CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

Members of the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society are hereby warned of the 2021 Annual Meeting, which is to take place via Zoom on Sunday, June 6, 2021, following the worship service via Zoom: cvuusservice

AGENDA

I. Kas/Mark/Priscilla checked for quorum - need 45 out of 178 members stopped counting at 54. All board members were present. Rev. Barnaby Feder/Laura Asermily/Poppy Rees from staff were in attendance. Tested poll voting - worked except for 2 members who were cohosts – Kas added them in if they voted manually.

II. Introduction of current Board of Trustees; review of Zoom procedures

III. Our thanks to the CVUUS Staff

IV. VOTE to approve minutes of 2020 Annual Meeting

A. Motion to approve minutes by Margy Young, seconded by Mike Greenwood
B. Typos found - Kas will amend
C. Question about discussion about ends statement that was tabled/Shelter Rock account that lost money - Ends still tabled and will discuss 2nd at financial part of meeting
D. Vote happened: 41 + 13/Yes; 1 No; 2 yes by chat
E. Minutes approved

V. REPORT: Governing Board: Priscilla Bremser, Doug Richards, Council of Ministry (Jean Terwilliger, Lise Anderson), Rev. Barnaby Feder

Reported has been a challenge with the pandemic. Goal was to listen to the congregation and it is hoped they achieved that. Stewardship of resources and ministerial transition will be goals over the next year.

Doug Richards offered a broader thanks to all the congregation and the staff who worked so hard during the past year. Shared a reading from the “Holy Work of Showing Up.” Kas did not spell out each thanks in this document but many were specifically mentioned and crowd ‘applause’ by waving of hands/fingers was given.

CoM: Lise Anderson. Lift up the work of the CoM - history had a group a long time ago but when adopted policy governance there were some gaps so CoM was brought back to keep the connections of the various leader groups and help CVUUS achieve it’s mission smoothly.

Consists of 2 co-conveners, 2 board members, the minister, and some chairs/members of the various ministry groups (about 12 members usually). The conveneres have 2 year terms. See fuller COM report.

Rev. Barnaby: talked about attendance - seems like it’s about the same or a bit more as it was prior to the pandemic. However, not the same group - really no families attending regularly so there is some concern that we will lose the families but has talked
to families and they are wanting to return when back in person. So he thinks we may see an upswing in attendance if we can keep the livestream/zoom option when we are back in person. He is very heartened by this. Looking forward to going back to face-to-face meetings and he is fully vaccinated. Re-opening will be a gentle process with lots of experimenting and trying to maintain connections with those who can’t physically get to the church.

VI. REPORT: Nominating Committee: Catie Raishart

VII. VOTE for Elected Officers for Board of Trustees – 3-year term

A. Proposed Slate:
   1. Hannah Sessions, to finish the term of Mark Spritzer (July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022)
   2. Douglas Richards (Second Term: July 1, 2021-June 30, 2024)
   3. Kathy (Kas) Singh (Second Term: July 1, 2021-June 20, 2024)

   Asked for nominations from the floor - none
   Moved to approve slate as above: Brett Millier; Second - Colleen Brown
   VOTE: 2 yes in chat; 40 + 14 yes; 1 no but might be for no on the second person rather than no second person. Passed.

B. Informational: Continuing Board of Trustees members (2020-21)
   • Priscilla Bremser (First Term 7/1/19-6/30/22)
   • Kerri Duquette-Hoffman (First Term 7/1/19-6/30/22)
   • Mary Hadley (Second Term 7/1/20-6/30/23)
   • Ann Webster (First Term 7/1/20-6/30/23)

VIII. VOTE for officers

A. Proposed Slate: Board of Trustees officers
   1. Douglas Richards, President (Term: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023)
   2. Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Vice President (Term: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023)
   3. Ann Webster, Treasurer (Term: July 1, 2021–June 30, 2024)

   Asked for nominations from the floor - none
   Moved to approve slate as above: Mary Hadley; Second - Mike Greenwood
   VOTE: 2 yes in chat; 58 yes; 0 no. Passed.

