

MID-YEAR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, January 23, 2022

Began 11:50am ending 1:00pm

Welcome and Call to Order – Alex Saksen

In-Person Gathering Task Force – Andy Zadnik

Current policy continues: Church activities are open to all who are fully vaccinated. Attendees must be free of COVID symptoms or have no recent COVID exposure, masks and social distancing required within the building, no coffee hour or food service inside. All are on the honor system. Living streaming of service will continue. Tech team could use some additional help. Task Force will continue to assess changing situation.

Sunday Services Team – Andy Zadnik

Team presents services when Rev. Jane is not in the pulpit during church year, and all summer Sunday services.

Feb. 13 – Tassi Bisers on writings of Robert Fulghum

March 13 – Cindy Mitchell - idealism and the music of the 60s

April 10 – update on the Memorial Garden with Peggy Trevanion and Chuck Berry

What are you passionate about? That's a service! 6 members only beginning this summer, new members, new ideas needed. [Tony Palermo volunteered to do a service this summer.]

Children, Youth and Faith Development Team – Becca Hovermale

Kids are all in one group at the moment.

KartUUn curriculum – short video clips (Disney, Pixar), discussion of UU principles, craft/activity. Kids are checking in electronically at CYFD desk (using Breeze). Teacher recruitment to help limit number of kids per classroom upstairs. Once attendance is consistent, kids will have separate classrooms by age.

Youth group has been very active: leadership retreat, white elephant gift exchange, game night, today's soup sale

OWL update – classes for 8th and 9th graders (beginning in February hopefully).

OWL Facilitators' training in August, hopefully (5th and 6th grade, etc., more facilitators needed)

Families group – Feb. 6 Animal Rescue League – “Endangered around Us” (hybrid event)

Green Sanctuary – Matt Mehalik

Strong representation by group doing this work for many years. Application submitted last year, UUCNH granted “Candidacy Status” → environmental justice project remaining. Reached out to eight community organizations, most promising responses from:

- HEARTH, North Hills shelter, train participants in designing, constructing and operating a community garden – a good match for us.
- Allegheny County Clean Air Now, communities that suffer from pollution from sources on Neville Island, small dedicated group that needs help with outreach, circulating petitions, etc.

Team would like to connect with Justice issues congregation-wide

Participation in monthly National Cohort of GS Candidates (7 churches in similar stage)

Would like to implement recommendations from Energy audit (2018), as part of Capital Campaign.

Plans for re-vamping recycling, composting, waste in community kitchen

Friendly competition with First Church and Allegheny Unitarian to see who can save the most energy and reduce their footprint the most.

Buildings and Grounds – Mark Swihart

2021 was quieter for B&G than 2020. Handyman doing excellent job but volunteers always needed for cleanup and repairs.

Trees removed; office repainted; elevator batteries replaced, and now in compliance; new mail box; Church sign revamped; driveway patching; most of outside stairs replaced as needed, not ideal - different solution in the long run; new dumpster provided by Vogel.

Communications – Fred Geiger and Joyce Kepner

Work on new website began in early 2020 with consensus on messaging to convey who we are. Site is now more professional, thanks to Fred. This is the 3rd website Fred has designed for UUCNH.

We were not reaching the people we wanted to reach. Language on website tweaked so that people seeking liberal religion will find us. Less jargon, new site will show who we are and who our minister is through her sermons. *Resources* is a repository of information for members, plus *Serving Others*, and *The Power of Personal Connection*.

Gradually replace stock photography with our own photos.

Handicapped accessibility to websites required by law. A plug-in added that allows person to change font size for him/herself. Future plans for advertising on social media to attract visitors to website.

Fred would like more feedback from congregants. Link to new draft website:

<https://dev1.oncore.ventures/>

Personnel Committee – Mark Draa, Chair, Susie Wood, Beth Zak

Develop & maintain a system for reviewing the (paid) staff at UUCNH.

Make annual recommendations to BOT regarding Compensation and Benefits for staff.

Review law, cost of living, annual UUA recommendations.

Last year highlight – Creation of formal Personnel Manual; organize and standardize job descriptions for all employees.

This year's big task – Creation of a standardized review process for the Minister.

Finance Committee – Dennis Doubleday, Chair

Church operates on July 1- June 30 fiscal year. Pandemic has made it hard to project expenses accurately; we assumed that we'd be back to normal operations this church year.

Finances are stable

Pledges tracking normally, little low.

