Interfaith Food Ministry
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, December 2, 2025
9:00 am - Meeting via Zoom

Board Officers & Staff	Board Members
Phil Alonso, Executive Director	Terry Robinson-Calvary Bible
Venus Paxton, Program Manager	Deborah Wilder, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Victoria Lindsay, Mktg/Comm Mgr	Carol Fegte, Emmanuel Episcopal
Laura Perry, Bookkeeper	Gaye Rogers, Grace Lutheran – **ABSENT**
Bob Thurman, President - **ABSENT**	Barbara Agrimonti, United Methodist, GV – **ABSENT**
Jeff Hebert, Vice President	Jan Alessi-Marrer, United Methodist, NC
Sandy Hakala, Treasurer – **ABSENT**	Don Andersen, Seventh Day Adventist
Robert Emmett, Asst. Treasurer - **ABSENT**	Cheri Eckholt, Sierra Pines Methodist
Amy Mathews, Secretary	Julie Clutter, Sierra Presbyterian
	Trinity Episcopal – **VACANT**
Supporting Churches (No Board Rep)	Linda Grube, St. Patrick's
Christian Science Church	Anne Lyon, Unitarian Universalist
Sierra Center for Spiritual Living	Jeff Hebert, St. Canice
	Judi Wade, Twin Cities
	John Muff, Peace Lutheran **- ABSENT**

Meeting Open: 9:02 AM (via Zoom)**.**

A sufficient number of Board members were present to establish a quorum.

OPENING REMARKS

The past 6 – 8 weeks (starting with the SNAP Crisis, see below) have been intense for us, and took a monumental effort from everyone to respond to the needs being faced as well as coordinating the assistance being offered. This community came together and showed up, both in monetary donations and in a large number of volunteers. IFM has been the primary recipient of the outpouring of support when people did not know where to go. Kudos to the staff and core volunteers for all the effort that has gone into coordinating and managing all of our resources during this time. Even though it has been a wild ride, it also has served as a reminder of how important our organization is to this community.

Prayer was offered by Phil.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The Minutes from the previous Board Meeting in August were sent out via email for review prior to this meeting. There was a correction made in order to include the full name of Deborah's church (Latter Day Saints) instead of abbreviating it LDS. No other corrections or edits were noted. **Jeff Hebert made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes. Carol Fegte seconded the motion. All approved, none opposed or abstained, the motion passed.**

Q3 Financial Review

REVENUE	Actual	Budgeted	Difference
Business Contributions	$66K	$25K	$41K
Estate Donations	$80K	0	$80K
Individual Contributions	$195K	$150K	$45K
Fundraisers	$260K	$137K	$123K
Zero Waste	$6,500	$11,250	- $4,750
CRC Grant	0	$135K	- $135K
Grants	$40K	$50K	- $10K
Fee for Service	$17K	$22K	- $5K
Total Revenue	**$675K**	**$540K**	**$135K**

This represents our totals through Q3 which ended in September 2025.

- The reason for higher Business Contributions is due to the large number of Safeway Gift Cards we received.
- Estate Donations are not included in Budget numbers (unplanned).
- Individual Contributions were higher than anticipated, mostly in the months of March and April, likely due to donors being used to donating to the "March Match" Campaign which was shifted to May this year.
- Fundraisers were very successful (nearly double what we had budgeted) during our May Match Campaign.
- Zero Waste was a little under as the expansion was delayed, now includes a monthly collection at Peace Lutheran Church as well as Lake Wildwood.
- The CRC Grant was only recently approved (end of October), delays beyond our control, discussion to follow.
- Grants fell a bit short, we applied for the Teichert Grant for our plumbing project but were not awarded the grant ($7,500).
- Fee For Service only a little under due to late invoicing for CalFresh.
- **Bottom Line: our Revenue exceeded the Budget figure by $135K, removing the CRC Grant boosts that number to $270K – incredible!**

EXPENSES	Actual	Budgeted	Difference
Food / Food Supplies	$257K	$296K	$39K
CRC Grant Freezer Project	0	$100K	$100K
Staff Expenses	$157K	$172K	$15K
Operations	$215K	$238K	$23K
Total Expenditures	**$629K**	**$806K**	**$177K**

- Food is approximately $40K under Budget projections. Good job Venus and team for helping keep expenses down while continuing to offer as many options in the quantity and quality of food for our clients. Will see an increase in Q4 due to holiday food expenses and bulk purchases.

