



First Unitarian Church of Rochester
Minutes of the
Annual Congregational Meeting
June 2, 2019

Moderator of the Congregation Barbara de Leeuw called the meeting to order at 11:35 am and found a quorum in attendance.

1. The first item presented for consideration was the request to move approval of previous meetings' minutes to the first position on the agenda, and the change was made without objection.
2. Approval of the minutes of the June 3, 2018 Annual Congregational Meeting
 - 2.1. Treasurer Anne Perry presented a correction of those minutes: the minutes failed to state that the first reading of a change to Section 2 of the Bylaws proposed to allow the Moderator of the Congregation to serve a possible 3 consecutive 2-year terms, rather than being limited to a single term, to bring the term limit for the position of Moderator in line with those for members of the Board of Trustees and President.
 - 2.1.1. Larry Eldridge moved that the corrections be accepted, and the motion was seconded by Vicki Schwart. The motion to approve the corrected minutes was approved by a show of hands.
3. Approval of the minutes of the May 5, 2019 Congregational Meeting to vote on the calling of Shari Halliday-Quan as Senior Minister of the congregation passed on a voice vote.
4. Annual Report to the Congregation Question and Answer session
 - 4.1. President of the Congregation Tim Farnum gave an overview of the various sections of the Annual Report.
 - 4.1.1. A question was asked about the availability of an electronically readable copy of the annual report for accessibility to members with different abilities. A link to a downloadable version in PDF format was sent by email to everyone on the newsletter mailing list the Friday before the meeting.
5. Approval of the proposed Congregational budget for fiscal year 2019-2020
 - 5.1. Interim Senior Minister Rev. Joel Miller presented the proposed budget as approved by the Board of Trustees.
 - 5.1.1. There was a question about what additional startup costs are associated with preparing for our relationship with a senior minister who is a woman of color. The response was that there will be a workshop for the Board of Trustees and Shari about the issues of racism and power – a very important conversation for the lay leadership and Shari to have, with additional funding for discussions of gender and power, and workshops on policy governance and how to use it.
 - 5.1.2. There was a comment from a representative of the Investment Committee that they were not consulted in the development of the budget, and that while they are in support of the budget, their analysis of the available balance in the Endowment Fund is different than that presented in the

budget, and that they believe it is appropriate for the Investment Committee to be involved in computing the balance of the Endowment Fund for the purpose of developing the budget and give advice on what percentage draw will be appropriate as part of the budget plan.

- 5.1.3. A question was asked about why the funding for a Schools Partnership Coordinator is set at 0, which the staffing budget for Social Justice is at \$16,513. The response indicated that the plan is for 2 part-time social-justice positions, one of which will focus primarily on coordinating the School Partnership Program. There was also a question about the Social Justice Fund Activity line references, and that line item was described as a representation of funds that are collected by the church for transfer to outside entities as part of our social justice efforts, for example, plate collections or The Greater Good.
- 5.1.4. There was a question about a reduction in spending on administration after an earlier reference to the need for more support for the work of the administrative staff. The answer indicated that changes in staff and increased productivity arising from new technology being implemented in managing church data have made it possible to change the configuration and workload of our office staff.
- 5.1.5. A question was asked about projected decreases in pledge contributions in future years, even as we have increasing membership. The response touched on the conservative nature of the projections, particularly with attention to the fact that the projected budgets already have a reduction factor applied to account for uncollected pledges because of people moving away or having economic factors that affect their ability to pay their pledges. In a related vein, it was asked why the fund raising allocation is low when there seems to be difficulty maintaining the level of the budget. The answer focused on using a conservative approach to budgeting while remaining open to initiatives by congregants for fund-raising activities. The questioner asked for clarification about the sources of "Other Income." The response explained that included a matching-fund grant for the pledge increases and some special donations in past budgets.
- 5.1.6. There was a question about how accessibility improvements are incorporated into the proposed budget. The resources for improvements in accessibility are represented in various budget categories, including capital expenses like property maintenance and building maintenance, and operational expenses in worship, religious education, and office operations.
- 5.1.7. Following a compliment on completion of the re-roofing process, a question was asked about funding completion of repairs and improvements our architect recommended as urgently needed in a survey of building needs I the near future. The answer specified that these projects will fall under the budget areas related to capital improvement, for example property maintenance and building maintenance funds. It was noted that long-term needs of the building will likely require a capital campaign in the future to fund a variety of needed maintenance and improvement projects to preserve

and protect the building, as well as improving its environmental sustainability. A followup questions asked about specific plans to have bricks replaced where they are deteriorating. There are no specific plans in place at this point to make those repairs.