Income/Expenses both below projected.

Net income \$22K lower than at this time last year. Not a cause for concern. Could be timing.

10.52% Growth in Endowment 12/21/20 – 12/31/21 (\$387,032 to \$427,747)

Advance capital campaign contributions coming in, sequestered.

2021 vs 2022 Budget

	2021	2022
Total Budget	383,025	406,093 (+6%)
Pledge Amount (Projected)	315,000	335,000 (+6%)
Fixed Costs and Ops (utilities, maint, ops, insure, FS)	104,903	103,465 (-1.3%)
Staff (Min, DLF, Off., Music, Book)	239,757	254,089 (+6%)
Other	38,365	48,539 (+27%)
Operating Income (Actual)	(2,741)	(Through Dec. 31) 32,081 (vs. Dec. 31, 2020) 54,438

Capital Campaign – Joe Meier and Carol Balance, Co-Chairs; Honorary Co-Chairs: Lowell and Rachel Swarts, our link to where we began.

1961 - Barn purchased

1992 -- Added East and West rooms

2006 – Most recent capital campaign

2007 – Completed upper level renovation

Opportunity for new people to help sustain the church (Carol). Expenditures must align with our UU values. Our building is our home and the Swarts' legacy. Three years to pay off Capital Campaign pledge. Annual pledge comes out of your budget; Capital Campaign donation comes from savings.

Preliminary 2022 Timeline


January 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rough plan/outline of 3 options
February/ Early March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group info and input sessions with members/friends to gather specific wants, needs, priorities and questions
Mid-March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll members/friends on which option the Capital Campaign will focus around
Late March/ Early April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UUA Consultant Barry Finkelstein returns to conduct feasibility study on the selected option, Can we raise the money? Stewardship runs Annual Stewardship Campaign (ASC) with visiting stewards Additional info and input sessions
Mid-May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Congregational meeting to vote on moving forward with the CC and specific option
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick Off Capital Campaign (assuming a vote to proceed)

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Cost of roofs and silos is sold from previous bids + 15% contingency added to the costs.

BASIC PLAN - \$550,000

Get to Know Your Board - Sunday Service 1-23-22




BASIC PLAN - \$550,000

- Repair of Silos: Roof, Soffits and Broken Masonry: \$92,000
- Upper Parking Lot Improvements: \$35,000
Sidewalk to Lower Lot and add'l Paved Parking
- New Roof on Barn: \$175,000
Air Conditioning for Barn: \$58,000
Add'l Solar Panels: \$23,000
Energy Efficiency Upgrades: \$52,000
Technology Upgrades: \$29,000
Kitchen Upgrades: \$5,000
- Relocated Paper Retriever and New Recycle Bin: \$5,000
- New Solar?? Roof on Bellwood: \$45,000
- Social Justice Initiatives: \$15,000
Religious Education Initiatives: \$16,000

2:36:14 / 2:46:00

ENHANCED PLAN - \$775,000 (additional \$225,000)

