

Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UCN) All-Congregation Annual Meeting

June 5, 2022

Review Draft of the Minutes by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of the Board of Trustees

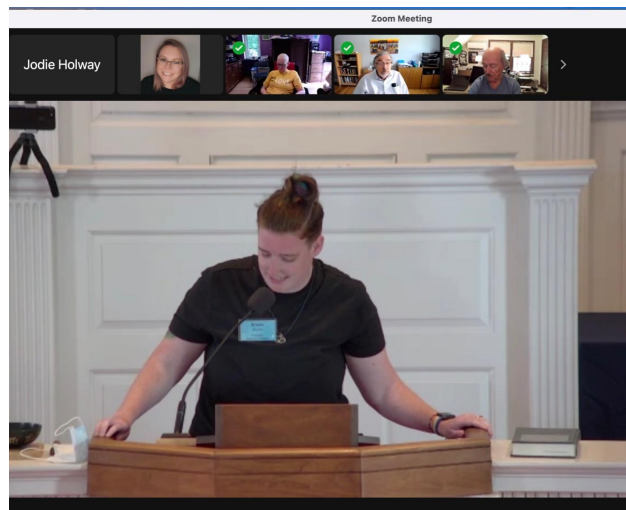
Internally Reviewed by: Jess Woods, Burns Fisher, Jon Lasselle, Ericka Lavalley, Victoria Agnew

Comment Period for Congregation: Feedback/corrections welcome from July 31 to Sept 30, 2022

See agenda posted here:

<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-Agenda-Annual-Meeting.docx-2.pdf>

Note: This Annual Meeting was held in a hybrid of in-person and virtually, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Consistent with our bylaws, and as approved by the Board of Trustees in May, the Annual meeting was held in Nashua: the President of the church chaired from the UU Nashua pulpit, while Rev. Allison Palm simultaneously hosted the online attendees from Nashua using UU Nashua's Zoom account.



1. Registration of Voting Members

- a. Attendees were welcomed and registered as they arrived, in person and via Zoom
 - i. Online check-in team: Ericka Lavalley, Harry Purkhiser
 - ii. In-person check-in team: Jodie K. Holway, Victoria Agnew, Burns Fisher
- b. Many more than the required 20% of membership attended to make a quorum
 - i. Needed 48 or more attendees, per [Clerk's Report](#)
 - ii. Registered 75 total attendees today

2. Call to Order, President Brenna Woods

- a. Certification of quorum by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of the Board of Trustees
- b. Reading of Purposes from the Articles of Agreement, see Article 2 in our [Bylaws](#)

Review Draft, July 31, 2022

- c. Explanation of hybrid meeting logistics
 - i. In-person discussion of microphones in the room, and how to cast votes
 - 1. Votes will be explicitly tallied only in case of tight votes
 - ii. Online video of how to participate via Zoom, and how to cast votes
 - iii. Test question for us to practice voting: “Is cereal a soup?”
 - d. **MOTION** to bring this question to a vote
MOVED by Kim Steele, **SECONDED** by Steve Ladew
Motion **FAILED**, including in-person and online votes: Cereal is not a soup
3. **Chalice Lighting**, Vice President Lindsey Hedrick
4. **In Memoriam**, Rev. Allison Palm
- a. Barbara Berrios, Muriel Credle, Ellen McCormick, Arthur Reublinger, Roy Jones
5. **Consent Agenda for the 2021 Annual Meeting**, Brenna Woods
- a. **MOTION** to accept the [Review Draft](#) of that meeting’s minutes
MOVED by Dave Hudson, **SECONDED** by Brian Ibsen-Johnson
Motion **PASSED**, including in-person and online votes: the minutes are now finalized
6. **President’s Report**, Brenna Woods (see [posted here](#))
- a. Proud of being part of such a flexible, strong, and understanding community
 - b. Report on the work of our Board committees
 - i. Monitoring committee reviewed, clarified, simplified all our [governing policies](#)
 - 1. Removing some financial-related executive limitations that don’t belong in policies
 - 2. Rather will capture these good guidelines in a more formal job description for Rev. Allison, to be written next year
 - ii. Endowment committee did great work on our definition of “socially responsible investing”
 - 1. Research about the UUA’s Common Endowment Fund (CEF)
 - 2. Soon will bring a new Endowment Policy to the Board of Trustees for vote
 - c. Thank you to whole Board for your hard work, and our fun and meaningful meetings
 - d. Thank you to incredible church staff for making this safe space for us in the pandemic
 - e. Thank you to the loud, proud, and willing congregation that inspires Brenna every day
 - f. Concluded with a beautiful, uplifting poem by Amanda Gorham, [New Day’s Lyric](#)

