

**EMERSON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
LONG-RANGE PLANNING TASK FORCE CHARTER**

**Proposed January 11, 2023**

**Approved January 17, 2023**

**Revised February 16, 2023**

**Whereas**, the Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church (EUUC) Endowment balance has declined from \$2.01 million in 2013 to \$772 thousand in 2022 (see enclosed graph).

**Whereas**, EUUC annual revenue has declined from \$788 thousand in 2013 to \$611 thousand in 2022 (see enclosed graph).

**Whereas**, EUUC membership has declined from a peak of 432 in 2013 to 235 in 2022 (see enclosed graph).

**Whereas**, EUUC Youth Religious Education enrollment has declined from 135 in 2013 to 32 in 2022 (see enclosed graph).

**Whereas**, the population of Houston (the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in the United States) is large and is much more liberal and diverse than the balance of Texas. This presents an opportunity to attract new members looking for a liberal church to call home.

**Whereas**, younger people and families in Houston searching for a liberal church may be more aligned with Unitarian Universalist theology than past generations.

**Whereas**, EUUC membership is generally aging, older higher income members are retiring or passing away, and new younger members generally have lower disposable incomes.

**Whereas**, facility, grounds, and building operating expenses have averaged \$153 thousand each year for the last eight (excluding mortgage payoff years) (see enclosed graph).

**Whereas**, staff salary, benefits, and professional support expenses have averaged \$457 thousand each year for the last ten years (see enclosed graph).

**Therefore, be it resolved**, the Emerson Board of Trustees (BOT), is hereby creating a Long-Range Planning Task Force (LRPTF) with its mission and authorities spelled out below.

**Mission**

Collaboratively develop a draft and final plan, each with three scenarios, to reduce annual expenses, increase annual revenues, or a combination of both or either, to provide for the long-term financial and spiritual sustainability of the congregation.

**Considerations:**

LRPTF should consider the following in preparing the draft and final plan:

1. What are the challenges, hopes, values, attitudes, and spiritual needs of younger people and families looking for a liberal religious home in the Houston region?
2. What does (or should) EUUC offer younger people and families to attract them, bring them into covenant with us, and transfer leadership to them?
3. How does (or should) EUUC communicate with and reach younger people and families to offer this covenant?

**Plan Document:**

LRPTF shall prepare a draft and final plan that includes the following elements:

1. A narrative response to each of the consideration questions outlined in this charter.
2. Three scenarios that address pessimistic, realistic, and optimistic estimates of membership count, membership demographics (ages), Endowment balance, annual revenue, and annual expense for each of the next five years. The realistic scenario must show balanced expenses and revenues, an Endowment balance sufficient to cover three years of operating expenses, per member expenses below 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of UUA churches in North America, and per member pledge revenue that does not deviate from historic averages.
3. A list of all assumptions made to create the three scenarios and create the plan.
4. A list of anticipated major expense items and revenue items.
5. A schedule of activities required to implement the plan.
6. A narrative description of the plan.
7. A narrative discussion of risks associated with the plan.

**Planning Process Requirements:**

While preparing the draft and final plan and the scenarios noted above, the LRPTF shall:

1. Solicit and consider sufficient input from the congregation, the BOT, and the new minister;
2. Maintain consistent communication with the congregation, the BOT, and the new minister;
3. Fully consider the last ten years of membership size, membership demographics (ages), youth program size, and other similar data;

4. Fully consider the last ten years of expenses and revenues;
5. Fully consider existing debt, investments, interest earnings, capital assets, and equity positions; and,
6. Document all assumptions.

**Plan Development Schedule:**

Present draft plan to BOT no later than Thursday, January 4, 2024. Present final plan to BOT no later than June 28, 2024. Draft plan and final plan must be developed using the collaboration and input provisions defined in Planning Process Requirements in this document.

**Plan Implementation:**

Implementation of the plan will be at the discretion of the BOT. Any actions requiring a vote of the congregation will be taken only after congregational approval.

**Membership Qualifications:**

1. Committee shall be no more than six people.
2. All committee members must be members of the church.
3. Two committee members must be members of the church for less than seven years.
4. Two committee members must be members of the church for between seven and twelve years.
5. Two committee members must be members of the church for more than twelve years.

