

**Congregational Meeting**  
**Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa**  
**June 14, 2020 - via Zoom**

***Note:** The recorded meeting is available for viewing/listening by members of the Congregation.*

**Meeting called to order 12:02 pm.**

**Chalice Lighting and Reading of UUCSR's Covenant:** Rev. Chris Bell, Senior Minister

**Meeting Introduction:** Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees  
Verification of a quorum: Approximately 130 people were in attendance at the beginning of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda was approved with one change.

Approval of January Congregational Meeting Minutes: Accepted as submitted.

**Status of Congregational Life and Board Reports:**

Rev. Chris Bell, Senior Minister

Rev. Chris said he was amazed at the way the staff, lay leaders, volunteers, and Congregation have come together to respond to this unprecedented, unanticipated new world. We'll continue doing online services for now. We'll explore new ways of connecting.

Rev. Dara Olandt, Assistant Minister

Rev. Dara said she's leaving with a heavy and hopeful heart. She's loved being our minister and didn't seek to leave UUCSR. She expects to sustain ongoing relationships with UUCSR, collaborate with Rev. Chris, and foster UU-ism in the North Bay.

Jen Freese, Director of Religious Education

The RE program is adapting to these times with a number of new online approaches for both kids and parents. This year we've moved to making RE thematic, integrated, multi-age, experiential, and choice-driven.

Intergenerational activities and youth groups are ongoing. There are many, many activities in progress and planned. The program is growing. Jen requested more RE volunteers.

Dawn Silveira, Administrative Manager

Previously, Dawn's job was 40% focused on Glaser Center rentals, which has been replaced by a new focus on getting the Realm software package up and running. UUCSR is carefully following the health guidelines from the Sonoma County Department of Health Services for everyone entering the building — staff and limited numbers of volunteers. In the future we'll convene a committee to plan for safe re-opening of the building, when appropriate.

Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees

Your Board is committed to making sure that we thrive, not just survive, through this period. Sometimes we'll misstep, but we'll correct and move forward with you. The Board deeply thanks the staff and Congregation for its creativity and can-do attitude. Together we'll continue to be a vital, engaged, and connected congregation.

Special Recognition of Rev. Dara

Rev. Dara has done a herculean job as our Assistant Minister. On top of her ongoing pastoral and program responsibilities at UUCSR, a full-time job at Mills College, and a small child at home, she provided support to Rev. Bonnie during Rev. Chris's sabbatical. With the advent of the stay-at-home order, in just three days she brought together what was needed to do our first virtual service together — with no prior experience! She was supposed to be working 12 hours/week for us, but she was working full-time. She was our rock, our stability, our continuity. We can't even begin to thank her enough. The Board is giving Rev. Dara a bonus of \$2000 for her extraordinary work, love, and care for the Congregation during this time.

Sean Freese also did extraordinary work on that first online service. Huge kudos to him too!

**Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws and Exercise of that Change:** Joe Como, Board Member

Per UUCSR Bylaws, the Congregation elects members to serve on the Board for a maximum of two 2-year terms. The Board itself elects its own officers annually.

No one who will be on the Board next year is willing and able to fill the President's position at this time. After much discussion, the Board raised the possibility of having Natalie continue as President for the coming year. However, she will have completed two consecutive terms on the Board, so will "term out" under our existing Bylaws. Natalie said she would be willing to serve another year — *IF* allowed by the congregation.

This has to do with the extenuating and uncertain times we're in. To be Board President at this time requires skills that go above and beyond the normal Board presidency responsibilities. Natalie has those skills and she's had so much experience working with the nuts and bolts of the job. The Board felt it wouldn't be productive to bring in someone new to learn the job while we're in these circumstances.

UUCSR's Bylaws don't include a provision for making an exception or adopting a temporary waiver to the Bylaws.

The Board is recommending to the Congregation that Natalie continue as Board President this coming year. That would first require an *amendment* of the Bylaws, specifically Article V, Section 4, by the Congregation to allow a board member to serve an additional term. In its entirety, the amended Article V, Section 4 would read as follows:

The Board of Trustees shall consist of no fewer than eight (8) and no more than twelve (12) voting Trustees. The term of office for each Trustee shall be two (2) years starting on July 1 and ending two years later on June 30. Trustees may stand for reelection, but shall not serve more than two full consecutive elected terms. *However, in the event that the Board is unable to elect a Board Officer from its continuing membership for the current or following fiscal year, the term of the Trustee serving as a Board Officer may be extended beyond the second two-year term limit to serve in that office until a replacement officer is elected, or a third two-year term is completed, whichever comes first. Any exercise of this provision must be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the members at the next Congregational Meeting.*

After an interim period of two (2) years, a former Trustee may stand again for election to the Board. No person shall be elected or appointed a Trustee unless such person has been a voting Congregation member for at least two (2) years.

This measure would come into play only if a Board Officer position could not be filled by new or continuing Board members.

**\*VOTING ITEM — on the Motion to Amend Art V Sec 4 of the UUCSR Bylaws** 89% voted in favor of the motion.  
**The motion to amend Art V Sec 4 passed.**

**\*VOTING ITEM — "Should Natalie Brundred be confirmed to a third 2-year term to the UUCSR Board of Trustees?"** 97% voted in favor of the motion.  
**The motion to exercise the new provision of Art V Sec 4 passed.**

The officers for next year are: Natalie Brundred will be President; Mike McGirr will be Vice President, Jane DeYoung will be Treasurer, and Cathie Wiese will continue as Corporate Secretary.

