



The First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist 167th Annual Meeting Minutes June 11, 2023

11:31am - Welcoming and call to order – Laurie Graham, President

- The meeting was called to order at 11:31 am by Laurie Graham, Parish Board President (2022-2024).

11:19 Opening Prayer – Rev. Chris Holton Jablonski

11:20 Quorum Call – Laurie

- 82 Present -minimum of 68 needed for quorum –quorum affirmed by Martha Courant

Opening Remarks – Laurie

- Thanks to many volunteers , asked to please stand
- Recalling key events of '22-'23 Church Year

11:47 Approval of Minutes of June 2022 Annual Meeting

- Moved by Charles Hamann
- Seconded by Eleanor Sugarman
- Approved by unanimous acclamation by Congregation

11:50 Budget Review – Brain Caputo

- Slower growth
- Mold remediation costs continuing
- Successful Auction
- Budgeted Income: \$876,735
- Projected Income: \$911,607
- Budgeted Expense: \$881,870
- Forecast Expense: \$920,377
- Budgeted Deficit: \$5,000
- Forecast Deficit: \$8,770
- Offering change: (\$7,700)
- Fundraisers change: +\$12,800
- Other income change: +\$12,459
- Raised staff salaries to UUA Mid-point
- Added Intern Minister
- Added new Children's Choir Festival
- Restored Auction & Children's Musical
- Positives include increased pledge units & dollars; KidsUUnited program
- Negatives include delayed full rent from Henry Frost Children's Program & inflation

- Budget FY 23 of \$882,807 vs. pledges of \$631,620
- Budget FY 24 of \$899,687 vs. pledges of \$647,436
- Pending rental to Hungarian School est. \$5,000-10,000 (actual was \$12,000)
- Children's music assistant for FY 2024 paid from Radford Fund, for FY 2025 will be paid out of Operating Fund
- Health Insurance for eligible staff premium increase of \$4,000
- GA assistance for congregation members eliminated
- Budget contemplates no major changes to programs or staff

12:17 Approval of Budget for 2023-24 Fiscal Year

- Moved by Sarah Oaklander
- Seconded by Laura Caputo
- Unanimous consent by voice vote of Congregation

12:22 Report of the Nominating Committee – Nicole Griffin

- Continuing Officers to be elected:
 - President: Laurie Graham (2022-2024)
 - Vice President: David Deese (2022-2024)
 - Treasurer: Martha Read (2020-TBD)
 - Clerk: James Hencke (2021-2024)
- New At-Large Trustees to be elected:
 - Susan Galli (2023-2026)
 - Gabrielle Garschina-Bobrow (2023-2026)
 - Eleanor Hobbs (2023-2026)
- Continuing At-Large Trustees to be elected:
 - Priscilla Cobb (2021-2024)
 - Roger Gallagher (2021-2024)
 - Martha Courant (2022-2025)
 - Ariane Frank (2022-2025)
- Past President:
 - Samuel James (2022-2024)

12:25 Motion to Approve Slate for Parish Board

- Motion by John Howe
- Seconded by Laura Caputo
- Approved by unanimous voice vote of Congregation

Finance Committee

- New Members to be elected:
 - Doug Burden, Chair (2023-2026)
 - Joel Mooney (2023-2026)
- Continuing members, to be elected:
 - Stefan Frank (2019-2024)
 - Jon Bridges (2022-2025)
 - Brian Caputo (2020-2024)
 - Catherine Claypoole (2022-2025)
 - Lauren Corning (2022-2025)

- Ex-officio, voting members:
 - Laurie Graham, Parish Board President
 - Martha Read, Parish Board Treasurer

12:27 Motion to Approve Slate

- Moved by Doug Burden
- Seconded by Eleanor Sugarman
- Approved by unanimous voice vote of Congregation

Committee on Ministry (“COM”)

- New Members to be elected:
 - Eleanor Sugarman (2023-2026)
 - Bayard Klimasmith (2023-2026)
 - Livia Racz (2023-2026)
- Continuing members to be elected:
 - Kathy Crawley, Chair (2021-2024)
 - Jackie James (2022-2025)
 - Leslie Kolterman (2022-2025)
 - June Lattimore (2022-2025)
 - Laura Wooster (2021-2024)
 - Nick Hausman (2021-2024)
 - Rev. Chris Jablonski, ex officio