- CRC Freezer Project deferred, potentially looking at construction to take place next year, targeting Summer of 2026.
- Staff Expenses are under due to unused hours and sick time. Q4 will reflect higher than average staff hours owing to the SNAP Crisis.
- Operations were under Budget, includes line items for Repairs (plumbing project deferred), Contractor Services (less use of our Consultant, Dana), Accounting (audit bill is pending), and Facility Supplies. Some items that exceeded Budget projections include Client Outreach (more Safeway Gift Cards than anticipated), Zero Waste (due to composting grant), and Miscellaneous Expenses (additional pet food and diaper purchases due to donors' wishes).
- **Total Expenditures came in $177K under our Budget projection.** Removing the $100K from the CRC Grant would result in Expenditures coming in $77K under Budget.

	Actual	Budgeted	Difference
Total Revenue	**$674,832.27**	**$540,350.06**	**$134,482,21**
Total Expenditures	**$629,909.97**	**$807,174.94**	**- $177,264.97**
Net Revenue	**$44,922.30**	**- $266,824.88**	**$311,747.18**

- Net Operating Revenue was projected to be $267K in Deficit, but since our Revenue generating efforts were so successful we find ourselves almost $45K in the black. Compared to Budget projections, we are around $312K ahead of where we thought we would be at the end of Q3.

CLIENT STATISTICS

- Weekly Client Visit numbers still showing lower in 2025 compared to the corresponding week in 2024. Taking the average per week over the course of Q1 – Q3, the number of client visits are 12% lower this year.
- September saw an increase with numbers that matched or even exceeded those from 2024, resulting in Q3 being only 7% below numbers from Q3 of last year.
- Adding in results from October and November to the Q1 and Q2 statistics, we see higher numbers virtually every week in 2025 versus 2024.
- Taking the average client visits for Q4 (thus far) on their own, which includes the SNAP Crisis and Thanksgiving Holiday Distribution, we are at -8% in 2025 vs 2024; however, that does not include the considerable number of New Clients who started coming (those numbers take longer to process).

Reservation Data

- The percentage of client visits made by Reservations over the Summer was approximately 20% of our weekly Client Visits (bearing in mind that Saturday has no Reservations, so, if that day were removed from the calculations, then the percentage would be higher).
- From the end of October through the current time, those numbers climbed back up to around 25%, mostly due to the SNAP Crisis and Holiday Distribution periods (most every day was at capacity with 88 Reservations being filled out of 88 possible spots).

- The numbers reflected now are more accurate due to cleaning up the database, verifying the actual number of people in each household, and combining client accounts at the same address.

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER REVIEW

- The Spaghetti Dinner was a great success, grossing $3500.
  - Served between 100 – 110 total guests (both seatings)
  - We had help from 25 volunteers and several Board Members
  - Total number of meals made = 120 – 130
  - Many thanks to Gaye Rogers and to Grace Lutheran for hosting the event
- SNAP / CalFresh Crisis:
  - SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, we call it CalFresh.
  - Monthly benefit that allows for approved food purchases at grocery stores, farmer's markets, etc.
  - In Nevada County, benefits amount to approximately $2M per month to families which, in turn, go to food sellers.
  - During the government shutdown, there was uncertainty about whether benefits would be renewed in Early November. After 3 weeks of concern and waiting, benefits were funded on November 7th for families in California.
  - Impact on IFM included an increase of client visits (around 27%), more volunteers, businesses and organizations held Food Drives, lots of media coverage.
  - Social Media Activity: Total Views went up 180%, there were 22,800 unique viewers, interactions (likes, comments, shares) went up 163%, Link Clicks (taking action or seeking more information) increased 382%, page visits went up 152%, and New Follows (supporters) up 323%.
  - Media Appearances by Victoria included interviews with YubaNet and The Union, an ABC10 interview for television, a request by Mayor Hilary Hodge to speak at the GV City Council Meeting, radio spots on KNCO and KVMR, and segments on Nevada County News Now and also on Nevada County Now on the Streets.
  - Throughout this period, in order to meet the many demands placed on her as Marketing and Communications Manager, Victoria went from working part time (around 20 hours per week) to working full time (40+ hours per week). She really stepped up and did an amazing job!
- Impact on IFM
  - During the 2 weeks of the SNAP Crisis (October 26 – November 8), we saw a dramatic increase in donations, raising a total of $106K compared to $43K during the same timeframe in 2024.
  - Even though we saw a boost in donations, we need to remember how devastating the loss of these resources would be. The effect would be felt by children, working parents, seniors, and the disabled, some vulnerable segments of our population. Organizations like ours are not equipped to fill the gap should these benefits be threatened.