**Membership:** Committee is a creation of the Board of Trustees. Committee members shall be appointed by the BOT.

**Officers:** The first committee meeting shall be chaired by the President of the Board of Trustees. During the first meeting, the committee shall vote to elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The President of the Board of Trustees shall not have a vote in this process. The Chair shall create meeting agenda, preside over meetings, and provide reports to the Board of Trustees. The Vice Chair shall create meeting agenda, preside over meetings, and report to the Board of Trustees in the absence of the Chair. The Secretary shall prepare meeting minutes.

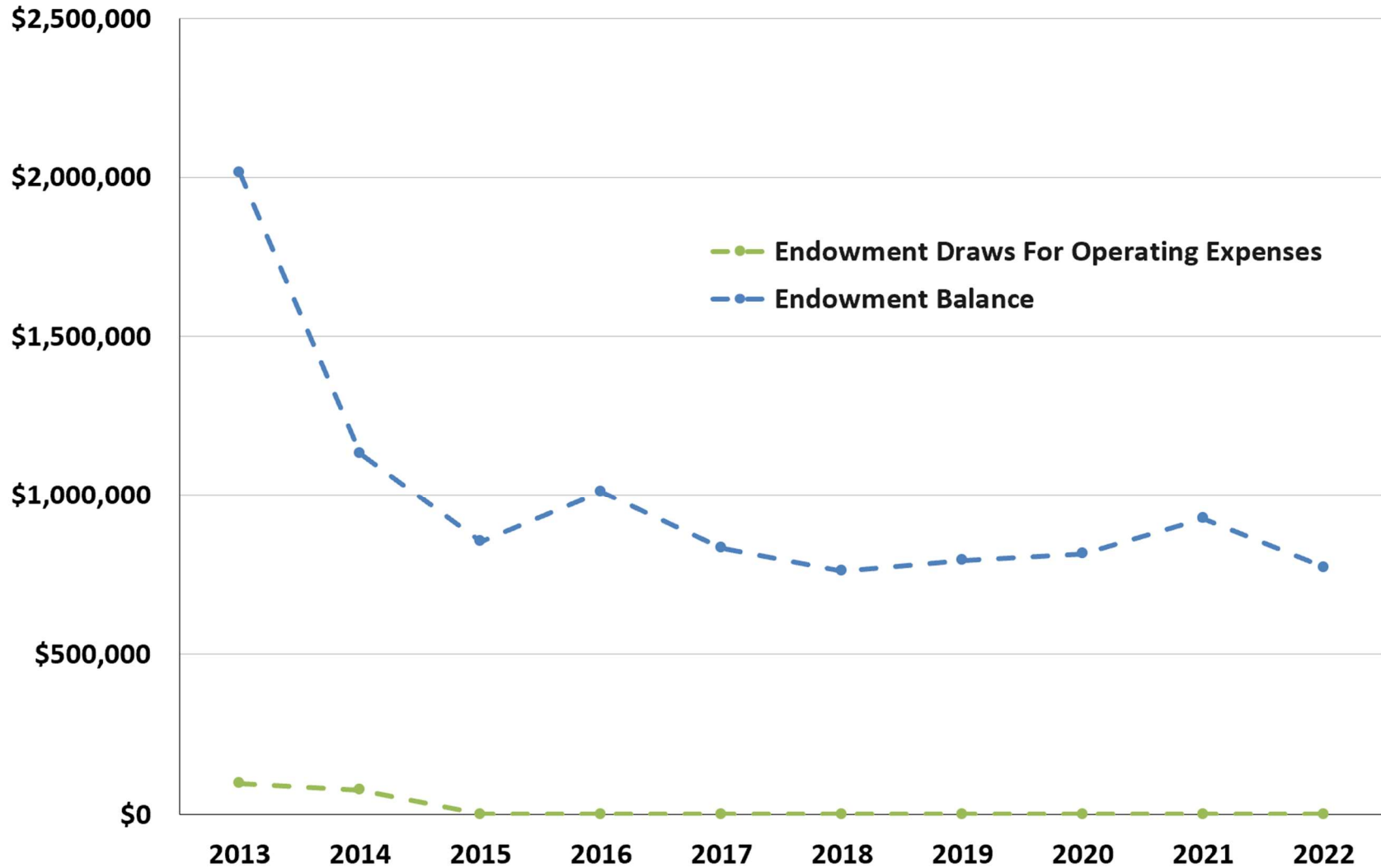
**Reporting:** The committee shall report to the Board of Trustees at each meeting of the Board of Trustees. The report shall include, at a minimum, a summary of research conducted and information obtained, a summary of congregational input received, an overview of the draft plan, an overview of interactions between the committee and the congregation, a summary of planning assumptions made, and the status of the planning process.