7. **Minister's Report**, Rev. Allison Palm (see [posted here](#))
 - a. Seventh year of our ministry together
 - i. Unfortunately we can no longer call these times "unprecedented"
 - b. Highlights of the year
 - i. Shift from all-online services to multiplatform
 - ii. Hard work by the Building Our Vision team and its five task forces
 - iii. Staff transitions and leave time
 - c. Accomplishments associated with our Ends Statements ([posted here](#))
 - i. Teaching our UU values: online Wizard camp, At-Home Church Kits, OWL (Our Whole Lives)
 - ii. Spiritual practices: including four Christmas services and resuming singing together
 - iii. Support and connection: delivering Boxes of Sunshine in a difficult winter
 - iv. Grow leaders: including many task forces for Building Our Vision
 - v. Steward our community: YouTube video "[Fueling Our Flame](#)"
 - vi. Participate in the larger UU community: sent 12 delegates to 2021 General Assembly
 - vii. Understand and work to dismantle systems of oppression:
 1. Actions from the team studying the Widening the Circle report (posted in the [Social Justice report here](#))
 2. Hard work by the Land Acknowledgement team (to be reviewed later in this meeting)
 - viii. Work to advance justice: new Black Lives Matter banner dedicated, Li'l Free Farmstand
 - d. What's next
 - i. Multiplatform worship continues to evolve
 - ii. Building Our Vision is moving into high gear
 - iii. Rev. Allison's sabbatical is nearly here
 1. She will work on her book to be published of UU rituals and will aim to walk every block in Nashua to ground her in this new home
 2. Thank you to the Sabbatical Team covering her absence: Caro Barschow, Ericka Lavalley, and past congregational presidents Carol Houde and Dave Hudson
 - e. Gratitude for the whole congregation and our dedicated church staff

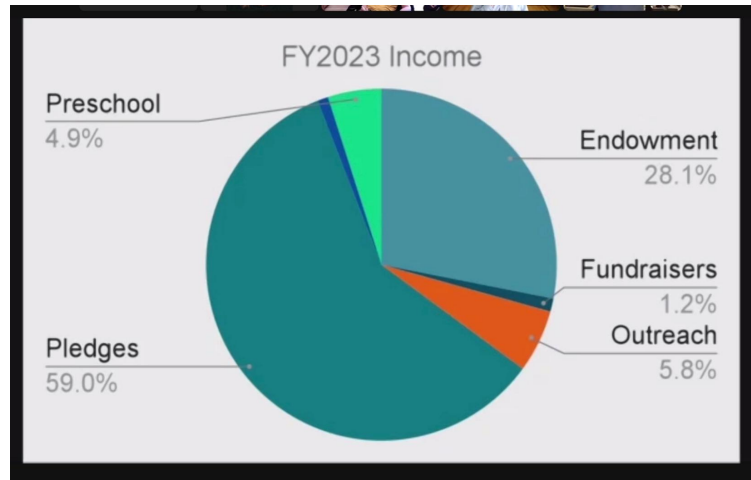
8. **Financial Reports and Budget**, Rev. Allison Palm

a. Summary of fiscal year 2021-22

- i. Tracking closely to the balanced budget that we passed in last year’s Annual Meeting