- Other Recent Events:
  - Gold Country Senior Services event: The Great Pumpkin Race
  - Spooky Booky at the Helling Library in Nevada City
  - Artist Reception for Ronnie Hart's Art Show benefitting IFM
  - Safeway Nourishing Neighbors outreach
  - Wild Eye Pub fundraiser for IFM and FBNC
  - Peace Lutheran's Harvest Dinner benefitting IFM
  - Victoria attended training at the Centers for Nonprofit Leadership

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY NUMBERS

Preliminary numbers from Thanksgiving Holiday Distribution:

- More than 1500 families were served (approximately 4000 individuals). Large families (3+ people) received a Turkey with some side dishes; small families (1-2 people) received a Frozen Holiday Meal; and Specialty / Unhoused clients received a small canned ham.
- ALL of the Turkeys we purchased and the Frozen Holiday Meals that we prepared were distributed. We are grateful that the Food Bank of Nevada County supplied us with additional turkeys, turkey breasts, and some sides on the final day of our distribution to cover Holiday Meals for the last 30 to 50 clients to come through the line.
- Special thanks to Melinda Pua of the Prep Commissary Kitchen in Alta Sierra and Kim Sewell of Gold Country Senior Services for leading the teams of volunteers who helped to prepare 1100 Holiday Meals.
- Also extending our thanks to GV Ladies Relief, American Heritage Girls, Owens Estate & Wealth, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for providing volunteers to help us with distributing Holiday Meals.

CRC GRANT UPDATES

- CRC stands for Community Resiliency Centers, the grant mainly is meant to rehab the GV Veterans Hall so that it can be activated, in times of emergency or disaster, as a place where people can go for assistance. In other (non-disaster) times, it can also be equipped to function as a center for the community to gather for social functions, meals, etc. IFM will be receiving about $500K from these grant funds over a 4-year period.
- The final contract was signed at the end of October, so we will be able to charge the grant for approximately $42K in food costs, plus a few thousand dollars extra for staff expenses, this year.
- Most of the work will begin in 2026 and beyond.

RECYCLING PROGRAM UPDATES

- We have expanded our CRV Recycling Program to Peace Lutheran Church in Grass Valley, with collections held on the last Saturday of every month from 9 AM to 12 Noon. The first collection in September raised about $1,000, and the second collection in October resulted in $1,200.
- Thus far in 2025, the Lake Wildwood collections have raised $14,000!

- The hope is that we can expand this program even further in 2026, bringing in additional revenue and doing our part to help the environment.

SHIFT IN FOOD PURCHASING

We need to prepare ourselves for more bulk purchasing, which may require a withdrawal from Baird.