**Sunset:** The Task Force will disband after the delivery of the final plan to the BOT, with the possibility of transforming into a permanent committee to help execute the plan.

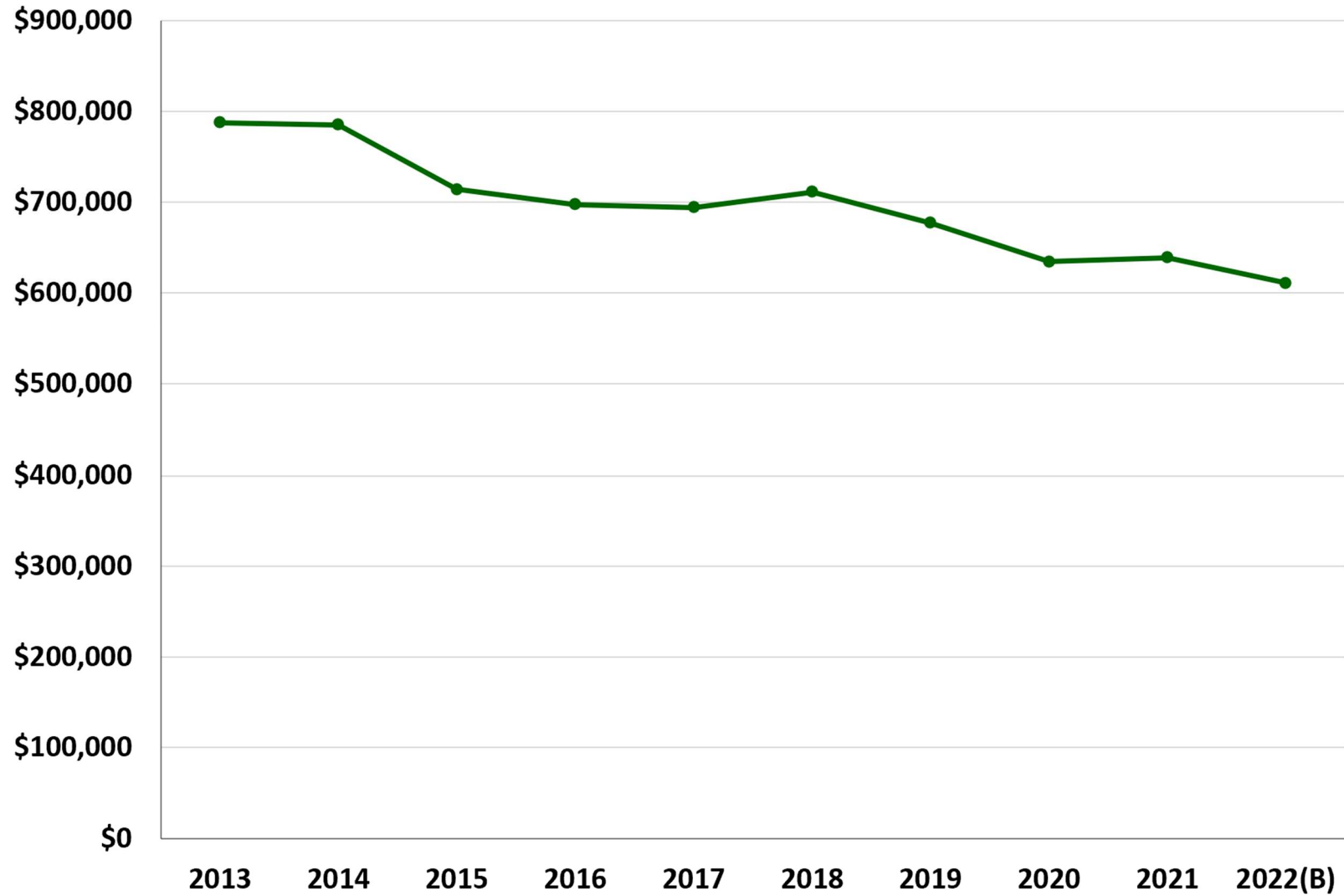
**Resolving Document Conflicts:** The Constitution has precedence over the By-Laws, and the By-Laws have precedence over this document.

