

UUCSC Board of Directors meeting
August 20, 2026
10AM Oneto Room

Present: Amber Collins, Karen Ellsworth, April Ruedaflares, Bill Jones, Cathy Solomon.

Absent: Donna Caldwell and Chris Johnson.

Guests: Ami Pienknagura, Nick Smith and Susan Pavlow, Ali Buffum, Susan Strakosch, Kathy Swink.

Chalice lighting

Check in

The agenda was rearranged today to accommodate people who are involved in both music and the Wunder Academy programs.

Old business:

The music committee and Ami gave a presentation about the need for an accompanist in order for Ami to continue in the position. We all acknowledged the special skills of Michael Galib who was able to be both an accompanist and music director.

Music Committee co-chair Nick Smith said Michael Galib created a separate account with proceeds from fundraising concerts. He believes there is about \$4,000 in the account. He suggested using the money in that account to pay an accompanist in order to avoid increasing the budget deficit.

April moved that the Music Committee is authorized to retain the present volunteer accompanist at the rate of \$50 per event, to be paid from the account created by Michael Galib, until the end of January, and that the Board will review the music program at its January 2027 meeting. Cathy Solomon seconded. The motion was approved.

April moved to approve July minutes. Karen seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Cathy moved to approve the Office Administrator's and Treasurer's reports. April seconded. The motion passed with a commendation to the Treasurer and Finance Committee chair for their work on eliminating superfluous accounts in the general ledger chart of accounts.

New business:

Karen will work with Lisa Richter, Personnel Committee chair, to review the proposed revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual and suggest changes to the draft.

The Board asks Nancy Dean and the sculpture team for an image to scale of the proposed sculpture to be erected in front of the UUCSC entrance to the right of the walkway.

The Facilities Committee is still gathering options for air conditioning repair or replacement.

The Board would like a progress report on the professional structural assessment of the building that the Board requested from the Facilities Committee in November. Amber will ask Michael

Bilecki to report on assessment progress and on the possibility of applying for a new RISE energy assessment in order to be eligible for a grant.

Kathy Swink requests that the Board consider a policy that allows video recordings of the Sunday services to flow more logically than they currently do. Other congregations have great looking YouTube videos and improving this may help us attract a new minister. Kathy will talk to the technology committee and Worship Committee to come up with the wording for a proposal the Board can vote on.

The fundraising brainstorm session went well and our attempted reorganization of Justice committees has begun with a discussion of two possible leadership structures:

1. one central justice coordinator who oversees all the justice events and actions that are each organized by a contact person.
2. a few organizers who each look for and organize justice work around a topic like LGBTQ issues, environmental justice, middle east justice etc.

Both organizational structures include the opportunities for us to join in with justice work that other groups have already begun. One example is RI Interfaith Power and Light which is already doing sustainability work that the Board has discussed wanting to do in recent months. We will discuss this further in the future.

Communication with the congregation: Amber will write in the enews that we have hired an accompanist

The meeting adjourned at 11:29.

Respectfully submitted,
Amber Collins, President

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County
Treasurer's Report
for the August 20, 2026 UUCSC Board of Directors meeting**

Budget

As of August 15, our accountant, Ame Botus, had not yet completed her report for the 2026 fiscal year, but I do not think it will be much different from what I reported last month: that we ended the year with a deficit of about \$17,000. As I reported earlier, I think we had a deficit because pledges were not sufficient to cover expenses, not because there was any over spending.

The budget adopted in June anticipates \$218,000 in pledges. According to Collector Jeff Berry, as of August 12, 80 pledging units have pledged a total of \$220,902. He anticipates that additional pledges will be made, but he also projects a collection rate of about 96.5%.

Financial administration

A “chart of accounts” is a list of the names and numbers of the accounts and sub-accounts in a general ledger. The general ledger is the Excel budget spreadsheets that shows income and spending.

The chart of accounts in UUCSC’s general ledger has been a source of complaints (mine included) since I became treasurer. Over the past several years, some accounts and sub accounts appear to have been added at random, and as a result the accounts are not arranged in categories. Some of the accounts and sub-accounts are not numbered consecutively, and the names of some accounts are either misleading or impossible to understand. I think this is one of the reasons why so many people find it difficult to understand an Excel spreadsheet showing the general ledger. Another reason is that the monthly income and spending reports have been designed to show the annual budget in monthly increments. Some of our expenses are the same each month, but many are not. Comparing those occasional expenses to one-twelfth of the budget does not provide a meaningful picture of our finances.

At their August meeting, the Finance Committee approved a new chart of accounts. A total of 56 unused or unnecessary accounts have been removed, and seven accounts have been added. All the accounts have been renumbered. As soon as Ame is able to revise our general ledger to reflect the new accounts, we will begin to use them.

A document called “July 2026 budget v. actuals” is attached. It uses the current (not the new) accounts. It has two columns, one showing the actual income and spending during July, and one showing the fiscal year 2027 budget approved in June. That format, with only two columns, is the one I plan to use in monthly reports to you. If you would like to see other details, please let me know.

A document called “UUCSC Budget - FY 2027” is also attached. It shows the budget as approved in June with the new account names and numbers. If you compare this document with the “July 2026 budget v. actuals,” you can see how the chart of accounts has been simplified.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ellsworth
UUCSC Treasurer