

Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
Congregational Budget Meeting
April 11, 2021: 11:15 – 1:37pm
FINAL MINUTES

From our Safe Congregation Covenant - We covenant to affirm and promote: Honesty and authenticity in our relationships; Words that are supportive and caring not belittling or demeaning; A welcoming and non-judgmental attitude; Respect for each person's boundaries of mind, body, and spirit; Listening to one another.

Heather provided technical instructions on how to get tech support via phone during the meeting.

Rev. John Crestwell presided over the Chalice Lighting and Opening Words prior to the meeting coming to order. She then recognized the members of our Right Relations Team, Scott Eden, Candy Clark, Gina Williams and shared the email and phone number to reach them during the meeting. She recognized the good work they are doing to help us be the Beloved Community we strive to be. All participants in today's meeting were encouraged to share any thoughts, concerns, or aspirations with the Right Relations Team.

Jane Carrigan, Vice President of the Board, called the meeting to order. She announced that a quorum is present, i.e., 20% of UUCA the members; 125 have signed in and more doing so now.

Heather Millar, President of the Board of Trustees, provided a welcome and expressed thanks to all of the church's volunteers. She introduced the members of the Board of Trustees: Jane Carrigan, Vice President; Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, Finance Officer; Stan Haavik, Trustee; Carrie Kotcho, Secretary; Linda Mundy, Nominating Committee Chair; Jenn Pollitt Hill Trustee; and Peter Morse, Trustee.

Jane Andrews moved to adopt the agenda and meeting standing rules as published. Thornell Jones seconded the motion. A member (no name given) moved to pass by unanimous consent and that motion was seconded by another member (no name given). By raising their voting cards, members adopted the agenda and listed standing rules as published.

Jeanne Jehl, Craig Beyler Chairs of the Building Expansion Exploratory Committee (BEEC2) provided an update. Jeanne reported that very soon, we will have the permits to add ADA ramp in the sanctuary and thanked Margaret Martin for leading this portion of the effort, starting tomorrow there are 5 companies will begin walk throughs, most of the

vendors considered for this work are black owned business, they believe they will have county permits in hand this week.

Rev. John Crestwell expressed appreciation for the work of BEEC2 to honor our 8th principle and walked through the financing options and approach selected by the Executives is which to expedite a loan through Harbor Bank, a Black owned bank in Baltimore. UUCA will open an account with them next week. He reports that the bank's executives live here in Anne Arundel Country.

Stan Keeve and Graham Smith provided an update on the work of the Becoming Beloved Community (BBC) team. Emphasized that the 8th principle requires action to dismantle racism and other oppressions. The team challenges themselves and the Congregation to do the hard work of taking concrete actions to enact the 8th principle at UUCA. They encourage members to reach out to members of the BBC to join and emphasized the importance of going to all 8 sessions of the workshops They do not need to be taken in a specific order. Jan Bird joined to give her testimonial about her support and engagement with BBC and encouraged all members to participate in the 8th principle workshops. The BBC took a survey asking how many workshops members had attended so far.

Next, Ken Apfel moderated a presentation from Pat Fleehty about his recommended amendment to our current Bylaws. Peter proposes a change to Section E - of Bylaw V – Meetings: "Any decision or transaction, duly approved by a majority vote, can only be overturned or significantly modified by a vote at a subsequent Congregational Meeting."

Pat explained the history behind the UUCA's Sanctuary vote in 2017 and his perspective on the decision by the Ministers to not physically house an individual or family as part of the approved Sanctuary program. Pat expressed he felt this was a betrayal of trust.

Eric Machinist, also shared his perspective on the Sanctuary vote and that he does not agree with the Board and Ministers rejection of the request to amend the by-laws.

Heather expressed the Board's perspective, that the Sanctuary resolution was not reversed, only that the physical sheltering portion that was not enacted. She acknowledges the Board and Ministers did not communicate it well or clearly and apologized for this lack of communication. She expressed the Board's position that it does not agree that a by-laws change is necessary to address the issue. The action taken in 2018 did not violate the approved resolution. The physical sheltering portion was written to be enacted "at the Ministers discretion."

Evelyn Spurgin, former member of the by-laws committee, shared her position on the issue as one who updated the by-laws. She opposes the proposed amendment. First because the by-laws were updated after this issue and second, this amendment would not have changed the outcome of the Sanctuary program because the Ministers followed the direction of the words of the resolution. She notes that this amendment would put the

church back into a micro-management mode when we have made such strides into fully implementing our policy-governance form of governance and decision-making. She acknowledges that the trust must be repaired and shared the supports the member feedback solution that the Board proposed as a remedy.