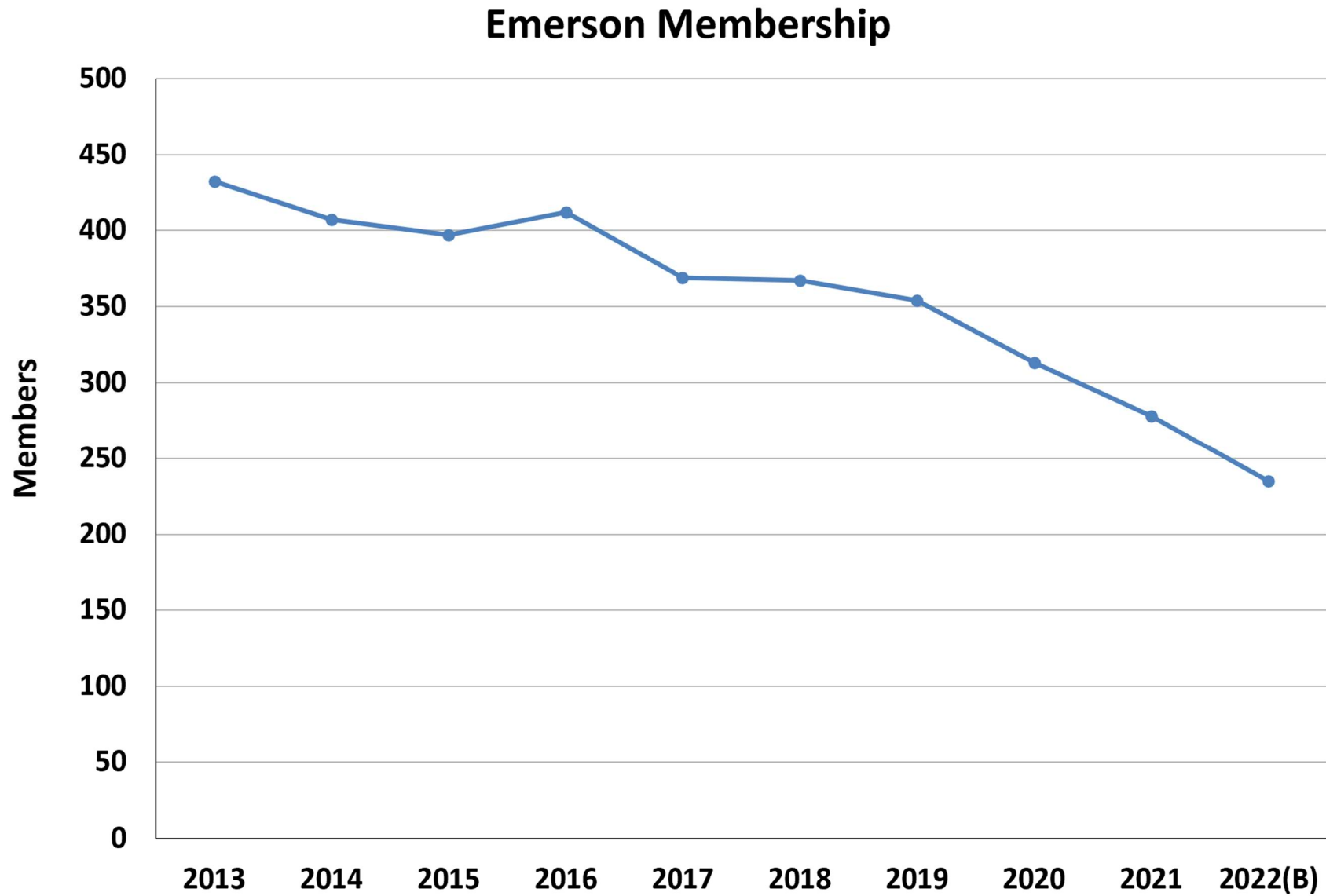
Approved by the Board of Trustees on January 17, 2023. Revised on February 16, 2023.

