

Minutes of the October 19, 2025 State of the Society Meeting
of the First Congregational Society (Unitarian)

ARTICLE I.	<p>To elect a moderator (Sanctuary) and assistant moderator (Google Meet).</p> <p>Motion: To elect Bill Newhard as Moderator</p> <p>Motioned by: John Schneider Seconded by: Maura Snow Vote: All in Favor – motion carries</p> <p>Motion: To have Neil Harmon assist online moderating</p> <p>Motioned by: John Schneider Seconded by: Beth Benoit Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE II.	<p>Motion: To vote on the admission of new members.</p> <p>Amanda MacLean proposed Steven Davis for Membership</p> <p>Motioned by: John Schneider Seconded by: Dave Kaffine Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE III.	<p>Motion: To vote to accept the minutes of the Annual Meeting held June 8, 2025.</p> <p>Motioned by: Tom Coffey Seconded by: Peggy Stephens-North Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE IV.	<p>To vote to accept the Auditor’s Report for FY2025.</p> <p>Proposed to table this article as the report is not ready.</p>
ARTICLE V.	<p>Motion: To vote to accept the Treasurer’s Report for FY2025.</p> <p>Discussion: The society ended with a deficit this year. Utilities went up. Just over \$6,000 deficit.</p> <p>Motioned by: Rebecca Gore Seconded by: Nancy Kaelin Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE VI.	<p>Motion: To vote to accept the Collector’s Report for FY2025.</p> <p>Motioned by: John Schneider Seconded by: Ruth Whalen Crockett Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>

ARTICLE VII.	<p>Motion: To vote to accept the Board of Investment Report for FY2025.</p> <p>Motioned by: Tom Coffey Seconded by: John Schneider Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE VIII.	<p>Motion: To vote on the distribution of the Eustace B. and Nancy M. Fiske Foundation \$20,000 grant funds from 2024.</p> <p>Discussion: Last year we received a grant from the Fiske Foundation, intended to be used for the building. Since it came in after the budget, it was not counted in our plan. Proposal here is to use this money for the cost we spent on the building and put this to use to zero out the budget. And put the remainder into the building budget for next year.</p> <p>In perpetuity? That is our understanding at this time.</p> <p>Question: Who are Fiskes? They were original founding members of the church in 1765.</p> <p>Motioned by: Dave Kaffine Seconded by: Beth Benoit Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>
ARTICLE IX.	<p>To hear a presentation from the Standing Committee regarding the Carlene Merrill Fund. No vote will be taken.</p> <p>John Schneider and Tom Coffey presented. There was a pause for asking the congregation to vote on matching funds of \$20,000. The church received \$50,000 from CM’s family, used by SC to act as a bridge fund for things that are unplanned. This was used to increase Erica’s hours to allow her to go full time and remain employed by the church. Also used for the putting in the offer of health insurance to the Music Director.</p> <p><u>Comments/Questions:</u></p> <p>Joan Coyne: Expressed frustration we were asked to do a matching to the fund. We are pushing this down the road.</p> <p>Barry Jefferson: Appreciates the frustration. He is the Board of Investment Chair at this time. The specific funding mechanism was to match through the endowment. The endowment moving restricted funds: by law they must be used for the given purpose. We have to weigh how we place money in our investment.</p> <p>Thanks to the board of investment for care.</p> <p>Beth Benoit: Was the question that we match or do a fundraiser. Joan answers that it was in 2021. This was a promise made by us four years ago.</p>

	<p>Kathy Deschenes: Approaches B-o-I: But we have over 2 million in the endowment and this is frustrating as we have the intent and the money, yet we are hanging on to it.</p> <p>Warren Flewellen: Also on the Board of Investment We have not needed to use that money until now. That money is still there for the purpose intended. It may be exhausted or it may not. The endowment can be used for unrestricted funds. The biggest value is our staff and also our biggest expense. So pledging is how we value our staff.</p> <p>At the moment there is over \$100,000 in the fund.</p> <p>Joanna Paulson: Question, is this for medical emergencies? No.</p> <p>Other fundraising and the numbers. To make another donation. We need to talk, we need to have more discussion but not in this setting.</p> <p>Ruth Whalen Crockett: We rely more and more on our staff. (Ruth is on the HR committee) If HR does not have the agility to make changes quickly then we are impaired from employing the best people in a timely way. We need to be able to do this going forward</p> <p>Leslie Yauckoes: Asks, is this an annual thing? Answer, No.</p> <p>John thanked everybody.</p>
ARTICLE X.	To open discussion to any issues of concern to the members. No vote will be taken.
ARTICLE XI.	<p>Motion: To adjourn.</p> <p>Motioned: Linda Newhard Seconded: Tom Coffey</p> <p>Vote: All in Favor – motion carries.</p>

Note from Clerk:

There were 3 absentee ballots collected. All voted in favor of all items.