

UUCLC Annual Meeting

April 9, 2017

The annual meeting was opened with a moment of reflection and Chalice Lighting by our President, Chris Higgins at approximately 1:15 pm.

Chris gave an overview of the purpose of having an Annual Meeting and reviewed the following points:

- Assess where we are (against our Vision and Mission of January 2013)
- Elect our leaders, ie, our Board of Trustees
- Plan where we will be going
- Enlist the support of the Congregation

The President's presentation began with an assessment of our 2013 Vision and Mission. Chris made note of the following:

- Chris announced that we are almost one year ahead of schedule with the Vision and Mission Statement of 2013.
- Soon we will be in our new building – thank you to all those who worked so hard to get us there, especially Carl Skiles, our Building Project Chair and Betty Emery, our co-Chair. The congregation members gave Carl and Betty a standing ovation.
- Acknowledgment and Appreciation was also expressed to long term Board Member Russel Littlefield for his work on the Board and as Chair of the Wrap Committee
- The President made note of a prospective part time minister, the Rev Tracie Barrett-Welser.
- The President then acknowledged the congregations appreciation to the selection committee who interviewed candidates and recommended Rev Tracie.
- A draft letter of Agreement is being reviewed with Rev Tracie
- On April 30th Rev Tracie will be our guest speaker at our service
- The President noted how the congregation is growing and noted that on March 19 we welcomed 14 new members; 'we have good

energy' she exclaimed.

Election of Officers to UUCLC Board Vacancies – Betty Emery

Betty Emery led the Election of Officers portion of the Annual Meeting and reviewed and presented the following:

1. Per UUCLC By laws at VII. C. 3. " A Nominating Committee...shall prepare ...a slate...to fill expiring and vacant terms of office and shall announce these names at a Sunday Service at least four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting."
2. The Nominating Committee for FY 2018 is Gina Rossi, Joanne Reilly and John Landers. She asked for a show of gratitude for their work.
3. At the close of FY 2017, four vacancies will exist on the Board. The vacancies are: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Most of our current Board Members have agreed to serve again, but some in different seats. We will anticipated having a two step election.

Betty reviewed the position vacancies that the congregation would be voting on.

- President vacancy will be filled by the current President, Christina Higgins for a one year term only. Next year the congregation will have to nominate another person for President for a 2 year term.
- Vice President vacancy, current VP Russ Littlefield has served on the Board in various capacities since 2010.
- Suzie Lockwood, who is currently a Board Trustee has agreed to run for VP.
- Secretary vacancy, is currently filled by Joyce Axelson-Lorch. Donald Stearns has agreed to run for Secretary, as a first time

member of the Board.

- Treasurer vacancy, Stuart Anderson, current Treasurer has agreed to serve for another 2 year term.

As required by the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee announced and publicized the nominees four weeks before the Annual Meeting on March 12, 2017. Nominations from the floor are also welcome. Betty asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor.

There was no response from the congregation members present for this meeting.

Betty then announced that we have an uncontested election. And that she would still like to record Congregation support. Betty made the announcement that Voting is for members of UUCLC only. All members voted unanimously in favor of the Nominating Committee Slate:

Chris Higgins – President
Suzie Lockwood – Vice President
Don Stearns – Secretary
Stuart Anderson – Treasurer

A Trustee position became vacant, when Suzie Lockwood was elected to the Vice President position. Recognizing this possibility, the Nominating Committee searched for a Trustee and Joyce Axelson-Lorch, the former Board Secretary (who was serving out Pam Ward's term since Sept. 15, 2016) agreed to run for the three-year Trustee term.

Election of Joyce Axelson to the Trustee position also required a formal vote by the members.

All members voted unanimously to elect Joyce Axelson to the Trustee position.

Betty invited members to thank the outgoing Board for their work, especially Russ Littlefield, who has been a fixture at Board meetings for at

least 7 years.

FY 2018 Draft Budget – Chris Higgins

President, Chris Higgins then made the following presentation to the members and friends of Congregation who were present:

'What is our reason for being as a Congregation? There are several.

I believe that we represent an important voice and alternative for people, especially young people, in Central FL who are exploring important questions in their lives and looking for non-judgmental support in their search for truth and meaning.

Discussion and exchange of ideas is part of the fabric of UU. We have intentionally structured brainstorming sessions designed to help us to define our priorities with the help of Susan and Peter Pitzele, in our "Out of the Box" workshops.