- 5.1.8. A comment was made to the effect that our purchasing processes could do a better job of ensuring that our expenditures are well-aligned with our values.
- 5.1.9. A question was asked about the inclusion of \$15,000 of income from the Operations Special Fund. The Operations Special Fund comes from previous budget surpluses, and the specific amount included in this budget is intended to defray some of the costs related to search for an Associate Minister. A further question related to a decrease in the allocation for guest musicians, after an earlier statement about increasing the number of guest musicians. The answer referred to a history of not spending all the money allocated for guest musicians, so a reduction just brings the level into line with actual past expenditures.
- 5.2. A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed compensation of the Senior Minister after a discussion of whether to vote solely on the senior minister's salary or also on the Associate Minister's compensation.
 - 5.2.1. The motion passed on a show of hands.
- 5.3. Approval of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 was moved and seconded.
 - 5.3.1. The motion was passed on a show of hands.
- 5.4. An appeal was made that those of us who live comfortable lives make a stretch to increase their pledges to help cover a shortfall in the pledge basis of the budget.
- 6. Bylaw changes
 - 6.1. Changes in the Bylaws were presented for the second reading at a Congregational Meeting and a subsequent vote on whether to approve the changes.
 - 6.1.1. The first change provides for the Board of Trustees to nominate candidates for Clerk, Treasurer, and President, clarifying an ambiguity that seemed to imply that the Clerk was nominated by both the Board and the Leadership Nominating Committee.

Change 7.1 B. to read:
The committee submits to the annual meeting at least one nomination for each elective office to be filled at the meeting except for the offices of president, treasurer and clerk (who are nominated by the board of trustees). Additional nominations for any office may be made from the floor with the consent of the person or persons so nominated.
 - 6.1.2. The second change alters the definition of the term of the Moderator to allow for a person to continue as moderator for up to 3 consecutive terms, rather than being limited to a single term, to bring the post in line with term limits for Board members and the President.

Change 6.6 to read:
 - 6.1.3. **Section 6.6. Moderator.** The moderator is elected by the congregation at the annual meeting in each even-numbered year. The term of office is two church years or until a successor is elected. The moderator may not serve

more than three consecutive terms. Whenever the moderator is unable to preside at all or any part of a congregational meeting, the president serves as moderator pro tem.

- 6.2. The changes were approved on a voice vote.
7. Candidates for the Board of Trustees
 - 7.1. Paul Minor – a 1-year term to fill a vacancy
 - 7.2. Kyle Williams – a 3-year term
 - 7.3. Courtney Miller – a 3-year term
 - 7.4. Paul Suwijn – a 3-year term
 - 7.5. The election of the four candidates for four Board of Trustees positions was approved on a voice vote.
8. Candidates for the Leadership Nominating Committee
 - 8.1. Jo Cone
 - 8.2. David Ryder
 - 8.3. The election of the two candidates for two Leadership Nominating Committee positions was approved on a voice vote
9. Candidates for President, Clerk, and Treasurer
 - 9.1. For President of the Congregation – Tim Farnum
 - 9.1.1. His election was approved on a voice vote.
 - 9.2. For Clerk of the Congregation – Anne Perry
 - 9.2.1. Her election was approved on a voice vote.
 - 9.3. For Treasurer of the Congregation – Robert Lyubomirsky (a one-year term to fill a vacancy).
 - 9.3.1. His election was approved on a voice vote.
10. A comment was made in acknowledgement of the many services to the church of Don Wilder a long-term member of the congregation.
11. The meeting was adjourned without objection at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Ketterl, Clerk

Approved at the June 7, 2020, Annual Congregational Meeting