IX. VOTE for Nominating Committee Members – 2-year term

A. Proposed Slate
   1. Donna LaRose (First Term, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023)
   2. Catherine Raishart (Chair), to finish Alison Cutler’s term (July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)

   Asked for nominations from the floor - none
   Moved to approve slate as above: Ann Christie; Second - Revell Allen
   VOTE: 2 yes in chat; 58 yes; 0 no. Passed.

B. Board of Trustees appointee
   • Kerri Duquette-Hoffman
**Report: Finance Team and Governing Board:** Mary Hadley
See documents submitted by Mary Hadley/Finance Committee
Choose not to get a Payroll Protection Loan as did not meet the criteria.
Closed out account and consolidated that into a brokerage account.

Discussion/Comment? None on that

FY 22 Budget proposed - see document submitted.
Trying to work on transition from musical staff set up to the 15-hour/week music director position. Covering this year’s imbalance with reserve. As we continue to do that each year the board is going to work on a solution to that.

Discussion? Comment? A member brought up a question regarding sanctuary value - how we got to it. Mary explained how that is arrived to. Insurance company increased insurance because of the kitchen and elevator but the value of the church building was not appraised higher last year as footprint didn’t change. Increase in insurance not reflected in budget yet as it just happened but will be.

Comment on disappointment in not having more to offer the Music Director position.

Question on what we can do if we can’t get a Music Director for the amount that is being offered. Response: Board can make changes without a congregational vote or we can get a congregational vote. Also, it’s likely it would not start until end of summer or into the Fall so that will buy us some more time of not paying for anyone and help with the budget. Minister mentioned we did a good faith effort based on the UUA values recommended in our region for this position so we started at the lower end. It was clear from the beginning this salary will not be the sole income - it is a less-than ½ time position - for anyone and everyone who has applied is aware of that and each applicant is assessing individually this issue. Congregations of our size don’t have ¾ time or full-time music directors either.

Once we find the right person for us/job then the financial aspect can be negotiated.

A member chatted: Also about the music position. I like what we have. Three people bring their perspectives and interpretations. I am concerned about having one person doing all this. Response - both models have pluses/minuses. Current model - Lucy is very qualified to direct choirs but she can’t do other things that a music director might be able to offer. As a minister trying to deal with 3 people can discourage the growth of the music program so moving to a music director model this may afford this opportunity. Kate resigning and Chuck needing more time off this affords us the opportunity to do this.

Member comment understands the complexity of the budget and all we are trying to manage but if there is any way we can offer benefits it would be a real boon to the position and attracting a good applicant pool. They understand if we can’t at this time.
A member of the music search committee expressed concern about the pay and asked the wiggle room in the pay and if there isn’t much then could we cut the hours down. Response: the congregation is only voting on the bottom line not each line item. We can't predict exactly what we will spend next year. The board is allowed to vote on up to 3% of our budget which is not insignificant if it comes down to it.

It was pointed out that we can amend the motion once we have the motion.

Member asked what the value base of the reduction in the budget in music was for this year ($5000 less from last year proposed). Would like to put in an amendment to add that $5000 to the music director position. Mary H said that the current salaries for 2 of the 3 music staff are paid at the high end of their role and so the equivalency of the music director starting salary suggested is less.

Member pointed that there is a salary in the budget for the Director of Music and we still have $1500 allocated for accompanists/musicians. It’s not gone down as much as mentioned about it’s just broken out differently.

From Chat: the amount for music this next year is actually $16,500 = 15,000 for new position + 1,500 for accompanist substitutes

Personnel Committee member commented that this was not to take away but to lean into Music for CVUUS. However, if the current budget is not landing that way with the congregation then the board should put more into the budgeted amount for the position since it appears that this is very important to the congregation. It was suggested to hire someone without benefits initially but then they kick in at a later point 6 months up to a year later to save us money.

Commented out: If we add to the budget for Music by $5000 then we need to indicate where it’s is going to be cut.

Mary H addressed question asked earlier in the meeting by Paul Stone: Q - I am concerned about the large amount of cash in bank accounts seemingly not earning interest or doing good works.