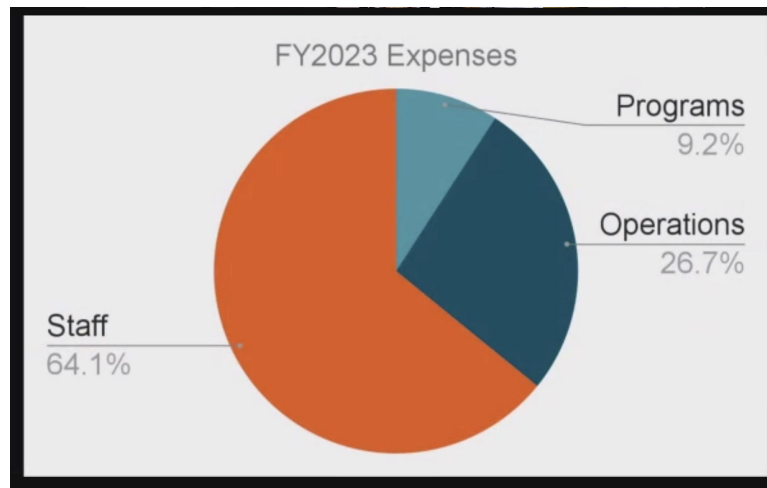
b. Proposed 2022-23 budget

- i. Income projected to be \$606,825, slightly higher than last year
 - 1. Pledges is the element that can change the most, plus a fundraiser stretch-goal



- ii. Requested expenses \$644,896, which had to be reduced in order to match income

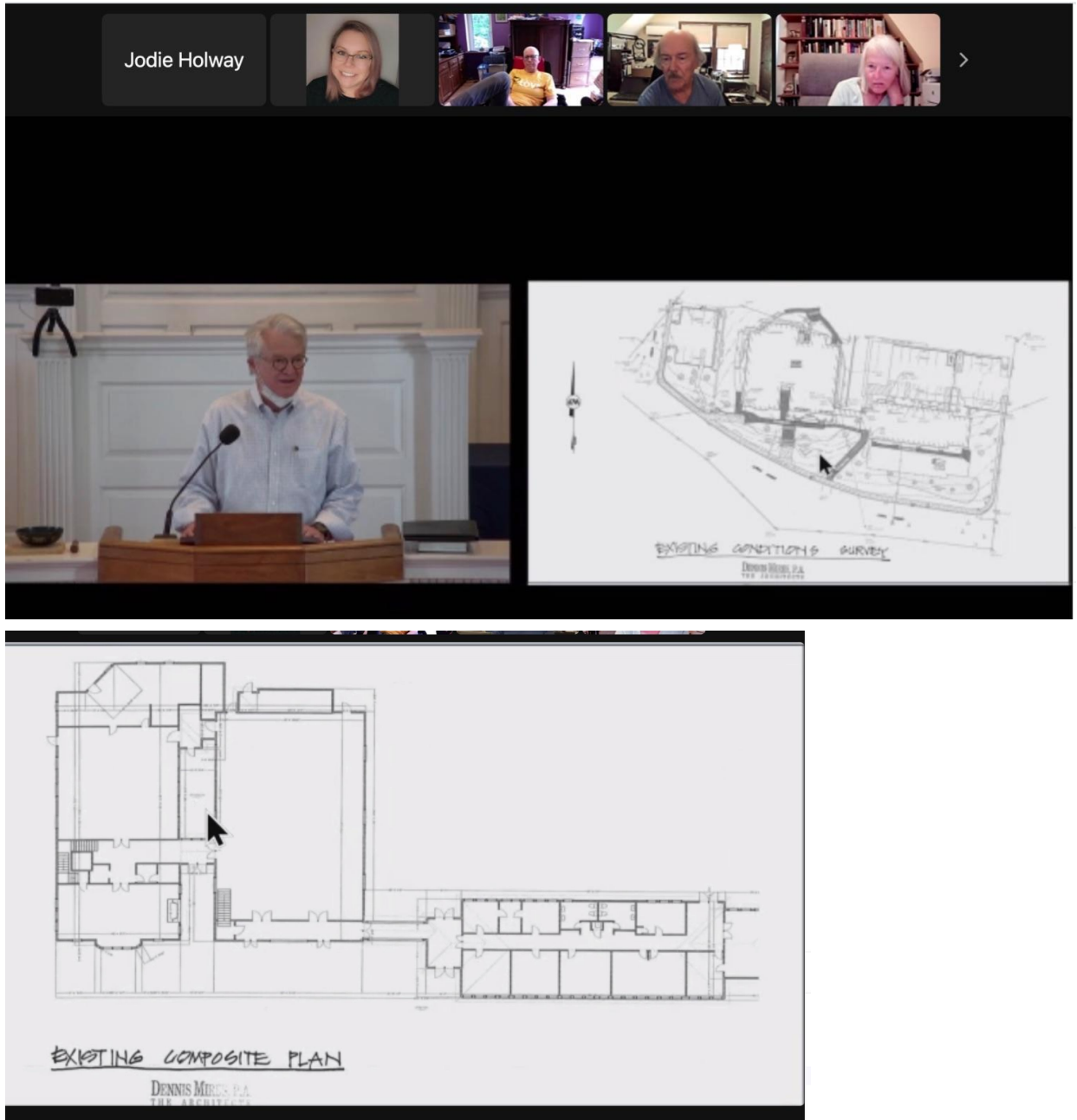
- 1. Main changes from last year are: spending slightly less on programs, more in Operations, quite a bit more in staff raises due to cost of living and inflation