**Proposed 2020/21 budget:** Michael Randolph, Treasurer  
Where we'll likely be at the end of the fiscal year (June 30)

At the end of April, we had a net income of about \$11.6k. This surplus did not include the UUA dues, which were \$32k. So, at the end of April, we were heading toward a really bad year. Things changed dramatically in May, thanks to the government bailout.

The \$64k from the Payroll Protection Program was received on May 8. Based on the projections, we conservatively estimate we'll have a surplus of about \$35k for the 2019/20 fiscal year. How we end this fiscal year will have big consequences for creating a balanced budget for next year.

The proposed budget

Considering the substantial uncertainty around the economy in 2020/21, FinCom (the Finance Committee) recommended that we split the anticipated surplus from the current year: \$21k to be allocated to income, and the remainder (about \$14k) to be held in a contingency reserve. They also recommended that FinCom and the Board review the budget mid-year (January 2021) for any needed corrections.

The Board unanimously agreed to the budget proposal being voted on.

Income

We're anticipating a drop in income of more than \$100k for the coming year compared to this year's budget, due no expected income from the Glaser Center, plus other factors. Pledges are estimated to be about \$460k. We expect to see high levels of donations continue into next fiscal year. We don't expect any income from fundraising this year.

Expenses

Limited funds have been included for staff raises. Several staff have foregone merit raises this year. We've bumped our hourly wages up to \$17/hour. We are reducing the Administration Manager's hours, taking out the time that person would work on Glaser Center work, but including the time they will be spending on our conversion to Realm. We eliminated the property tax since we aren't renting out the Glaser Center. We reduced the Sexton's hours. We reduced the pianist's position, the teachers' hours, eliminated childcare hours for RE, and cut some budget items from committees.

This year the Operations Team, which has a schedule of how funds from our Building Replacement Fund are to be dispersed over time, will spend

about \$20—25k on replacing the carpet. This expenditure does not affect our budget at all; it comes out of accumulated funds that are set aside every year for this purpose.

**\*VOTING ITEM - "Should UUCSR adopt the 2020/21 budget as now proposed?"** 98% voted yes.

**The motion to approve the proposed 2020/21 budget passed.**

**Endowment Fund distribution for 2020-2021:** Michael Randolph, Endowment Fund Committee Member

This year the Board recommends NO distribution from the Endowment Fund. With markets in turmoil and economic uncertainty going forward, the Board felt it would be unwise to remove money from the fund.

**\*VOTING ITEM - "Should UUCSR *not* take the Endowment Fund distribution this year?"** 99% voted yes.

**The motion to *not* take a distribution from the Endowment Fund passed.**

**Nomination and election of Nominating Committee members:** Ellen Skagerberg, Chair, Nominating Committee

There are two candidates to be voted upon: Michael Larsen and Ben Ford.

**\*VOTING ITEM - "Should Ben Ford and Michael Larsen be elected to the Nominating Committee?"** 99% voted yes.

**The motion to approve Ben Ford and Michael Larsen as new members of the Nominating Committee passed.**

**Advocates for Social Justice:** Natalie Brundred, President, Board of Trustees and Elaine Wellin, Chair, A4SJ

Elaine Wellin has been elected by the Advocates to continue being Chair.

**\*VOTING ITEM - "Should Elaine Wellin be ratified as the [Chair] of the Advocates for Social Justice?"** 99% in favor.

**The motion to ratify Elaine Wellin as chair of A4SJ passed.**

Cassandra Lista will be the secretary. Mary Louise Jaffray continues as the fiscal liaison. Social action is by no means limited to A4SJ's 10 ongoing projects, which you'll learn about in the annual report. They'll be preparing calls to social action.

**Appreciations – honoring members who have gone above and beyond:** Cathie Wiese, Member, Board of Trustees

The first person we're recognizing is Ellen Skagerberg. Ellen is a pillar in our community. Her contributions of expertise keep us on track, civil in our discourse, and financially responsible.

Our next honoree is Michael Bingham. He's worked as the lead Glaser Center event staff since October 2016. He's also been a Sunday social hour host. He's become the editor for our virtual Sunday services. Michael makes sure every Sunday service is well-crafted, seamlessly edited and ready for broadcasting.

Our next honoree is Sadie Sonntag. She has given of her time, talent, creativity, and heart to ensure that our Sunday services are interwoven with beautiful music. And now she's had to leap into the digital choir world, and is bringing that same enthusiasm, creativity, and heart to make sure we continue making beautiful music. She's devoted many, many hours to learning the technology and creating Zoom meetings, iPhone meetings, and iPod editing.

Our next honoree is John Ray. He is generous with his time, energy, and heart in making sure that our neighbors in need continue to have access to nutritious and plentiful meals every Saturday morning, even with COVID-19 restrictions. It was important to him that we give a shout out to his right-hand people, Ethan Foote, Tamara Murrell, and all of the people who make breakfasts and lunches now.

**Open forum/Questions/Concerns/Appreciations/Aspirations**

We have deep, deep, deep gratitude to Michael Randolph and Rev. Dara Olandt for all of the contributions they've made with such open hearts and such willingness, to our community and to our congregation. Thank you, thank you, thank you both, so much.

**Closing Words:** Rev. Chris Bell

**Meeting Adjourned:** 2:40 pm

*Town Hall Meeting: October 18, 2020  
Next Congregational Meeting: January 31, 2021*

*Respectfully submitted by Susan Thollaug, Recording Secretary*