A - The Balance Sheet shows the various accounts where CVUUS has money. In the section of Current Assets, the subsection Operations (made up of National Bank of Middlebury, Vanguard Money Market and the Minister’s Discretionary fund.) These do not generate any/much interest, but are readily available to run CVUUS.

The subsection of Restricted Reserves (Building Reserve Funds, Capital Campaign, UUCEF) are where the true investments are held – but in a fairly conservative investment strategy.

A member commented that they trust the Music Committee and the Board to make the necessary decisions for the music director position noting all this is before we even know what the applicants will do about it.
Member reinforced an earlier comment they made so Kas did not recapture that here but asked where we can cut to increase the budget for the Music Director. Comment made that one of the things this board does is that it listens to the congregation even though it doesn’t always do exactly what the congregation wants but they listen carefully. So these comments are being heard and will be taken into consideration as we move forward.

Another member seconded what others have said about the value proposition and if benefits will help they would be supportive of that. For the 2nd/3rd year in a row we are not adding to the building reserve fund and concerned that we aren’t keeping up with that. It was confirmed that we haven’t been doing that though we have some gifts/grants but not to the level of the last 5 year plan.

Another member asked clarification if they vote on the budget does that make the music director happen? Response: It actually votes to support Barnaby since it’s actually his decision to do this. Had to clarify that Barnaby has mentioned it several times. But the member felt that the congregation should have a serious discussion on this since it’s a major change. The board agrees with Barnaby the he felt that given the timing of the situation with Kate retiring and Chuck lessening his time, this was just an opportune time. Barnaby addressed the concern of 3 vs 1 selecting music for the services by clarifying that it’s not really 3 different people contributing to the music but the minister getting their opinions and making the decision with their input. Going to one music director, helps lessen the juggling of those decisions. The member appreciated the clarification but hopes that we don’t lose multiple contributions and perspectives.

(President’s computer crashed so Doug pinch hitted for her/Margy will do polls)

Music committee clarified that they’ve emphasized to the applicants they really want diversity in music and will still have Chuck some of the time so they hope that minimizing the music positions won’t minimize the diversity.

Other chat commentary ensued.
From Barnaby Feder to Everyone: 12:24 PM
To be clear, my discretionary fund is used to support people in need in one way or another, not for "anything I want" in the sense of a trip to New York to see the Giants play the Mets.
From DivaMan Clemmons to Everyone: 12:25 PM
I think that this is an important discussion!!! Thank you'!!!! As you know we would appreciate 'more' music, especially congregational singing!!!!!!!!!
From Mike Greenwood to Everyone: 12:26 PM
Thanks Steve, I agree.
From Carol Harden to Everyone: 12:31 PM
We did conduct a music survey, too.

VOTE: Approval of Budget for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022
Moved to approve slate as above: Brett Millier; Second - Paul Stone
VOTE: 2 yes verbally; 1 yes via chat; 49 yes; 0 no. Passed.

XI. **PROGRESS REPORT: Long-range planning**
Priscilla provided a report via presentation. Attached to this document.

A member had a question: related to the minister’s timing and process of replacement (long, important one). If a specific timing will be made available to the congregation when it happens. Rev. Barnaby said we will have a firmer idea by September but wants to get through COVID before anything firm is done.

Previous long range plans have included things like hire a full-time minister or build a new building. Historically as a congregation we do take them seriously and pay attention to it.

XII. **Recognitions, thank you!**
- Mark Spritzer for service on the Governing Board
- And of course, all of you!

XIII. **Other Business that may regularly come before this meeting.**

A. **General Assembly Delegates**
Mike Greenwood said we are eligible for 4 delegates. We have 2 delegates - Alan Moore & Mike Greenwood. They are expected to attend the business meeting reports/elections/finances/propose immediate witness to items that didn’t have time to make the agenda

Vote on that was by raised hand - appeared to be unanimous to Kas.

It was pointed out that not only delegates can attend but as many participants as want to can attend - there is a cost. There will be about 45 workshops in addition to the big events. Can volunteer to offset costs.

XIV. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn - Robin Scheu/Second - Mike Greenwood - all were in favor.