## Emerson Endowment Balance and Use for Operational Expenses

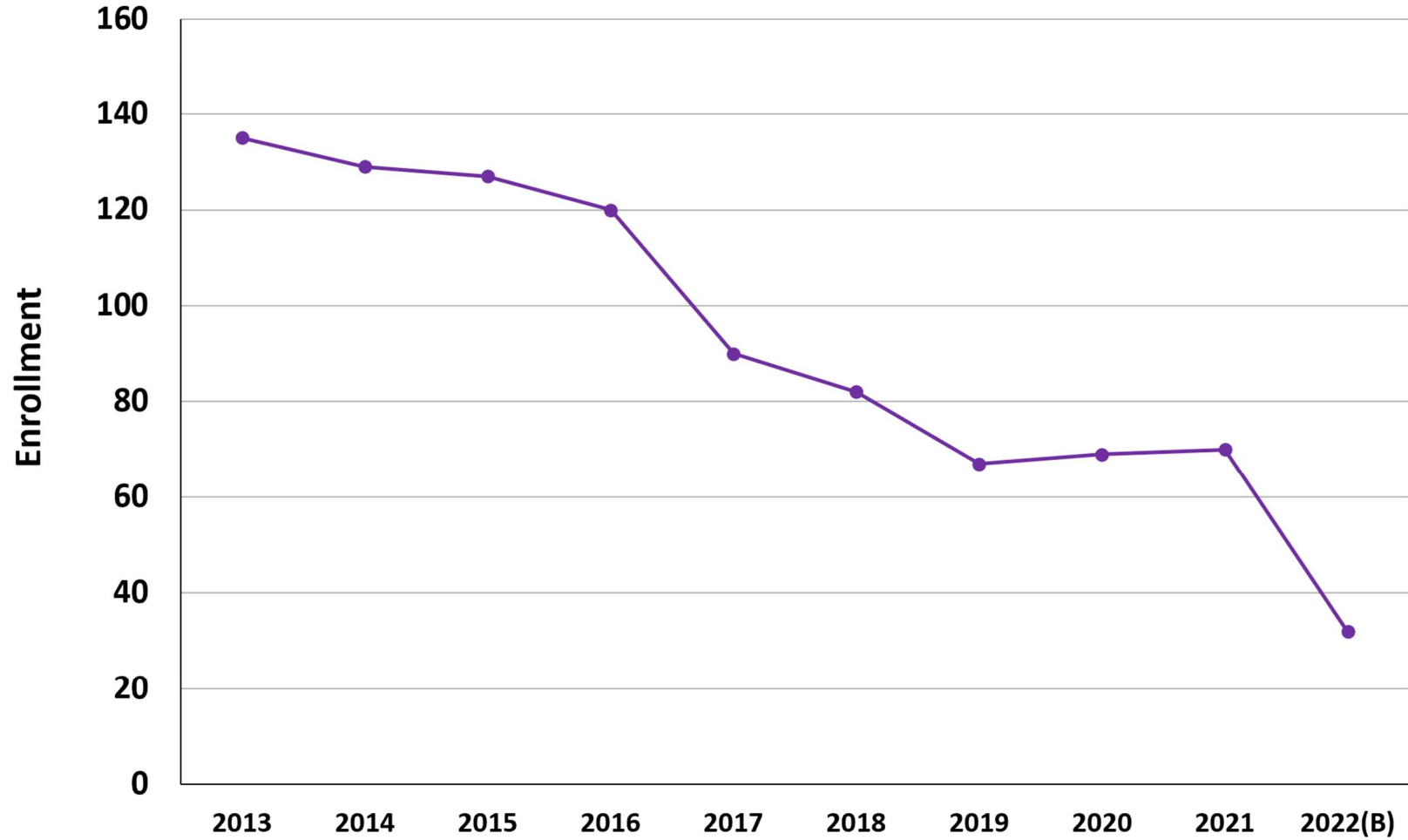


## Emerson Annual Revenue

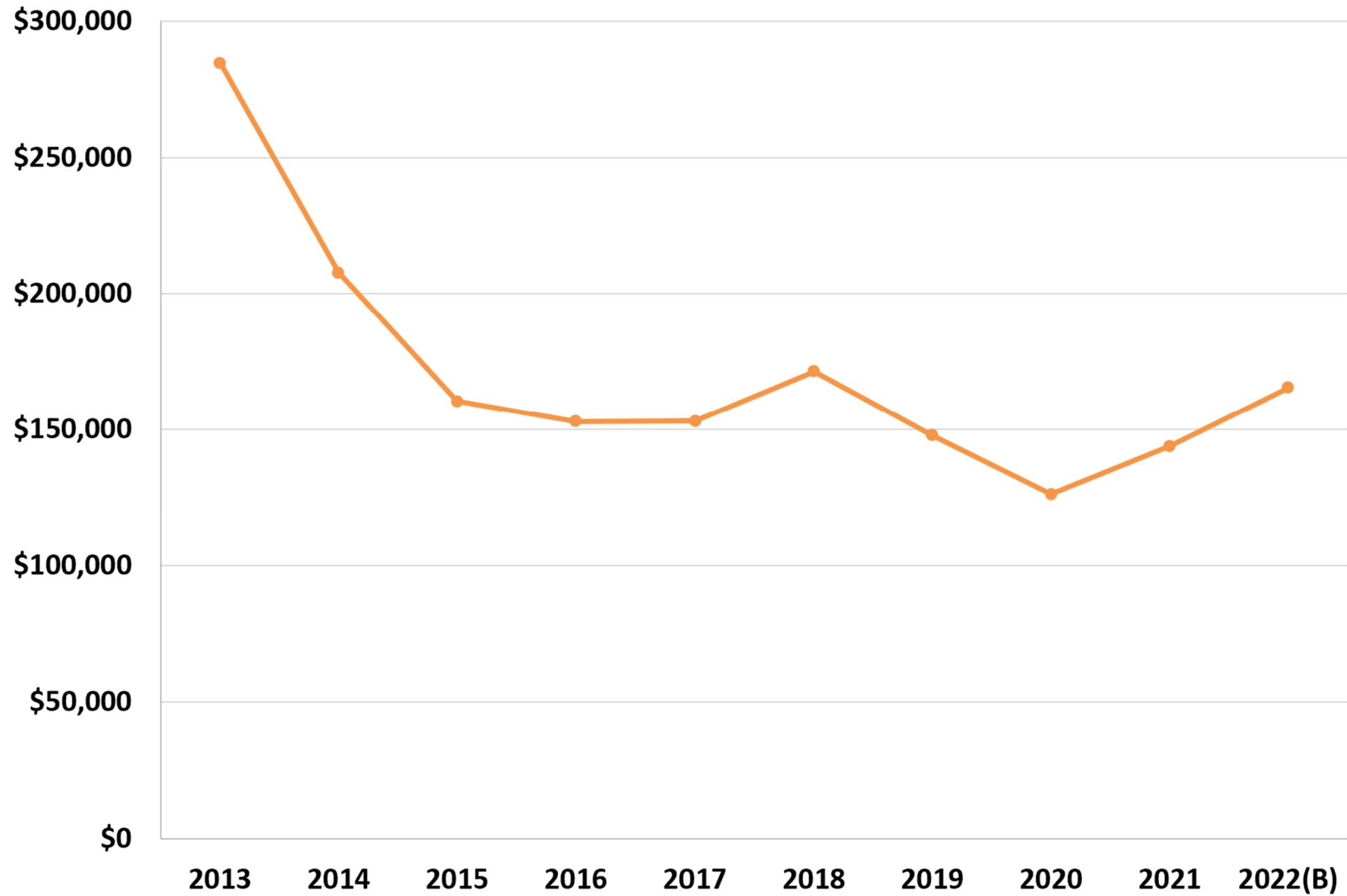




## Emerson Religious Education Youth Enrollment



## Emerson Facility Expenses



## **Emerson Salary, Benefits, and Professional Expenses**