Ken Apfel then opened the issue to the floor as per the agenda. Multiple members commented via chat and voice. Members expressed a variety of positions both for and against the amendment. All agreed that the hurt and broken trust must be repaired, but not all agreed that a by-laws amendment is needed to accomplish this. SAE was noted in the chat – that some people were speaking multiple times and others had not been called on. Action was stopped to address, and Ken acknowledge and said he would keep the balance going forward.

Ken, Moderator for this Congregational discussion, then called the vote on the **motion** by Pat Fleearty to modify the UUCA by-laws “Section E - of Bylaw V - Any decision or transaction, duly approved by a majority vote, can only be overturned or significantly modified by a vote at a subsequent Congregational Meeting.”

Members voted yes or no or abstain via online poll. 67% must vote yes in order to pass the amendment. The motion did not pass. 54 yes 58 no votes and 10 abstentions.

Reports

Finance: Kari Alperovitz-Bichell

Kari our finances are doing well. The Payroll Protection Plan loan was a help. She reminded the Congregation that we voted a budget to build the new staff we have and to pay fairly. That budget requires us to add about \$6/week per pledge unit or \$320 a year increase to meet the budget we approved. The pledges look good, but we need to keep the summer months strong. Please sign up for monthly giving/automated giving. Kari then announced that Liz Yoder is our new investment officer for the church. Liz Yoder addressed the meeting. She stated that she is investigating sustainable/socially responsible investing on UUCA’s behalf. She hopes to guide our investments to be profitable and align closely with our values.

Heather Millar announced that we will need to extend the meeting time in order to finish the agenda.

Ministry Team:

Rev. Zinke and Rev. Crestwell presented their “state of our union” remarks.

Pride in our care for each other to keep safe during the pandemic by showing up to our physically distant workshop, programs, and events. The sense of loss is real, and the disconnection is real for many members. Also, many have found new commitment and higher levels of participation. She asks what it is we want to come of this challenge we are living through.

Rev. Crestwell gave highlights of the Minister's end of year 12-page report which will be shared with all members.

Rev. Zinke noted that we have doubled the number of Stewardship Captains this year and this will allow our stewardship to be more about relationship building than it has in the past. She sees this as a positive sign.

Rev. Crestwell reported that the staff has created a "reopening committee" that will be looking at all aspects of physical, process, and medical aspects of reopening safely. He feels hopeful that UUCA's building will open in the fall, but that the Ministers/Executives and the Reopening Committee are looking for activities that might reopen over the summer.

Next, Scott Eden, Chair of the Master Grounds Team gave an update in response to Congregational conversations about the use of our property and its state. They are first having a survey done to clarify our bounds. Our rain garden needs more attention than our volunteers can manage, so they are looking for professional help. The Memorial Garden has some runoff issues and they will work on that. The lighting and electric outlets outdoors and the back deck will also receive attention. They are exploring uses of the place between Lawrence Ave and Church and the Lawrence Ave property. Lastly, they are researching options for the Fahs House lot once it is torn down.

Linda Mundy, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the slate for Board member candidates.

The Officers and Board of Trustees At-Large members Up for Election for terms of 2 years are the following:

- President – Jane Carrigan
- Vice President – Jenn Pollitt Hill
- At-Large Board Members.
 - Peter Morse and Stan Kieve for full 2 years
 - Jan Bird for 1 year to complete Jenn Pollitt Hill's term

Note: Carrie Kotcho (Secretary) and Kari Alperovitz-Bichell (Finance Officer) are in the middle of their terms.

For the Nominating Committee: Up for terms of 2 years are the following:

- Sally Wood
- Mike Wanhatalo
- Graham Smith
- Peggie O'Dea
- Karen Murphy-Keddell

Note: Linda Mundy, Jodi Delaney-Yates, Shauntee Daniels, and Dave Burman are in the middle of their terms.

Heather Millar without objection that the slate be elected (NOT SURE HOW TO WORD THIS HELP HEATHER) No objections were offered. The slate was voted in as presented.

Linda then led the Shining Lights awards. Each will receive a lapel pin in recognition of all awardees' hard work this year and for many years. Members recognized are:

Paul Jorgenson was recognized for his BEEC and BEEC2 committee work and perseverance in the current building improvements.