Get to Know Your Board - Sunday Service 1-23-22

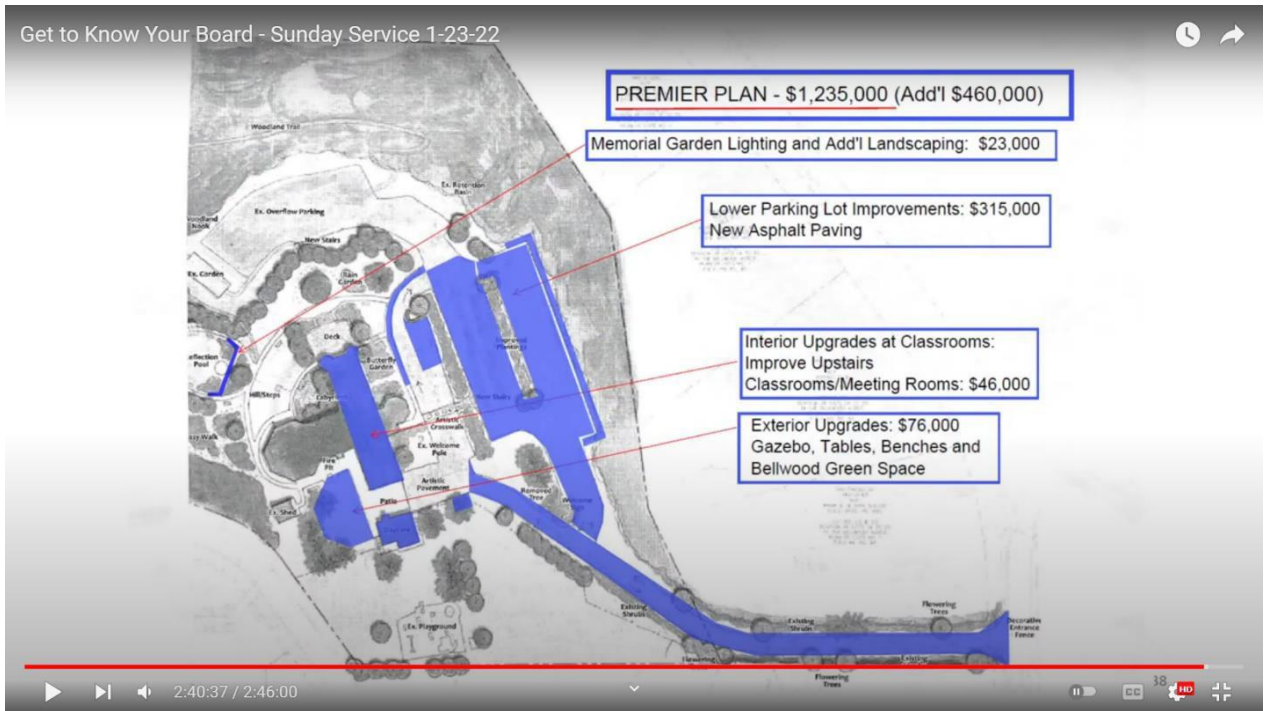


ENHANCED PLAN - \$775,000 (Add'l \$225,000)

- Memorial Garden Wall with Weatherproof Plaques: \$35,000
- Invasive Plant Species Removal: \$15,000
- Lower Parking Lot Improvements: \$40,000
Hillside Stabilization
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Upgrades at Restrooms and Stage: \$25,000
Add'l Technology Upgrades: \$2,000
- Driveway Upgrades:
Paving and Landscaping: \$90,000
- Add'l Social Justice Initiatives: \$9,000
Add'l Religious Education Initiatives: \$9,000

2:38:44 / 2:46:00

PREMIER PLAN - \$1,235,000 (additional \$460,000)



From Chris Hill: We MUST have a recycling bin program by law. Make building more accessible to the community, other UU church groups, or rental. Capital Campaign will kick off next fall.

Adjourn

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES 2022

June 5, 2022

- I. **Chalice Lighting** – Tony Palermo
“Bring us home to love,” Frances Kozier

- II. **Welcome**
President Alex Saksen asked the congregation to
- keep Bernita Clover in our thoughts after the recent deaths of her two brothers
 - remember Becky Ridgeway whose smile lit up this room

- III. **Vote to approve 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting minutes**
Motion to approve from Sue Broughton, 2nd Mary Ellen Johnson
Unanimous approval.

- IV. **Vote to Approve 2022 Mid-Year Congregational Meeting minutes**
Motion to approve from Dennis Doubleday, 2nd Mark Draa.
Unanimous approval.

- V. **Vote to Approve Budget**
Presentation by Dennis Doubleday, Finance Committee

Highlights:

- Pledge highest ever, despite fewer pledge units (drop from 120 to 100)
- Reserves from prior years were expended to support budget and fix West Room roof through last 2 years of pandemic.
- Final \$10K of reserves used to support this budget
- Dropping the Fair Share commitment was the only way to balance the budget. (We will pay at least partially if net income improves.)
- Endowment Fund realized an **8%** asset value **decline** from April 30, 2021 to April 30, 2022 (\$375,245 at end of period)

A lively and lengthy discussion ensued regarding the decision on which areas to cut to balance the budget. Suggestions were offered on how to raise more money.