It's important that we keep the dialogue going and that we engage our members and friends, inviting all to share their talent. Together, we will set the priorities for our Congregation. What can/will we do as a Congregation? These are questions that we will answer collectively ... together.

The purpose of a Budget is to align our priorities as an organization with our resources. If we don't do that formally, we can find ourselves (down the road) having spent our funds on less important things, because they came up sooner and more important things came up later.

We have reflected the ideas that percolated out of discussions so far into our proposed Budget. In addition, we've estimated expenses to operate our new building, but there are lots of unknowns and once we have a few months in the building we'll be able to sure up the numbers.

A comprehensive line item review of the proposed budget was given by President Chris Higgins, referring to the diagram projected on the screen. Some congregation comments or questions were addressed.

- Professional Staffing is the largest allocation of funding
- President Chris Higgins reviewed the UUA guidelines for Minister's compensation packages for small congregations. Chris went on to explain how we got the figure in the proposed budget that is \$641 per week for 39 weeks, mid Sep through mid Jun
 - Chris also went through the previous package that was offered to Part Time Minister Susan Berryman and the differences between an independent contract person and a Part Time Minister that is actual staff at UUCLC.
- A question about housing for the Part Time Minister that is consistent with privacy concerns.
- Suggestions that perhaps a winter resident might be able to offer temporary housing were made
 - One person offered the use their home through December
 - UUCLC would have to come up with housing December – June
- The next largest expense is the Building and Grounds
- Based on estimated and projected expenses the budget for 2018 is \$81,558.00 vs 2017 \$67,200.00 – which is an increase of 21% or \$13,358.00.
- The increase is small when we consider that we now have building upkeep, additional programs and a Part Time Minister,
- Every line item was reviewed during this presentation, including the fact that 7% of our total budget is given to UUA each year.
- A congregant asked whether we need to allocate funds for pest control, eg, termites. Probably not in year 1.

The budget is a living document; it is subject to adjust as new information comes in. The Board will take your input and any new information that we receive in the next few weeks and adopt a budget prior to the end of April as required by our bylaws.

But before we do that, we need some confirmation regarding the funds we will have to support our budget.

Supporting our Congregation – Chris Higgins and Stuart Anderson

Chris Higgins began 'I admire Russ Littlefield for his ability to write (and for other things as well). His words capture how I feel about this Congregation and you can read them at your leisure in the brochure that will be passed out to you in a few minutes. I think his words will inspire you, too.

This has been a wonderful time for the UU Congregation of Lake County. As we have worked together over the past 4 years, the relationships within the congregation have developed and we gained insight regarding the talents of some of our members. As the song (Woyaya) goes, the Road has been muddy and rough, but we'll get there:

- first to determine whether we wanted to take on a building project, and then
- to define it, in its details and
- to envision how we would grow into a new building and
- to welcome families with children, and
- to offer them educational and inspirational programs that they can't get elsewhere in Lake County, and
- programs to stand up for people and causes, like the Gay-Straight Alliance in our schools, and Interfaith Council and Homeless Drop-In Shelter, and Health care for everyone. The list goes on and on and will be limited only by our energy.

Brochures were handed out.

Stuart Anderson

Stuart began by reviewing the question 'how are we going to support this budget?'

- We need to assure that expenses do not exceed income.
- We get income by pledges, special gifts, plate collections
 - Sometimes special gifts are allocated for specific projects
- We need to increase the 2017 budget by 23%
- We either need to increase Pledge amounts of current people who pledge, and/or, increase membership pledges and attract new members who might pledge.
- One suggestion is that current people pledging add \$5.00 per month or \$60.00 per year to their existing pledge amount
- Recruit members who have not pledged before
- Average median pledge is \$125.00 per month or \$1500.00 a year, that means that ½ the pledges are lower than that and half the pledges are higher than that.
- I am passing out Pledge Cards and invite you to have them completed by the End of April, April 30th. There will be a confidential pledge box on the Information Table each Sunday for your convenience.
- If every member pledges according the suggested guidelines, if able, we can attain our goal.

Some suggestions for raising funds included, solar energy farm, selling electricity, selling wood that is cleared, renting property for weddings, funerals, and other occasions. Renting the space for meetings, and community activities. It was also suggested that we give thought to alternate means of generating energy for our own use if utility cost is 10% of the Building and Grounds budget.

President Chris Higgins closed the meeting by thanking everyone, and then extinguishing the Chalice at approximately 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Axelson, Board Secretary