

**Congregational Meeting
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa
January 27, 2019**

MINUTES

Chalice Lighting and Opening Words: Rev. Chris Bell, Senior Minister

Meeting called to order at 11:13 am: Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees

Introduction: Natalie Brundred

Minutes from the June 2018 Congregational Meeting were approved without objection.

Members should let the office know if they want to receive Congregational Meeting packets via either US mail or email only.

- Quorum: 109 members were counted, exceeding the requirement of 69.
- Parliamentarian: Ellen Skagerberg
- Recording secretary: Susan Thollaug
- Minutes from the June 2018 Congregational Meeting were approved without objection.
- Announcements:
 - Members should let the office know whether they want to receive Congregational Meeting packets via "snail" or email, or both.
 - The UUCSR Annual Report for the last fiscal year (2017/18) is available. Consider reading and returning to avoid wasting paper and ink. The report is available in the office.
 - The UUCSR Directory is also available from the office.
 - People were asked to please stand and give their names before speaking from the floor.

Treasurer's reports: Michael Randolph, Treasurer

Last Fiscal Year (2017/18):

Last year was good fiscally for UUCSR. Net income for the year was \$16.6k. However, pledges were down by \$14.1k compared to what had been budgeted. Several members who had made significant contributions passed away.

The Current Fiscal Year (2018/19):

We're about \$28.3k ahead for the first 6 months of the fiscal year, but that's deceptive. Income tends to be higher in the first half of the fiscal year (July-December), and expenditures are higher in the last half (January-June.) We

expect the rest of this fiscal year to be “a little choppy.” The Board, Finance Committee, and Stewardship Team are working to get us through this challenge in good shape.

Analysis of Pledging (July 1-December 18, 2018):

We started this fiscal year with a baseline of \$453.8k in annual pledges. 30% of the congregation has increased their pledges so far, adding \$41.8k. Reduced pledges total \$9.9k, and new members contributed over \$10k. We removed 25 members from the rolls - people who left the congregation, moved away, or passed away. This represents a loss of \$24k. At this point, our net pledge income for the year is \$466.1, which is only about \$12.3k more than last year.

The 2018/19 Initiative:

We’ve started a “mini-pledge drive”, with the Board and the Stewardship Team reaching out to about 40 households. Response has been fairly favorable.

We hope to have less of a deficit at the end of this year than we’re projecting at mid-point. We’re developing a new budget and looking for solutions. We have substantial reserves, and UUCSR is in very strong financial shape overall. This is about our current year operating budget only, and we are not drawing on our reserves.

Nominations and Elections: Ellen Skagerberg, Chair, Nominating Committee - VOTING ITEMS

Nominees for the Board of Trustees:

Larisa Ashley
Paula Hammett
John Mason
Mike McGirr

VOTE: The slate of nominees for the Board was approved unanimously.

Nominees for the Endowment Committee:

Ann Chambers
Linda Stabler
Terry Graham

VOTE: The slate of nominees for the Endowment Committee was approved unanimously.

Nominees for UU General Assembly Delegates:

Lucia Kasulis
Rose Saint John

Bev Spears
Judy Marley
Sean Freese
Mike McGirr
Richard Senghas

VOTE: The slate of nominees for delegates to GA was approved unanimously.

Debrief of the October 2018 Town Hall: Natalie Brundred

About 80 - 100 people attended the Town Hall. The meeting started with 25 minutes of open mic to allow time for expression of ideas. We also heard three presentations.

In general, people were impressed with the Town Hall. They felt it was well organized and the presentations were excellent. Some people expressed a desire to see the open mic time at the end of the meeting, and some appreciated having it first.

Notes of people's input were taken and the appropriate sections were forwarded to the speakers, who followed up on their pending items. In the future, the notes will also be posted on the Work Room and Social Hall bulletin boards and posted on the website.

Naming Room 545:

Nominations with accompanying rationale for naming Room 545 should be sent to Gretchen Vap by April 1. The Board will then whittle down the list, and the congregation will vote at the June Congregational Meeting.

Reflection on the State of the Congregation: Rev. Chris Bell

Our congregation is happy, healthy, and doing well. We've had around 350 members for several years, which is a tipping point, with the opportunity to move up to the next congregational size. In transitioning to this next level, there can be fear that change might lead to loss, but to be more effective in fulfilling our Mission and in the world, we need to get ready to grow. Rev. Chris will be reading/reflecting about how to overcome this hurdle so we do it as well as we have in the past, when we grew to this size.

A very big step is bringing on our new Administrative Manager, Dawn Silveira. She had a high-pressure job with the YWCA on domestic violence and ran their safe house.

Board Report: Natalie Brundred, Cathie Wiese and Joe Como

Last August, the Board determined its three focus areas for the 2018/19 fiscal year: (1) Intergenerational Focus; (2) Upstairs Focus (“Second Floor to the Future”); and (3) our Fiscal Future (which has since been dissolved to focus on the current year’s Initiative and budget).

Intergenerational Focus - Cathie Wiese:

The goal is to facilitate connections among the youngest and oldest members of our congregation, and everyone in between. Some of the current and planned activities that contribute to this goal are: Intergenerational worship services, Mystery Pen Pals, participating in our Faith and Fitness hikes, and the annual all-congregation retreat camp, a revival of the Cake Auction, and intergenerational game nights with board games for all ages.

Upstairs Focus (“Second Floor to the Future”) - Joe Como:

We are a growing congregation and there’s no doubt that we’re going to need more physical space. We need to start planning for it now because it will take a long time (5-10 years) to carry out.

We currently have limited use of the second floor because of code restrictions. Making the upstairs area fully useable is a continuation of what we have been doing since we purchased this building and modified it for our needs. In the next phase, we need to rebuild the interior and exterior stairs, install an elevator and raise the ceiling in some areas.

Other things the Board has been working on – Natalie:

We have hired an Administrative Manager, Dawn Silveira. Damilia, our interim Administrative Manager, will train her for one week and then stay on for one week to complete some special projects. We have now hired a new person for almost every major position in the congregation - DRE, Assistant Minister, Administrative Manager, and Bookkeeper.

It’s been 5 years since Rev. Chris’ last sabbatical. He would prefer to take shorter sabbaticals, with shorter intervals between them. He will take one for 4 months next year, from February through May 2020.

Appreciations: Honoring members who have gone above & beyond - Cathie Wiese

- **Sharon Smith** - Worked tirelessly to hire Damilia, is a member of Caring Connections, is Co-Chair of Circle Dinners, and has done much more.
- **Lucia Milburn** - Was a Worship Associate, has chaired COSM for many years, is a co-leader of the fire support group, and is a lay chaplain.

- **Rabbit, aka Susan Williamson** - Brought great expertise to editing the newsletter.
- **Phyllis & Bob Clement** – Have been prime movers in Advocates for Social Justice and Caring Connections. Phyllis is one of the founders of the Old Age is Not for Sissies group.

Open Mic: Questions/concerns/appreciations/aspirations

Meeting adjourned: 12:36.

Next Congregational Meeting: June 9, 2019

Respectfully submitted by Susan Thollaug, Recording Secretary