- For many years, we had cash on hand, and our Revenue kept up with replenishing that. Bulk purchases were infrequent, usually being made for Holidays, Specialty Bags, or when we found incredible deals.
- During those times, we could rely on Feeding the Foothills (formerly Placer Food Bank) to provide us with free, and steeply discounted, food on a consistent basis. More recently, that is not the case. They still are our primary food source; however, we cannot get the same food items at the prices we enjoyed in the past, and some items are completely unavailable.
- Historically, IFM only had traditional bank accounts for financial transactions up until 2021. It was then, following a few years of healthy Revenue and some generous Estate Gifts, that we started the Baird investment account. Revenue sharply declined in 2023 and 2024 at nonprofit organizations across the county (not just at IFM), and we needed to withdraw funds from Baird to cover the Deficit.
- In 2025, we are on track for a balanced Budget, no withdrawals have been necessary from the Baird account (despite a few close calls). Our two major fundraisers (Match Campaign and Sponsor a Family) have sustained us, but in between times our cash runs low. For instance, we were fortunate to receive a large Estate Gift in the early Fall which got us through to our Holiday Campaign and allowed us avoid a Baird withdrawal.
- Looking ahead to 2026, the Sponsor a Family for the Holidays Campaign in 2025 most likely will sustain us through the end of Q1 / beginning of Q2 of 2026, but then there is little Revenue anticipated until the May Match Campaign. Given that many of the bulk discount opportunities have a limited timeframe requiring that we act quickly, it would help to have more cash on hand to make these purchases.
- Another consideration is the large CRC Grant which will reimburse us for some purchases, but the requirement is that we have to make the purchases first with our own money. The process of reimbursement can take several months to be completed.
- The Proposal being presented is to have the Board empower the Executive Director and the Bookkeeper to withdraw funds from the Baird account <u>as needed</u>, rather than having to wait for the Board to meet and approve a withdrawal. The process takes approximately a week for the funds to become liquid, and the goal would be to keep the money in the Baird account as long as possible earning interest. The same holds true once the funds are withdrawn, we would keep them in an account earning the highest interest possible.

  <u>Early in 2026 we are looking at withdrawing $100K from the Baird account to allow sufficient cash on hand.</u>

DISCUSSION:

- These funds would be part of the Approved Budget, this in **not** the same as Deficit Spending.
- We have $100K in food expenses that will be reimbursed by the CRC Grant.
- Any funds that are withdrawn from Baird would be deposited back into that account as soon as Revenue (e.g. fundraisers) allows us to do so.

- A recommendation was made by Deborah to engage the Executive Committee as the ones to approve a withdrawal from Baird, as that allows for a group vote and can be accomplished in short order. A Board Officer would have to initiate the withdrawal process (such as Bob or Jeff).

  The agreed-upon Proposal to be made to the Board at the Annual Meeting in January:

  The Executive Director (Phil) and Bookkeeper (Laura) would evaluate cash on hand after paying the monthly bills in order to make a determination as to whether a withdrawal from our Baird account is necessary. If that is the case, that would trigger a request to be made to the Executive Committee. The EC would make a determination as to whether that request will be approved, and evaluate if a change in the amount to be withdrawn is advisable. Any withdrawal from the Baird account will be reported to the Board at the subsequent Board Meeting.

HOLIDAY PLANS

- We have secured the purchase of the non-perishable side dishes to be handed out at our Christmas Holiday Distribution.
- **Brand New**: Safeway is changing the timing of how their Gift Cards will be distribute; we will have them available for our Christmas Distribution (in the past, we got them too late to do this). At this point, we have received 1,570 Gift Cards, and are planning to offer them to our client families in lieu of offering a meat choice (we are not publicizing this fact). Doing this will allow them to pick out and purchase something of their choosing. Only 1 Gift Card will be given to each client household.
- Help spread the word about Sponsor a Family for the Holidays: share on Social Media, hand out our hard copy flyers, and shout from the rooftops!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Grass Valley United Methodist Church is hosting a Concert featuring a Choir from the San Ramon area on December 21st, cost is $25.00.

Peace Lutheran Church will be hosting a fundraiser in January benefitting IFM, with the price of admission being 3 cans of soup. Planned for either January 18th or 25th.

It would be great to see Board Members at some of our events, maybe picking one or two throughout the year to attend and/or provide assistance.

Save the Date – The Volunteer and Job Fair will be on April 16th from 2 – 5 PM at Sierra College.

Our next Board Meeting is on January 27, 2026 at 9:00 AM. This is our Annual Board Meeting, with a focus on 2025 Year End Review and discussion of the 2026 Budget. Congregation leaders are welcome to attend.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10:48 AM.