

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 19, 2024

Meeting Conducted In-Person and via Zoom Video Conference

Minutes – Draft

Call to Order

Pier reviewed the voting process. A quorum being present the meeting was called to order by Pier Sun Ho, co-president, at 12:58 p.m. Michael Armstrong and David Rosales did the chalice lighting and reading, Pier read the covenant, and Helen Tinsley-Jones read the land acknowledgement.

Consent Agenda:

Adoption of Agenda

Approval of February 10, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the consent agenda (M-Karen Elliott/S- Norie Clark) passed with no objection.

Presentation of Schweitzer Medals for Extraordinary Service

Ariel Smith-Iyer – Presented by Paul Hudson.

Tom Tripp – Presented by Larry Nagel

Affirmation and Installation of the Nominating Committee

Rev. Marcus installed the members of the 2024-25 Nominating Committee: Andrew Swan, Anita Mermel, Bill Brown, Carisa Orwig, Liz Der, Lorraine Schnurr, Randall Hudson, Sandy Portillo-Robins, and Suzette Anderson-Duggan

State of the Congregation Report

Co-Presidents Helen Tinsley-Jones and Pier Sun Ho presented the State of the Congregation report. Some of the highlights included the arrival of our new settled minister in August 2023 and his installation in April 2024, reconnection with our Transylvania partner church, seventeen new members joined our church, and 141 household units made pledges for the 2024-25 Stewardship campaign, allowing us to reach our goal to bring most UUCB staff salaries to UUA minimum standard. The Board of Trustees updated the Governance Manual and will get input from the Ground and Horizon discussions before revisiting its goals.

Committee Reports

A. Endowment Projects Oversight Committee- Beth Pollard and Lenore Ralston

The Endowment Projects Oversight Committee has spent \$669,000 of its current \$725,000 spending, and has received an additional \$180K in targeted donations. Of the remaining \$55K, \$40K will be added to \$35K from UUCB Building Funds to repair the black folding doors between the sanctuary and atrium, the atrium and the social hall, and the social hall and the Fireside Room. The doors don't meet fire code, are a safety issue, and have been on the repair list for 10+ years. The remaining \$15K will go to planning for transition to all-electric buildings. The congregation was invited to help by volunteering to be on the Buildings and Grounds Committee or the Endowments Committee, donate, or making a bequest to UUCB in one's estate plans.

B. Freestone Oversight Committee

Beth Pollard reminded the congregation that the first milestone in the Freestone resolution is to raise \$250,000 by 12/1/2024 in order to fund needed repairs. Beth provided updates on the Freestone's two fundraising strategies. The conservation application was denied for insufficient history of agricultural use at Freestone. Selling the two undeveloped lots is a second fundraising strategies. The lots were listed and UUCB received a good offer; however, the offer was withdrawn after a well-water survey of six locations did not provide evidence of sufficient water. The Freestone Committee is currently considering other funding options including a possible long-term lease of part of the dome lot, a possible additional well-water survey, and ongoing fundraising activities. The Committee may propose daytime use by UUCB groups, which the FOC has asked to address safety concerns.

C. Social Justice Council (SJC)

Carol Carlisle, Cyndy Greenleaf, and Sheila Tarbet provided a report on the many facets of the SJC. Some highlights include the work of Honoring Indigenous People (HIP) in replanting the Three Sisters' Garden and supporting an indigenous restaurant in Oakland. One of the SJC's sponsored projects for the coming year is "Working to Achieve Equity in Berkeley Schools" which will involve assisting in classrooms, in food delivery, and with the librarians. The Voting Justice project has already elicited the support of the UUCB community in writing over 1000 postcards. The Climate Justice Committee completed the first phase of the work towards Green Sanctuary recognition. The next step is the Opportunity Assessment.

D. Widening the Circle of Concern –Lonnie Moseley

Lonnie reviewed the WTCC Committee's goal of helping the congregation implement

the WTCC Task Force's recommendations. The committee's recent focus has been on observing ways that the implementation is happening and encouraging the congregation to be attentive to these implementations and to notice ways UUCB can widen more. Lonnie highlighted some of the WTCC's observations including more youth participation, advocacy to bring back the AC transit bus line to the Arlington, diverse musical selections, Tongan-American Free Wesleyan Church's participation in the Installation, search committee for the Director of Family Ministry is using WTCC recommendations.

Installation Committee Acknowledgment and Appreciation

Co-Presidents Helen Tinsley-Jones and Pier Sun Ho thanked the Installation Committee for all their work on creating such a spectacular event. The committee members were Suzette Anderson-Duggan (Chair), Natalie Campbell, Karen Elliott, Jean Gleason, Megan Hailey-Dunsheath, Lisa Maynard, Sandy Portillo-Robins, Kerry Simpson, Ariel Smith-Iyer and Karen Tripp. Suzette thanked donors who contributed to the Installation, UUCB staff for all their ways they supported the installation, and the congregation and friends for their enthusiasm, flexibility, hearts, and help.

Presentation and Vote the Board of Trustees recommended Budget for 2024-25 Fiscal Year

Tess Snook O'Riva shared some highlights of the recommended budget including that Stewardship exceeded its stretch goal and UUCB is on a path to getting all staff to the UUA minimum salary. The budget for staff and volunteer appreciation has been increased, a new "reserves" line item has been added to the budget, and there is a \$9000 surplus built into this budget. To reduce the strain on current staff, a property manager was hired for the Craft Cottage and Lexington Lodge properties.

A **Motion** to approve the recommended Budget for 2024-25 Fiscal Year (M- Norie Clarke/ S – Anne Greenwood) passed unanimously.

Benediction by Reverence Marcus Liefert

Adjournment 2:40PM.