

FIRST UNITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN BROOKLYN

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

(Draft November 7, 2018)

12:55 p.m. – Call to order; preliminary matters

Moderator Mike Alcott called the meeting to order pursuant to notice.

Dawn Elane Reed offered opening words and a chalice was lit.

Mr. Alcott appointed John Carroll as timekeeper and Liz Davis as parliamentarian.

Mr. Alcott said that no matters were scheduled to be voted upon. He called attention to the agenda (ANNEX A), the Rules for Meeting (ANNEX B) and the Rights Relations Covenant (ANNEX C), copies of which were available.

12:59 p.m. – Co-Presidents' report

Co-Presidents Patrick Gunn and Cara Haft reported briefly on the following matters:

- the first use of the Society's immigrant sanctuary facility during the summer in which the sanctuary policy was amended by the Standing Committee (later ratified by the Board) to permit an immigrant woman and her child to stay at the building for eight days;
- that the Finance Committee has been revived by the Board's appointment of new members and that the Finance Committee is studying matters relating to financial controls and major expense items in the budget;
- that the pledge total in the current year budget has been exceeded thanks to new members;
- that Nancy Wolf has successfully raised funds to allow moving plants that stand in the way of the accessibility construction; and
- that the building will be 175 years old in 2019, which may be an occasion for a special event and a possible fund-raising opportunity.

1:08 – Treasurer's report

Treasurer Lake Wise reported on the closing of books on the 2018 fiscal year. He revenue exceeded budget because of rental income, but that expenses also exceeded budget by \$125,000 because of back property tax that had to be paid. The result was a net \$47,000 deficit. Also, \$100,000 was spent on the fire safety and accessibility projects authorized by the Membership, but only \$66,000 was given toward those projects.

He said that fiscal 2019 will also have a deficit because of the new higher level of property tax to be paid.

He said that the endowment enjoyed investment gains but, after all draws on it, the endowment balance ended fiscal 2018 essentially unchanged about \$4 million.

There was a question about the financial outlook beyond fiscal 2019. Mr. Wise said the daycare lease will end in 2021, at which time there may be an opportunity to reduce property taxes if a not-for-profit tenant can be substituted. He also said the Finance Committee has a goal to achieving an operating budget that does not depend on endowment draws.

1:21 p.m. – Report on accessibility project

Facilities Director Chris Johnson said that Landmark Commission and Building Department approvals have been obtained and a contract has been made with the lift company. A general contractor to do related site work is still being sought. Plants are to be moved on Tuesday to make room for the construction.

1:25 p.m. – Congregational survey report

Congregational Life Director Garnet Losak reported on highlights of the survey that was completed during the summer (annexed to the Board minutes of October 11, 2018). It is based on responses from about a quarter of the wider congregation.

1:35 p.m. – Report by General Assembly delegates

Delegates to the June 2018 GA reported on their experiences and some of the UUA business and public policy matters that were debated and acted on.

The delegates said they enjoyed the experience and liked meeting UUs from all over the country. They urged members to consider going, either as delegates or independently, which is allowed.

Lee Pardee commented that it is now possible to be a delegate without actually travelling to the GA site and participate on a limited basis using teleconference facilities.

Dave Garvoille lamented that the Society contributes little money to the UUA and far less than its official “fair share.”

Mr. Alcott adjourned the meeting at 1:52 p.m.