12:28 Motion to Approve Slate

- Moved by Joel Mooney
- Seconded by Laura Caputo
- Approved by unanimous voice vote of Congregation

Nominating and Recruitment Committee

- New Members to be elected:
 - Jody Renouf (2023-2026)
 - Leslie Talmadge (2023-2026)
- Continuing members to be elected:
 - Martha Gallagher (2022-2025)
 - Marion Westgate, Co-Chair (2022-2025)
 - Catherine Stalberg (2021-2024)
 - Jonathan Wolf, Co-Chair (2021-2024)

12:29 Motion to Approve the Slate

- Moved by Bob McGaw
- Seconded by Laura Caputo
- Approved by unanimous voice vote of Congregation

12:30 Committee on Ministry (“COM”) Review – Kathy Crowley

- Revitalization of listening circles
- “What do I want next year, and...”
- “What does the World need from FCB next year”

- Added conversation with Youth Group
- 82 participants
 - 48 with over 10 years with FCB
 - 15 Youth
 - 11 w/children over 18
 - 13 between 3-10 years with FCB
 - 6 with 0-3 years with FCB
- Themes: staff appreciation, sermons, connecting, communication, leadership
- Key points raised:
 - Want to keep up with UUA recommended COLA's for staff
 - Appreciation of Rev. Chris
 - Desire for hybrid Services (elderly, those with mobility issues)
 - Want intergenerational services
 - Concerns regarding coffee hour
 - Website navigation issues
 - Communication!
 - Want weekly Unitarian
 - Difficulties navigating Fellowship One
 - Moral leadership in Belmont and beyond
- Specific Proposals:
 - Bingo Night
 - Circle Dinners
 - BBQ's
 - A coffee hour between services?
 - How to attract younger members

12:40 History Committee – Covenant Task Force – John Howe

- 2022 Asked by Sam James to research
 - Why we come together, and
 - Vow we make to each other
- Historical: Cambridge Platform – Ministers at Harvard
- Ames Covenant dates back to 1880. Adopted for FCB 1900.
- In 1980, “downgraded” to traditional covenant
- FY23 – conducted 3 sessions; consensus, “move to new covenant”
- Apr '23 inserted “covenant placeholder” in FCB Bylaws
- Asking PB to commission a Task Force
- Planning meetings fall '23 & spring '24
- Consider ranked choice voting on alternative covenants
- How was the Ames Covenant used?
 - Recommended by UA 1880
 - Adopted by 40% of congregations by 1890
 - Several others popular
 - Actively used by FCB into the 1920's in various ways

12:55 Stewardship Committee Update – Bruce Logan & Gina Carloni

- Key to budgeting
- Celebrating the congregation, & resilience

- Coming back together post-Covid
- Prepared pledge packets mailed to households; hosted 2 events to thank donors from prior years
- Thanks for the committee & participants
- Answer to question about top 20%: 35% of pledge total by top 20; ranging from \$7,600 – 30,000.

1:03 Parish Board & Committee Appreciations – Laurie

Recognizing with appreciation those whose terms are ending:

- Stewardship
 - Susan Galli
 - Catherine Canfield
 - Susan Kobayashi
- Finance
 - Mike Widmer
- Committee on Ministry
 - Mary Harrison
 - David Lind
 - Margaret Dunn
- Nominating Committee
 - Karsten Kuppenbender
 - Nicole Griffin
- Parish Board
 - Anjali Kumar
 - Pam Eggert
 - Doug Massidda
 - Sam James

1:08 Looking Forward – Laurie

- FCB history project
- Cuba Taskforce – Gina Carloni
- Policy & Procedure work stemming from Bylaws Task Force work
- Building on Membership initiatives
- Improve accessibility, reduce impediments to participation: Communication!

1:10 Closing Words – Rev. Chris Jablonski

- Recognizing three PB Presidents who navigated across Covid: Marian Westgate, Sam James & Laurie Graham
- Upcoming is Rev. Chris' 5th year, but feels, post-Covid, like just starting.
- Fabulous resources; so many hungry to help.

1:15 Adjournment – Laurie Graham

- Motion to Close Meeting – Brian Caputo
- Seconding – Jeanne Moody
- Unanimous by voice vote of the Congregation