \$58,000 in the budget now to ensure continuity and stability in the coming church year, especially for our staff; he, as upcoming President, pledged to improve the stewardship process. Several mentioned their initial opposition to distribution of principal from the Endowment, especially for operating expenses, but were swayed by budgetary controls in place and commitments to increase funding from other sources.

It was clarified that this was not a loan to be repaid, but a distribution from principal as needed during 2023-2024. The funds will be held by the Trustees and will not be distributed unless and until they are needed. Any residual remaining at the end of the year will be returned to the corpus of the Trust.

The Endowment Trust Agreement specifies that any excess distribution beyond the ADA, i.e., the \$58,000 requested by the Board, requires a vote at an appropriately called business meeting. Approval of the Endowment Trust Resolution would require 75% Yes votes by Members in attendance, in person or on Zoom, i.e., no absentee ballots. Vote counters: Alan Hersh and Roger Best in the Great Hall, Maria Geigel and Steve Weyer in Balcony & on Zoom. *Vote Result by show of hands: 92% approval (59 Yes Votes / 64 Members Attending)*

Nominees for the Endowment Trust.

Bios were sent. There were no questions about candidates.

<i>Joan Dean</i>	<i>3 year term</i>	<i>— ballot result: approved</i>
<i>Lois Pettinger</i>	<i>3 year term</i>	<i>— ballot result: approved</i>
<i>Michael Ross</i>	<i>2 year term</i>	<i>— ballot result: approved</i>
<i>Rosalie Wolff</i>	<i>2 year term</i>	<i>— ballot result: approved</i>

Michael adjourned the meeting at 12:56 pm.

RVUUF Congregational Meeting (reconvened)

Donna Barrett reconvened the earlier recessed Congregational Meeting at 12:57 pm.

Budget (Roger Howe, Treasurer). Roger summarized the proposed budget, offered to provide more details (none requested), and highlighted recent challenges in obtaining up-to-date financial reports. Since the Endowment Resolution was approved, the proposed budget could now be voted on by the entire Membership via paper ballot. There was no discussion.

Ballot Result: approved

Budget/Stewardship Motion (Dave Baker). Dave re-raised his earlier proposal. The chair ruled that, as the motion was a legitimate piece of business and was being considered at a meeting while a quorum was present to do business, it could be considered and voted upon at this meeting. The Motion:

“Board is advised to restore the Annual Stewardship Drive and the Stewardship Committee. The Board and Finance Committee are advised to monitor finances on a monthly basis”

Vote Result by show of hands: approved by a majority of Members in attendance

Nominees for the Board and Leadership Development (Kate Cleland-Sipfle).

Bios were sent. There were no questions about candidates.

Kenny Andersen 2 year term — ballot result: approved

Alan Hersh 3 year term — ballot result: approved

Jim Meckel 2 year term — ballot result: approved

Nancy Roberts 3 year term — ballot result: approved

Nominee for Leadership Development:

Roger Howe 3 year term — ballot result: approved

Restatement of the Purpose of the Restricted Building Fund (Roger Howe).

Roger reiterated that this financial accounts issue was separate from the Budget. Roger displayed the 20+ year-old statements from the original donors to the Restricted Building Fund (RBF); these short, general statements did not provide clear guidance to the Board on how RBF funds could be utilized for capital building projects. The new Restatement, distributed earlier to Members, strived to honor the original donor intent as much as could be inferred, still precludes use of the funds for normal RVUUF operations, and listed several categories for capital improvements. Approval by Members of the RBF restatement would delegate decision making to the Board for funding future projects without requiring a congregational meeting and vote for each project.

Ballot Result: approved

Donna adjourned the meeting at 1:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Board Secretary, Steve Weyer

Appendix A. Treasurer's Presentation (Roger Howe)

The agenda says this time is for a Treasurer's report. I am going to deviate just a bit from what you received in your agenda packet, since I know you have all read my report there.

At the end of this month, I will have served six years on your Board. During that time, I have been president for about a year and a half, and Treasurer for the past three years. A lot has happened. During my time as president, we held a special congregational meeting to call Rev. Sean Parker Dennison to be our settled minister. Plans are under way for an installation service, now delayed for several years by the pandemic. About a month after that meeting, the importance of COVID became clear, and we shut down our building and shifted our Sunday services to YouTube videos and Zoom meetings online. The Board, understanding how inadequate anyone's foresight would be in the condition of a global pandemic, started to meet weekly and invited the Committee on Fellowship Ministry (now called the Covenant Committee) to join us to form and solidify our leadership Tripod.

Those meetings continued for six months, by which time it was becoming apparent that the pandemic would continue for much longer than we had expected. In that interval, three people stepped forward to evidence interest in sitting on our Board: Julie Gillis, who later served as President Elect and President; Steve Weyer, who has served for three years in the role of Secretary; and Jean Crawford, whose loss we still feel.

The viewer numbers for the YouTube videos and our pledging process gave us reassurance about the continued vitality of our community. The response of this community to the Alameda Fire was equally gratifying.

Each year, we planned a budget, thinking that we might reach the inflection point where we could return to "operations as normal" by some point during that year. Year after year, COVID tricked us, becoming progressively more contagious as it swept the world in wave after wave of new variants. Whether we have reached the end of that process or not remains only for the future to disclose, but we are now back open, with a great deal of new equipment upstairs for livestreaming, offering our Sunday services in three different formats – in person, live online, or recorded.

Despite the tribulations of the immediate past year, I remain solidly optimistic about our future together. I find that I will leave the Board in a place no one would have believed when I was elected six years ago, embattled but not embittered, with four new candidates to bolster the number and variety of the members of the Board.

I will no longer serve on the Board, but I will remain active in the affairs of RVUUF.

Thank you for your support during the past six years.

Appendix B. Finance Committee Presentation (Joe Martone, chair)

One of the primary duties of the Finance Committee is to develop a draft proposed operational budget for the coming fiscal year. After deliberation and agreement within our committee, the draft budget is shared with the Board for their consideration and modification before it is presented to the congregation at this annual meeting. It is now up to the congregation to accept or reject the proposed budget. It is important to note that RVUUF policy requires that our proposed operational budget be balanced so that planned expenses are exactly equal to planned income.

To be clear, the proposed operational budget we are discussing today covers the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024, for shorthand, we say FY24.

In a few minutes, Roger will return to the podium to go over the numbers and explain why it was necessary to split our budget presentation into Part 1 and Part 2. Now, I will share a brief summary of the process we used to get to this point but before that, I want to recognize the members of our Finance Committee:

- *Roger Howe*. As Treasurer, Roger is a Board member so he was our direct communication link to the Board and Tripod.
- *JoAnn Cleckner*. Because she is an Endowment Trustee, JoAnn was our liaison to the Endowment Trustees. This year, she stepped up and volunteered to be the RVUUF bookkeeper for two months in the critical period immediately after our Administrator's departure.
- *Walter Ensign*. Walter is also chair of the RVUUF Technology Committee which really helped us understand all the cost issues associated with our adoption of live streaming capability
- *Leila Wrathall*. Leila is our newest member but she's not new to UU and is a great addition to our team
- *Michael Ross*. Michael is also Chair of the Endowment Trustees but more than that he is the senior member of our Finance Committee and brings us a wealth of knowledge about RVUUF and the UUA.

Back to the budget development process. We kicked off the process back in March with a budget request call letter to RVUUF leaders including all committee chairs, our music director, our RE lead teacher, and the Board. Everyone responded by April 3.

Normally, we would have also asked our Administrator for budget input for a variety of administrative expenses but because of our vacancy, we used year to date actual expenses for the current year to estimate the requirements for FY24.

We received guidance on Minister and staff compensation increases from the Board.

On the income side, we used the income planned for this year as our baseline for FY24.

With that data in hand, Roger and I proceeded to populate a detailed operational budget spreadsheet to get a first look at a target FY24 budget and share it with other Finance

Committee members. Initially, we considered a 5% and, for comparison, an 8.7% cost of living compensation increase for RVUUF staff.

It became immediately apparent to our Finance Committee that balancing proposed expenses would require a huge increase in planned income so we decided at that point, in early May, to engage the Board to help find solutions to our disconnect between income and expenses. In response, the Board asked us to revise the spreadsheet to show planned pledge income based estimated actual pledge income for this year and to eliminate cost of living compensation increases. The Board asked that we balance the resulting expenses with grant money from the Endowment as a contingency should other income fall short.

The outcome of this process is the proposed budget Roger will come back to the podium to share with you now. Before leaving, let me point out that the proposed budget retains 100% of the funds requested from the RVUUF leaders mentioned earlier. So, all committees, RE and music programs are fully funded. Thank you for your attention.

Appendix C. Endowment Trust Presentation (Michael Ross, chair)

One thing we did not emphasize in our Annual Report for the current fiscal year is where all of that money came from. Well, it represents "living the dream" for many Rogue Valley RVUUFians like us. They've maybe had to dig down into their long-term savings or tax-free IRA distributions, (above and beyond their annual pledge amount) with the hope that annually many worthwhile causes will be supported. Our Trust Agreement limits such distributions to up-to 5% per year. Even after responding to such annual grant proposals, our Endowment Trust has grown to more than \$800,000 dollars. How fortunate we are to have this Endowment Trust. Special thanks to our Trustees this year: Joann Cleckner, Joan Dean, Secretary, John Tyler and Treasurer, Rosalie Wolff

Now, there is a resolution to be considered, and I understand our RVUUF Treasurer, Roger Howe, would like to make a motion in that regard. Following a second to Roger's motion, we'll open it up for discussion.

If there is no further discussion, we can have a call for the question, followed by a vote, which will be tallied based on a counting of hands of all MEMBERS present, both here and on-line. In accordance with the Trust Agreement a 75% affirmative vote by those present will be required for acceptance of the resolution.

Since I'm a member of the Finance Committee as well as being an Endowment Trustee, in order to avoid any possible perception of a conflict, I'm going to recuse myself from the voting.

RVUUF: PROPOSED FY 2024-2025 BUDGET

		Budget Income/Expense Lines				(\$0)	chge frm 2023-2024
		Net income from line 223					
Income							
100 Contributed							
	Total 110 Pledges			\$251,015		\$58,000	
	Total 120 Plate & Sunday Support			\$10,500		\$2,000	
	Total 130 Fundraisers			\$59,681		\$34,931	
	Total 140 [UNRESTRICTED] Grants to Operating Income			\$46,076		(\$58,000)	
	Total 100 Contributed			\$367,272		\$36,931	
	Total 200 Earned Income			\$5,000		\$2,000	
	Total 300 Interest			\$5,644		\$0	
	Total 4100 Other Income			\$0		\$0	
	Total Income			\$377,916		\$38,931	
Operating Expenses							
	Total 1000 Personnel Expenses			\$279,447		\$21,725	
	Total 2000 Building, Aesthetics, Grounds, New Projects			\$28,501		\$5,503	
	Total 3000-3100 Admin and 3200 Technology			\$27,600		\$10,300	
	Total Worship, Education, Stewardship, Social Justice			\$35,868		\$1,403	
	Total 8000 RESERVE ACCOUNTS			\$6,500		\$0	
	Total OPERATING EXPENSES			\$377,916		\$38,931	
	Total OPERATING INCOME			\$377,916			
	NET INCOME			(\$0)			