

BOD Meeting March 26, 2026

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Unitarian Society of Hartford Board Meeting

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Quorum NO ____ YES __X__

Board Attendees

Guests

Regrets

Nina Elgo

Virginia de Lima

Laura Cipriano

Paul Cipriano

Jon Covault

Laurie Kelliher

Rev. Bob Janis

Zoom:

Rocco Orlando

Judy Sullivan

Michael Michaud

Orders of Business

6:30 p.m. Nina called the meeting to order

Chalice lighting and opening words with Nina Elgo.

Approval February 23, 2026 BOD Minutes

All in favor. Minutes accepted.

Item: As noted in the previous meetings Gloria Mengual has resigned as the Secretary of the BOD due to health.

Laurie Kelliher will take notes for this evening pending the next BOD elections

May 2026

Item: Rev Bob reported on the recent overnight Youth Retreat held at USH. ~15+ adolescents from area UU churches attended including 2 from USH. They made soup that evening and distributed soup sandwiches, clothing and food at the Hartford Stop & Shop later in the night. John Bengtson has a full-hearted description of the evening in a Facebook posting ~3/23/26.

Thus far USH has not received any applicants for the position in support of the RE program. The position will remain posted but may be more successful in the upcoming year with more lead time. Please see Rev Bob's Ministers Report for fuller details.

Item: Jon Covault (Treasurer) highlighted several aspects of his Treasurer report.

Pledge income as of this week is at 88% of FY26 goal. The UBS transfers for the past two months did not transfer for Feb/March but are expected to be corrected.

Operating expenses, personnel expenses and liability expenses are ~4% below expected. On the other hand snow removal this winter has cost ~\$10,000. The treasurer report is further described in the Treasurer's report found on REALM

Item: Rocco Orlando (Finance) reports that the Stewardship planning is moving forward. Mailings went out to members 3/13/26 and by 3/19/26 \$40,000 in pledges were received. Virginia de Lima is the lead for “cottage meetings” in support of the pledge drive. BOD members are encouraged to attend the sessions. The first was held 3/22/26 and 10+ members attended. A live interactive word cloud tool was displayed that permitted participants to generate responses through their phones. Participants opined that the tool allowed anonymity as well as serving both extroverts and introverts. Results will be compiled and shared in the future. Further details are found in the written Finance report in REALM.

Item: Annual Meeting will be held 5/31/26. Location and facilitator TBA

Item: Nina Elgo BOD President notes that the USH Constitution was last amended almost 3 years ago (May 2023). She suggests that a committee be developed to review the Constitution and make suggestions for any revisions. Nina has volunteered to be the lead.

Motion was offered that a “Governance and Leadership Task Force” undertake the review and recommendations of the USH Constitution. The committee would be headed by the past president (Nina Elgo). Motion passed unanimously.

Item: Laurie Kelliher (Membership) reported that the Volunteer Fair resulted in few respondeents other than several people showing interest in being candlelifters, joining the choir and running the Book Sale. The Sunday Service team (greeters, welcome table and ushers) had a single volunteer.

New member interest on the other hand has been robust. Ten people attended either one or both of the UU101 sessions run with Rev Bob and possibly more may participate in the New Member Ceremony to be held May 17, 2026.

Further membership details in the Membership Subcouncil reports.

Item: The Endowment fund will be tapped to meet current capital needs including \$75,000 for B&G projects including the continuing repair of the clerestory windows/glass and the driveway repaving. Paul Cipriano has extensive notes on upcoming B&G repairs and expenses in his Administrative Council Report in REALM.

Item: Michael Michaud chair of Spirit Life is finalizing plans for the benefit concert offered by concert pianist Paul Bisaccia in support and celebration of the newly revamped music program at USH. Michael proposed a motion that “the proceeds from music program fund raisers be designated as “unrestricted funds” that can be used to support the music program budget suggested by the music director and can be carried beyond one year (i.e. roll over from year to year). The motion passed with one abstention.

Michael also notes that several USH programs (ex: Social Justice, Green Sanctuary) have no budgets designated by the BOD. The Youth Group has discretion to use their Soup Sunday proceeds. Comments were made that people are more likely to donate to specific groups/projects that parallel their interests. It was noted that fewer restrictions on collected money are easier for the church to access.

Item: Judy Sullivan updated the Social Justice report on REALM. Five religious leaders including Rev Bob and USH members Laura Cipriano and Paul Cipriano spoke at the Capitol in support of bills aimed at supporting protections for immigrants and accountability from personnel interacting in a government role.

Summation and consolidation of meeting notes with detailed individual Council reports are found in REALM.

Next BOD meeting: April 27, 2026 6:30-8PM

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Kelliher (Interim Secretary to the USH BOD)

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Laurie Kelliher (Interim Secretary to the USH BOD)

Sincerely,
Laurie Kelliher