

# Membership Meeting Minutes

Sunday, May 7, 2017

L Shannon, President, called the meeting to order at 12:40.

Rev. J Morehouse gave a centering reading as the chalice was lit.

MJ Cross, Secretary, established that a quorum was present.

## I. Ordination of Lara Fuchs

K Vogel moved, R Burnham seconded to affirm the Board of Trustees Recommendation for our Congregation to Ordain Lara Fuchs to Professional Ministry in the Unitarian Universalist Association. Passed unanimously without discussion.

## II. Constitution Revisions Proposals

C Onyemelukwe, convener of the Constitution Revision Task Force, introduced the proposed 2017 amendments to the Constitution.

1. L Garvey moved, J Sherman seconded to accept the changes proposed for Article VII – Membership: Change the financial requirement for membership from committing to an annual pledge to making a documented financial contribution.

Questions were raised about household contributions and any restrictions on the fund(s) to which a donation can be made. Per policies, a household contribution counts for all who meet the other requirements for members. The Constitution amendment has no restrictions on funds to which a donation may be made, other than restrictions noted in financial Policies. Passed unanimously.

2. S Polmar moved, R Burnham seconded to accept the change proposed for Article VIII - Board of Trustees: Add language to allow a draw on a Line Of Credit (LOC) for a catastrophic event.

A question was asked about limitations on the amount that could be drawn and why a LOC is needed. The draw is limited to three (3) months of the operating expenses in the budget for the fiscal year. The LOC is a stopgap to bridge the time from a catastrophic occurrence to a final insurance settlement. Passed unanimously.

3. C Harrington moved, D Davidoff seconded to accept the changes proposed for Articles IX, X: Change the name and portfolio of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee to Nominating Committee

A question was asked about how the work on Leadership Development will continue. A committee has been put together by Rev J Morehouse to plan and offer leadership courses and to identify potential future leaders. Passed unanimously.

4. T Hearne moved, K Vogel seconded to accept the corrections proposed for Articles II, VII, X, XIII, XVI:

Article II: Delete confusing and unnecessary language

Article VII: Add needed information on Calls to Meetings, Section 3

Article X: Insert the Amendment on Ministerial Search Committee (Section 5), which was approved in 2016 but left out of the final document

Article XIII: Change phrasing regarding budget to be consistent with wording in article VII, Section 1

Article XVI: Correct phrasing to that approved in 2016, but left out of the final document.

Passed unanimously. No discussion

### **III. 2017-2018 Budget**

C Onyemelukwe, Treasurer, presented the draft of the 2017-18 Annual Budget for discussion.

During discussion it was noted that although we are still drawing down our reserves (planned withdrawals are higher than planned contributions), the Income/Expense gap is reduced next year. Also there has been a higher contribution to reserves than planned this year. In answer to a question, she clarified that Operating Fund reserves are labeled for the areas to which they are targeted.

The Lift has been completed and will be operational this year.

B Lasher, Endowment Committee Chair, answered a question on the Endowment. The funds are ahead \$100,000 from March 2016 to March 2017. The total Endowment currently stands at \$1.9M.

Rev. J Morehouse answered a question on planned B&G projects: repave more parts of parking lot, redo surfaces of church decks and concrete steps, possibly replace outdoor light stands.

### **IV. Covenant of Right Relations**

L Garvey and his task force presented a Draft of the Covenant of Right Relations for our Congregation.

They presented a history of the development – started 2 years ago under Rev R Finkelstein; have had some discussions with Congregants. Questionnaire sent to chairs of standing committees, and they held a focus group with chairs.

The draft is close to final; comments are still welcome before voting for adoption at the Jun 11 Annual Meeting.

Questions centered on language clarification, request for more details on the process, and a suggestion to use Stephen Covey's book as a guideline for right relations. Please email the task force at [RRTF@uuwestport.org](mailto:RRTF@uuwestport.org) with questions, suggestions.

A Congregant question opened up a discussion of how to go from adoption to putting the Covenant into practice. A number of options were discussed:

a) A non-violent communications practice group exists in TUCW already – this can be developed into a group for conflict resolution.

b) Rev J Morehouse stated there is a plan to identify and train a team for conflict management.

c) T Hearne, incoming chair of Committee on Ministries (COM) noted that the COM might be a part of this resolution conflict team.

d) S Polmar suggested we put in place a measurement process to assess outcomes of conflict management.

L Shannon thanked the committee for its work.

L Shannon thanked everyone for attending and participating in a spirit of love and peace. The meeting was adjourned at 1:43pm.

Respectfully submitted

Mary-Jane Cross, Secretary of the Board of Trustees