

Bylaw Updates and Changes – 2023

Intro: In March of 2019, Unity Worldwide Ministry (UWM) provided a Bylaw template to be implemented by all Unity churches, where possible. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing (USCL) formed a committee to review and adopt the changes suggested by UWM that were not in conflict with bylaws previously adopted and important to USCL membership. Then, there was a fire, and then there was Covid, and there were moves to other venues for church services and related activities. Recommended Bylaw updates have also been made to cover and reflect the many changing circumstances over the last few years.

Throughout the amended Bylaws, there have been changes made to merge with UWM language, or for clarification purposes; changing “shall” to “will”, and making passive sentences active. Cross references have also been added.

Below are the NEW substantive changes recommended to be adopted in USCL’s Bylaws. (This list does not include every change made, but covers those changes that are most significant.)

If anyone has any questions about the discussions surrounding decision making and changes that have been included in this draft, please feel free to contact: Reverend Sharon or Teresa Mulford

Article IV Members Section 1.	Qualifications The Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love Covenant (Appendix C) is replaced with Healthy and Safe Community Interactions Agreement
Section 2.	Election of members New Members: Youth Members 13+ (new – cannot vote). To vote, a new member (18) must have been a member for 30 days.
Section 3.	Membership terms and effective dates: USCL add: Membership <u>terms and effective dates</u> . (Including youth members.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New members: term begins on the date a new member is approved by the Board. Voting rights begin 30 days after Board approval. • Renewal members: renewal term begins on the scheduled Annual Meeting date, provided a renewal document has been completed and provided to record keeper prior to the start of the Annual Meeting. (Board approval not required.) • Reinstatements: within one year, after one year, see below. Voting rights begin 30 days after submission of renewal document or new member application. • Removal of membership for cause: see below.
	3. Youth Members – description added.

	4.a. & 4.b. Inactive Membership – Former member reinstatement within a year, and after a year.
	5. Removal for cause - additional clarification
Section 4.	Powers of members: (30 day wait for some to vote or speak in debate) F. To Be eligible to serve on the Board of Trustees; (6 months a member) (added) G. To Speak in debate at any membership meeting according to the rules provided for debate.
Article V Meetings Section 1.	Annual Meeting – specify day and term 1.A. the 2 nd Sunday of March (fixed) Annual Meeting Date, and designates first day of membership year for everyone, unless a new member.
	1.B. BOT and Minister designate the permitted manner of attendance and voting and include in notice (hybrid-zoom-vote by mail, proxy, etc...)
	Vote by proxy added (USCL) see also Appendix D
	1.G.3. Voting Members Power and Authority Clarify – Expenditures for real property commitments require 2/3 approval vote of all members. Cross reference with Administration.
	1.G.4. Power and Authority of Members Building Fund restrictions removed from this section because it no longer exists (and also referenced Special Meeting required – but in Annual meeting section). See paragraph under Administration for requirements of Designated / Restricted Funds.
Section 2	Special Membership Meeting Special Meetings – letters realigned to match with the same topics listed in the Annual Meeting rules. UWM did not have some powers listed but probably should be for Special Meetings. See “Meetings” table.
Section 3	Town Hall Meetings – Added – Informational only.
Article VI Board of Trustees Section 1	Allow flexibility of number of trustees- change requirement to 5-7 Trustees from 6 trustees.
Section 2	Qualifications A. To be a board member, must be a church member for at least 6 months. (added)
Section 3	Prohibition of Board Service C. Individuals receiving compensation from the ministry may serve on the board, but may not vote on any matter of compensation as it relates to such individual or business entity owned by such individual. (changed) D. Relatives, significant others, or household members of any individual consistently receiving more than \$100.00 per month compensation

	from the ministry may serve on the board, but may not vote on any matter of compensation as it relates to such individual or business entity owned by such individual. (changed)
Section 9	Duties of Board Members G. Real Property restrictions cross referenced to Member powers. X. Keep records of childrens' programs participants and dates. (added)
Article VII Administration, Management and Leadership Section 2	B. Emergency Powers (added - previously approved 08-2020). C. The manner of attendance and voting at any meeting will be agreed upon by the senior minister or co-ministers and the Board, and designated in the required notice. A member is considered present when attending any meeting as prescribed by the Board. Voting options: in person, confidential mail, ZOOM, proxy, or other designated electronic means. (added) D. Restricted/Designated Funds. (added)
Appendix B	Inclusion and Diversity Statement (updated)
Appendix C	Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love replaced with Healthy and Safe Community Interactions Statement
Appendix D	Proxy Voting - added