- iii. **MOTION** to accept this 2022-23 budget as proposed
MOVED by John Laselle, **SECONDED** by Sean Chadwick
 Motion **PASSED** without discussion, including in-person and online votes

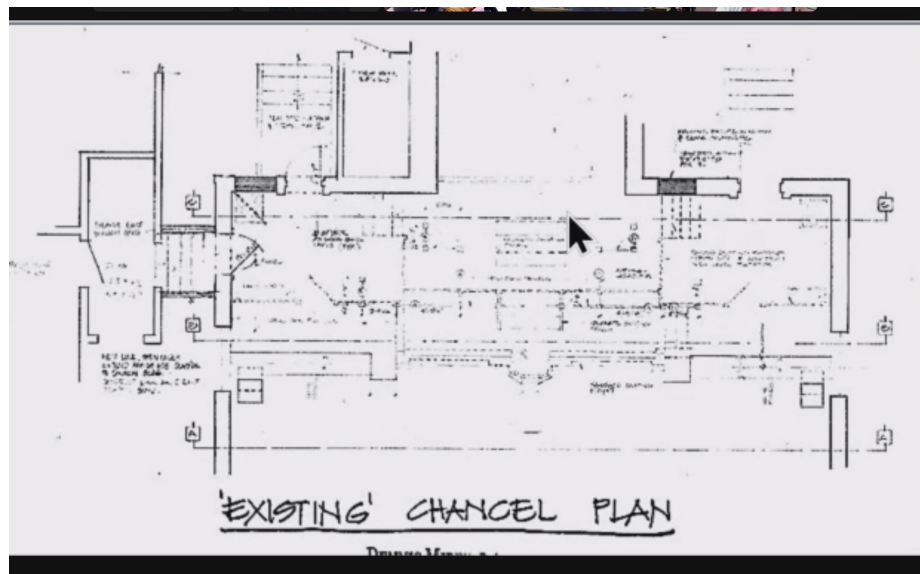
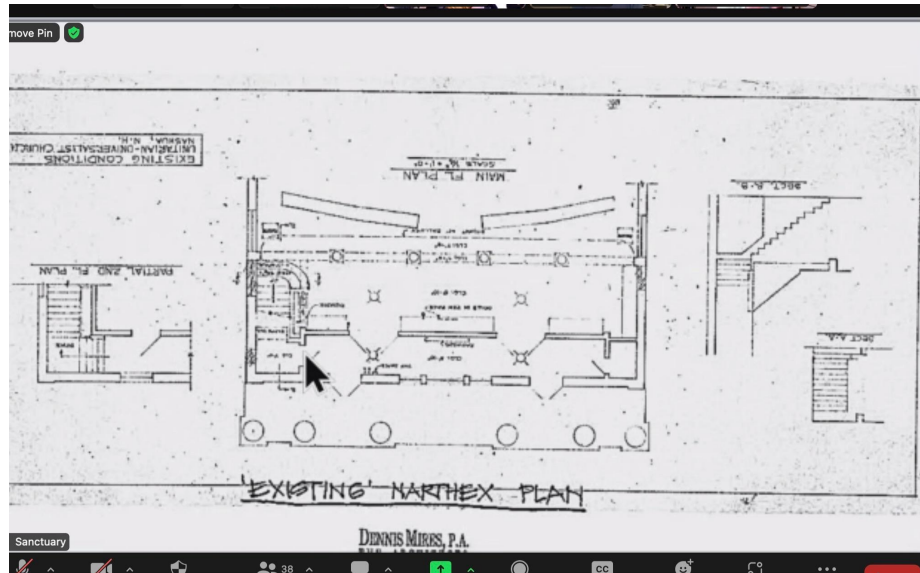
9. **Building Our Vision Team Update**, Rick Spitz and Jon Lasselle