Laura Schrank was recognized for taking the initiative to start and grow the Wendi Winters Memorial Blood drives. This work has continued even during the pandemic and collected over 1200 units of blood. She is also a driving force beyond Camp Beagle and our youth groups. She is an active member of ACT.

Melanie Keller was recognized as a member of the choir, UULM, usher, and building the little free food pantry. She has been instrumental in helping the church transition to Zoom during the pandemic. She provides vital tech support to make our online services successful.

Lex Robertson was recognized for her work on anti-racism work and SURJ. She has been a nominating committee chair and has worked on the OWL program. Her long history of service is a model of UU commitment.

Heather Millar was recognized for serving as Board President through times of Ministerial transition and has been a driving force in our 8th Principle work. Heather is patient with everyone and always assumes good intentions. She started the UU Partner Church group and was a member of the UU Amazing Grays softball team.

The Ministerial Search Committee (Jan Bird, Shauntee Daniels, Thronell Jones, Karen Murphy- Keddell, Gwen Schnidler, Mike Wanhatoalo, and Craig Beyler) was recognized for their yearlong intensive work to bring us an outstanding Minister of Equal Standing, Rev. Zinke!

Scott Eden reported on the Right Relations committee. The first was the start time of the meeting which was advertised at various times. Good resolution to make it the later time so all could participate. The second was to make sure that all had a chance to ask questions during the amendment discussion.

Jane Carrigan addressed the Congregation to express her thanks to her Mentor Heather Millar and the Congregation for their confidence in her to lead the Board. Our exciting task ahead is to decide who we want to be as a Beloved Community. A fresh start, new things to explore, new methods to use. How we want to live our 8th Principle is an exciting task ahead.

Rev. Zinke, Minister offered closing Words extinguished the Chalice.

The meeting was adjourned.

STANDING RULES We shall follow Robert's Rules, with these adjustments:

- The amount of time scheduled is adhered to unless there is a motion to extend.
- Members of the Board will bring microphones to each person who wishes to speak.
- Brevity is encouraged, with a limit of 1 minute to speak with an additional 30 seconds for a follow-up question or comment. No one speaks twice unless all who wish to speak have done so and there is still time available.
- Please trust the presiding officers to keep to the agenda and bring discussion to a close. "Calling the question" immediately stops debate, and you may not see someone behind you that has not yet been heard.
- There is a Right Relations Team at the back of the room. If you have issues, please text them at: _____, email them at: _____ (its only one hardcopy) or go to them and talk with them in person. At the end of our meeting, they will give a brief report about issues that were raised and planned follow up.
- According to UUCA Bylaws, amendments must be published 30 days before the Congregational Meeting when the vote to adopt will be taken. The proposed amendments were published on November 6, 2019. They are in order, but other amendments are not in order for this meeting.
- If a YES vote is an obvious majority, it will be so declared without counting hands. Negative votes and abstentions will be counted.

UUCA Vision Statement

At UUCA we spent time to develop a Vision Statement that we approved during our 2017 December Congregational Meeting.

At UUCA we value and aspire to:

- Courageously seek authentic relationships across differences
- Move ourselves, our church, and our Earth toward justice, wholeness, connection, and love.
- Engage in a lifelong journey of learning and spiritual growth.
- Practice radical hospitality, acceptance, and inclusivity
- Provide a haven for all beliefs and identities that align with UU Principles

UUCA Ends Statements

We have a Global Ends Statement followed by Three Ends Statements. They are:

Global Ends Statement - The UUCA exists to create the Beloved Community by inspiring and empowering all souls to live bold and compassionate lives.

1. Faith Development - UUCA creates meaningful opportunities for deepening spirituality for all persons within a safe and challenging environment.

2. Social and Environmental Justice - UUCA's theological and spiritual culture calls us to put our principles into action by creating and supporting systems that address environmental and social injustices.

3. Larger UU Movement - UUCA creates meaningful opportunities that encourage participation and leadership in the larger UU community to promote the growth of Unitarian Universalism.

UUA 7 Principles plus 1

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

In April 2018 we voted to support the 8th Principle to accountable dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Attachments:

Agenda that includes the Standing Rules Right Relations Team Activity Form

Proposed Bylaws amendments 11/6/19

Power Point Presentation for this Congregational Meeting Submitted by Carrie Kotcho, Secretary