Motion to approve from Dennis Doubleday, 2nd John Ritzert

Vote (show of hands):

Yes – 51

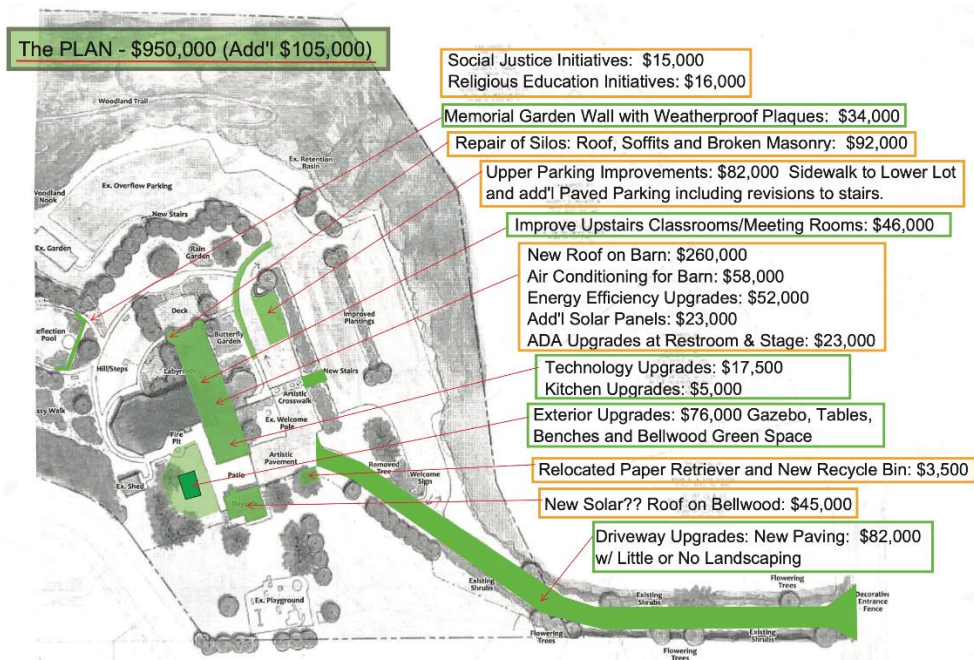
No – 4

Abstain - 1

- VI. **Vote on Capital Campaign**
Carol Balance and Joe Meier
CC Committee – Co-Chairs Carol Balance and Joe Meier
Dennis Doubleday, Kathi Finch, Chris Hill, Mary Ellen Johnson, Janet McCall

Discussion of the final plan –\$950,000

The final figures will change since cost estimates are now 4 years old.



Based on the feasibility study he conducted, Barry Finkelstein lists the following **Reasons for Optimism**:

- Intended large gifts including three \$75,000 gifts and 18 gifts of \$10,000 or more
- 12 families indicated motivation to increase intended gifts
- People learning of 18 \$10K+ gifts and the magnitude of the largest gifts
- Responses about important features of the project and concerns
- Potential major givers not included in the study
- People willing to volunteer
- This is an important time and opportunity for Unitarian Universalism and UUCNH
- Several former members are potential supporters

Motion to approve from Marsha Albright, Erin Terrizzi 2nd

Vote by paper ballot

Yes - 60

No - 1

Abstain - 3

VII. Election of Board Officers

- David Miles, Non-Leadership Track
- Erin Terrizzi, Non-Leadership Track
- Alison Smith, Leadership Track

VIII. Election of LDT Members

- Melinda Geiger
- Beth Zak

Grateful thanks to those who stepped up to this 3-year commitment.

There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Motion to approve from Bill McAdams, 2nd Cindy Mitchell
Vote by paper ballot
Yes, by overwhelming majority

IX. **Call for New Business** - None

- X. **Special Recognition** – Jen Suehr, incoming president
- a. *In-Person Gathering Task Force* – Chair, Alex Saksen
 - i. Barb Draa, Connie Ritzert, Carol Watkins, Alyson Zadnik
 - b. *Capital Campaign Team* – (see above)
 - i. All encouraged to get involved and pitch in, not just with money, but with creating “hoopla!”
 - c. *Communications Team* – Chair, Joyce Kepner
 - i. Fred Geiger, Nancy Kepner, Brian Sullivan – new website, focus on others finding us, ongoing work
 - d. *Dick Myers* – acknowledged for his work and care for the Hunger Garden over the years. Involved kid in tending the garden.
 - e. *Tech Team* – Chair Bruce Travers
 - i. Dennis Doubleday, Joyce Kepner, Nancy Kepner. Bill McAdams, Don Nelson, they could use more help!

- XI. Alex thanked **departing Board Members**, Beth Zak, Hal Dixler, and Julie Kant and presented them with pottery chalices.

Alex welcomed incoming president, Jen Suehr, and handed over the steering wheel.

Mary Ellen Johnson made the motion to adjourn, 2nd Sandra Akacem.
Chalice extinguished - “Beannacht (Blessing)” by John O-Donohue