- a. We are creating task forces to expand out the effort and thinking in five key areas:
 - i. 1-Sanctuary 2-Entryway 3-Parish House 4-White Wing Building 5-Energy Efficiency
 - ii. Would you like to join one or more design taskforces? Email bov@uunashua.org
- b. Presented by Dennis Mires from architectural firm “The Architects” (see the [Building Our Vision report here](#))
- c. Dennis Mires presents the current architectural plans and some ideas to consider:



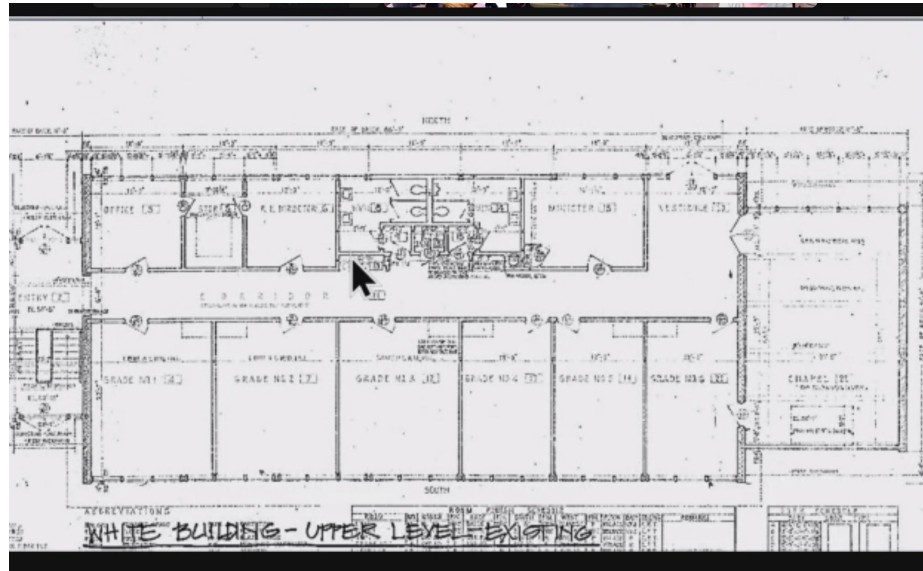
- i. Possibilities to change today’s not-so-welcoming approach from street
- ii. Considering a roof with skylights between parish house and sanctuary

- iii. Energy audit, improve efficiency and airtightness, options for windows where today is lots of single-pane glass
 - iv. Mechanical system has exceeded its expected lifespan for hot air, water, and steam
 - v. Considering options around gender-neutral bathrooms
 - vi. How to make the great space of the auditorium more used!
- d. Thoughts about the entryway and sanctuary, aka the Narthex and Chancel:



- i. Considering whether to make the organ more mobile, modify the elevations of the stage and the choir area
- ii. This might work with how we may modify the seating in the main sanctuary, thinking about accessibility and flexibility of the worship space

e. Thoughts about the preschool wing:



- i. Consider extending the entrance, gender neutral bathrooms too
- ii. Competing office vs. program space vs. storage space
- iii. Thinking about how we use the chapel, making accessible the lower floor for preschool, windows for energy efficiency as well as view
- f. For more information, check the team’s page: <https://uunashua.org/building-our-vision/>

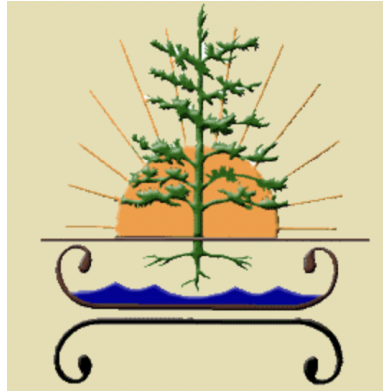
10. **Land Acknowledgement Statements**, Jess Woods

