

## **FUSIT Annual Meeting Minutes, June 17, 2020**

Reverend Margaret Weis called the regular annual meeting of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca (FUSIT) to order at 5:09 p.m. First ever Zoom-based virtual annual meeting!

Note-Taker: Matt Hare, Parliamentarian: Elton Hall  
Quorum: 57 Members Present

Annual Report; FUSIT Annual Meeting Minutes, 2019; nominee bio paragraphs

Opening words of welcome and chalice lighting by the Rev. Weis

### **Year in Review Presentation by President Andy Turner**

- Launched Dreamcatchers strategic planning process
  - thanks to Angela Zhang as Board liaison
- Supported successful DRE search led by Rev. Weis
  - thanks to Board members Matt Hare and Kim Wilkinson for search team participation
- The Board of Trustees focused on fiscal health in terms of volunteer fundraisers
- Thanks to our outgoing Board members - Angela Zhang and Wendy Salomon

### **Year in Review Comments by Rev. Weis**

- Inspiring how the community has come together and lived into their covenant during this odd and trying year
- Up until March 1 pandemic closure we had 1 multigenerational service per month and were starting to consider 2 services per Sunday
- Some staff departures and replacements
  - Thanks to Beth Pallace for filling-in as Outreach and Engagement Coordinator until Viviani was hired.
  - Thanks to Sandy who is retiring this month after a long career with FUSIT
  - Susanne Quagliata finished her 2<sup>nd</sup> year as interim DRE - thanks for her efforts
- DRE search - Rev. Margaret with Lynn Garman, Leah O'Conner, Kim Wilkinson and Matt Hare. Over a dozen applicants from across continents, 3 rounds of interviews, we hired an excellent candidate - Emily Richards
- COVID has eliminated our choir for now and Jennifer Birnbaum was furloughed until January.
- Our childcare workers have been furloughed.
- Hiring Sandy Soule's replacement is on hold.
- Safety team has been actively working on COVID security procedures. The Way Forward task force has volunteers from each ministry team and is focused on how and when to reopen safely and inclusively.

- This year we welcomed 18 new members
- Offered middle school and high school levels of OWL lifespan sexuality education programs
- Began investigating and discussing becoming an international partner church
- 4 delegates are attending UUA in addition to Rev. Weis; Jessica English, Stephanie Ortolano, Sara Catterall and Barbara Shew
- Thanks to ministry teams and members for your efforts in all that we do.
- Wrapping up 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Rev. Weis' ministry at FUSIT - thanks for your support

### **Zoom logistics for voting - Susan Weis**

- Please change your Zoom ID to your full name, first name last name
- "raise hand" if you have a question (chat box will work too)
- Use "yes" or "no" button for voting when told to vote. If two people are sharing a computer, one of them votes during the first round of voting, there will then be a second round of voting to include votes by the 2<sup>nd</sup> persons.
- Vote tally will be recorded in addition to a screenshot of participant list with votes, in addition to recording the entire Zoom session

### **President Andy Turner - Opening of business meeting**

#### **Motion 1** - Move to approve minutes from May 29, 2019 annual meeting

##### Discussion

- Add to minutes - For the Nominating Committee, Beth Howard, Arthur Woll and Fred Balfour were elected for 2 year terms, Kathy Hopkins & Geoff Dunn were for 1 year terms.

#### **Motion 1b** - Move to approve amendment to minutes, seconded.

##### Discussion on amendment - none.

Vote to accept amendment - 47 + 12 yes / 0+0 no (first pass voting + second pass voting)

**PASSED 59 yes / 0 no**

#### **Motion 1a** - Move to approve minutes from May 29, 2019 annual meeting

##### Second from Kim Wilkinson

Vote to accept minutes - 45 + 11 yes / 0+0 no

**PASSED 56 yes / 0 no**

### **Budget presentation by Jennifer Streid-Mullen**

Budgeting process similar to previous years, but Vision of Ministry was left unchanged this year due to strategic planning process

##### Revenues

- Revenues down slightly
- Projecting slight deficit this year due to accounting error with respect to Rev. Weis' FICA

- In response to COVID lockdown, Payroll Protection Plan loan of \$54,500 was applied for and received. We expect to qualify and do the paperwork to have this loan forgiven.
- Pledges for next year are nearly equal to last year's, very generous
- Rental income is projected to be down next year
- Plate income is slightly down since services went online, so projecting less revenue next year
- Recycle Sale was cancelled, but we got a one time \$20,000 grant from a generous member to make up the difference.
- Auction is projected at \$12,000 revenue, less than usual because it may need to be online
- We need to develop additional fundraising events/plans
- Endowment will contribute at a level equal to last year.

#### Expenses

- Full time DRE at UUA salary range - this may become financially challenging after next year.
- 1.8% cost of living increase for all staff
- Reduced due to Choir Director furlough until January 2021
- Reduced due to delay replacing Sexton - contract cleaning service and snow removal at a savings
- Reduced due to childcare worker furlough until January 2021
- No new technology in the budget - will probably use available capital funds

#### **Motion 2** - Move to accept 2020-21 budget as proposed

2<sup>nd</sup> by Elton Hall

#### Discussion

- Expressions of gratitude for Jennifer Streid-Mullen and the budget team
- concern about violations of church/state separation by accepting PPP loan.
- Why wasn't this PPP loan opportunity brought to the congregation?
  - There was very little time before the loan application deadline. All religions had equal access to PPP, and the goal of the program was to keep people employed. Church staff are eligible for unemployment (as always) and the PPP loan is a similar program. Board welcomes continued discussion and consideration of these considerations.
- Request for reason behind cost of living increase for staff given that so many organizations are laying off and freezing salaries.
- Capitalization of technology - what is in this fund? 25K in endowment for capital needs, maybe ~10K in operating budget that also could be used. There is still a need for more expensive capital projects, may need capital campaign in near future.
- From perspective on music team, aren't there ways that Jennifer Birnbaum could be kept on to help solve the challenges of re-opening?
  - Jennifer Birnbaum's position is very specifically choir director, one of two staff supporting music at FUSIT (with music director). It required much discernment and discussion to make this furlough decision.

**Move to call the question, plus 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

Vote to cease discussion: 42 + 11 yes / 1+0 no

**PASSED 53 yes / 1 no**

**Vote to accept the budget: 44+10 yes / 2+0 no**

**PASSED, 54 yes / 2 no**

**Slate of Candidates for the Board of Trustees - Arthur Woll**

- The two board members stepping down, Wendy Salomon and Angela Zhang, from 8-member Board given that Oliver Habicht stepped down last year.
- These two Board members served two 3 year terms (maximum allowed consecutively). We are grateful for their service and thankful for the strong leadership skills that they brought to the Board.
- Thanks to current Nominations Committee members for their service
- Thanks to the current slate and the willingness of many others to consider this nomination

**Motion 3:** Motion to approve the slate of Simon Catterall, Carsten Hess, Therese O'Connor

2<sup>nd</sup> by Angela Zhang

Discussion

- Clarification that motion is made by Nominating committee

Vote on Motion 3: 48+9 yes / 0+0 no

**PASSED, 57 yes / 0 no**

Call for (any additional) floor nominations. None.

**Motion 4** - Move to approve Simon Catterall, Carsten Hess, Therese O'Connor for 3 year Board terms, 2020 - 2023

2<sup>nd</sup> by Margaret Nichols

Discussion - None

Vote on Motion 4: 43+9 yes / 0+0 no

**PASSED, 52 yes / 0 no**

Closing words by Rev. Weis, extinguishing chalice.

Welcome to our new board members!

Join us at Summer services, 9:30 am Sundays

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm