

UUCWI Annual Congregational Meeting June 26, 2016

Fifty members present; achieved the 30 needed for a quorum.

Meeting Opening

Sarah Richards, UUCWI Board of Trustees President, called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.. She introduced herself and welcomed all to the annual meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Eileen Soskin moved to approve the minutes of the Congregational Meeting held on January 25, 2015. Lois Chowen seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

Rhonda Salerno moved to approve the minutes from last year's Annual Congregational Meeting held on June 7, 2015. Soskin seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

Recognition of Members completing Lengthy or Dedicated Service

Richards recognized members who have dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and effort to the congregation. Trees will be planted in their honor here at the church.

Recognized members include: Tom Buxton for his willingness to take care of many aspects of UUCWI operations; Eileen Soskin for her efforts in managing our successful Concert Series; Libby Roberts for her service on the Board, managing the auction, and countless other UUCWI programs; Mary Goolsby for her service on the Board, and Charlie Knutilla for his tireless work on the UUCWI website, Religious Exploration programs, and the current parking lot lighting project, and serving on the Board.

John Long continued by presenting Knutilla with a *Let There be Light* award and read an accompanying scripture.

Introduction to Website

Richards unveiled the new website, projecting it on the wall. She explained that Knutilla had advised development of a new website, as soon we would not be able to update the existing site. The new website is structured in a manner similar to the existing website. It was completed using a UUA theme in Wordpress. Richards acknowledged that several people, including herself, have worked on developing the new website. She concluded by thanking Charlie Knutilla, Mavis Cauffman, Aaron Taggart, Meri McCormick, and Suzi Pengilly. Cauffman thanked Richards for her steady work on the new site.

Approval of 2016-2017 Budget

Soskin moved to approved the 2016-2017 budget. Buxton seconded.

Discussion: Richards noted that we are trying to operate the church with static or declining funds and not rely on fundraising to pay for operating expenses.

Jelcy Romberg questioned the expense (\$6235.00) for fundraising. Buxton explained that expenses for all fundraising efforts, e.g., auction and concert series, are included in that figure.

Ken Merrell asked about funding needed for thinning the diseased trees surrounding the church. Gene Berg, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, explained that \$600 is allocated in the budget for tree removal. Merrell expressed concern that \$600 was not adequate, considering the potential danger to person and property by the hazard trees. Berg acknowledged that discretionary funds may be required to manage the situation. Richards and Buxton noted that there are approximately \$34,000 in general reserves and \$5000 in the maintenance reserve. Richards commented on the reduced budget for Children's Religious Exploration (RE). She explained that since she became a UUCWI member in 1998, the church has not been able to sustain a viable Children's RE program. In May, the Board held two meetings specifically to address the future of the program. The consensus was that most of the congregation wanted a good Children's RE program but few seemed willing to put in the effort to make it happen. Gina Diamond, the current Children's RE Coordinator, is leaving her post for another job, so the congregation is without paid staff for Children's RE. The Board is waiting to see if the congregants want to form a

Children's RE Committee to organize and orchestrate the program. A committee requires the commitment of least three people. If a committee is formed, the Board will reconsider the funding. Judy Kaplan noted that UUCWI is not the only church on the Island with a deficit of children; all of the churches are having trouble getting children to participate.

Kaplan explained that Spirit Play is in place with Joann Roomes, who has been trained in that program. After further discussion, Arron Taggart offered to serve as Chair and Board liaison for the committee, with Joann Roomes, Judy Kaplan, Coreen Beckman, and Rhonda Salerno as members.

Terra Anderson called the question to vote on the budget.
Vote: Approved unanimously.

Children's RE Committee

Taggart moved to form a Children's RE Committee with himself as Chair, and Joann Roomes, Judy Kaplan, Coreen Beckman, and Rhonda Salerno as members. Jelcy Romberg seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Nominations for Board of Trustees

Existing Board Members:

Sarah Richards, President

Clara Beier, now Secretary

Teri Wright

John Long

Nominated Board Members:

David Davis as Treasurer

Laurie Riley as Vice President

Dick Hayes, nominated by Larry Morrell. Hayes accepted the nomination.

Merrell moved to accept the nominations as amended. Camille Long seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Nominations for Nominating Committee

Mary Goolsby

Chris Bell

Sara Heath

Soskin moved to accept the nominations. Camille Long seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Message from our Minister

Richards read a message from Rev. Dennis Reynolds, who was not able to attend this meeting. Rev. Reynolds regrets that he cannot attend and expresses his deep gratitude to the Board. He would like to name Lois Chowne *Rev. Reynolds' UU Hero of the Year*. He told the story of Lois' involvement with Ryan's House, an organization that helps homeless youth. Lois offered a home to a young woman who was six months pregnant. After giving birth to a boy, who brought great joy to his adoptive grandmother Lois, the young mother moved into her own place. Tragically, the baby recently died of SIDS. Rev. Reynolds recognizes Lois' generosity as an affirmation of love into action. Love is the spirit of Lois and service is her practice.

The meeting concluded at 12:30 p.m., with not a dry eye in the house.