- a. Brief history of the region
 - i. People have been in Nashua for 8,000 years, which is hundreds of generations - this was the native Pemmacook people
 - ii. The original Christian settlers had the principle of “Subduing the earth”
 - iii. The Pennacook people were largely gone by 1700’s
 - iv. Some of the principals in the nearby Nashua Manufacturing Company "donated" the land for the building of our church
 - 1. This company processed cotton from plantations which enslaved people
- b. Presenting the steps taken by this committee to create the statement
 - i. Met with indigenous people Sagamo and Sagamoska, reflection, met again
 - ii. Examined various examples of land acknowledgement statements of others
 - iii. Periodically have been seeking feedback from UU Nashua
- c. What makes a good Land Acknowledgement Statement?
 - i. It’s not necessarily the words, it’s the action which it inspires
 - ii. We are open to suggestions of what specific actions we all can take

- d. Read two versions of the [proposed statement](#) for consideration and voting today
- i. **Full version:** The Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua is on unceded and occupied land called Niswa-ok (*NIS-wah-oak*) (now Nashua), in N'dakinna (*'n-DAH-kin-nah*), the sacred ancestral homeland of the Pennacook, Abenaki and Wabanaki Peoples, past and present. We acknowledge and honor these People who have been stewards of this land and water for hundreds of generations.
Our Church's financial foundation came from the appropriation of this sacred land and from profits of the cotton textile industry using the labor of enslaved people.
Our principles call us to work toward reconciliation and relationship with the Indigenous People who are still among us, and with those who have suffered through enslavement and racial injustice. And so we covenant to steward our environment, especially our local waterways, as well as to foster and nourish community relationships.
 - ii. **Short Version:** Welcome everyone to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, New Hampshire. Our church resides in Niswa-ok (Place of Two Rivers--now called Nashua) in N'dakinna—the sacred, unceded homelands and waterways stewarded by the Penacook, Abenaki, and Wabanaki Peoples for hundreds of generations.
 - iii. For more information visit:
 1. Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective, <https://indigenousoh.com/>



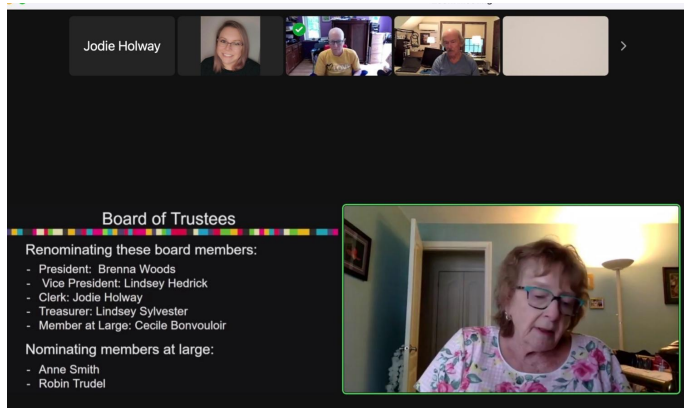
2. The Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook Abenaki People,
<https://cowasuck.org/>



- iv. **MOTION** to accept this Land Acknowledgement statement
MOVED by Kate Messner, **SECONDED** by Sarah Leshay
- v. Discussion: Bob Keating comments in favor of the statement: He wishes not to propose any changes to the wording, but just to acknowledge that many kinds of people were exploited in the name of the textile mills' profits, who did not get fair compensation, not just enslaved people, including the poor workers of the region
- vi. Motion **PASSES** easily, including in-person and online votes

11. Nominating Committee Report and Elections, Karen Leonard

- a. Per bylaws, must identify candidates to fill open positions on the Board of Trustees, Nashua Cemetery Association, Financial Records Review, and Nominating Committees



- b. See proposed slate of nominees and people leaving positions:
<https://uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Nominating-Committee-2022.pdf>
- c. This list was motioned already by Karen Leonard and the committee, now the vote
- d. Motion **PASSES** easily, including in-person and online votes

12. Closing the Meeting

- a. **MOTION** to adjourn
MOVED by Jon Lasselle, **SECONDED** by Carol Houde
Motion **PASSES** easily, including in-person and online votes
- b. Chalice extinguished, singing Peace and Joy by our own Kathy Grossman

