

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
All-Congregation Special Meeting:
Building Our Vision

November 20, 2022

Meeting held hybrid, at church in Nashua and via Zoom, due to COVID-19

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

Comment Period: Jan. 23 - March 24, 2023

All congregants may review these minutes and provide any corrections or input about this record of our meeting, to Clerk JKHolway@hotmail.com by March 24, 2023.

Agenda:

Time	Agenda Item	Presenter
11:30	Admission into Meeting	
12:00	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification of Quorum 	Brenna Woods
12:05	How We Will Conduct the Meeting	Brenna Woods
12:15	Chalice Lighting	Lindsey Hedrick
12:20	Framing the Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review minutes of the Annual Meeting – June 2022 • Goal and centering of our purpose today • Includes motion 	Brenna Woods
12:30	Building Our Vision Team Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time for questions at the end 	Frank Grossman, Jess Woods
1:20	Straw Poll Explanation and Congregational Vote	Brenna Woods
1:35	Adjournment and Chalice Extinguishing	Brenna Woods

1. Admission into Meeting

- a. Attendees were welcomed and registered, both in person and via Zoom
 - i. Check-in team: Jodie K. Holway, Victoria Agnew, Harry Purkhiser
- b. Many more attendees than required 20% of membership for a quorum
 - i. Needed 48 or more attendees, per 2022 [Clerk's Report](#)
 - ii. Registered 86 total attendees present

2. Call to Order, President Brenna Woods

- a. Certification of quorum by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of the Board of Trustees
- b. Explanation of hybrid meeting logistics
 - i. In-person discussion of microphones in the room, and how to cast votes
 - ii. Online video of how to participate via Zoom, and how to cast votes
- c. Test question for us to practice voting: "Is a bucket a cup?"
- d. **MOTION** to bring this question to a vote
MOVED by Karen Murray, **SECONDED** by Tiffany Holmes
Motion **PASSES**, with in-person and online votes: Yes, a bucket is a cup

3. How We Will Conduct the Meeting, President Brenna Woods

- a. Reading of Purposes from the Articles of Agreement, Article 2 in [Bylaws](#)
- b. Consent Agenda for the Annual Meeting from June 2022
 - i. **MOTION** to accept the [Review Draft](#) of that meeting's minutes
MOVED by Dave Hudson, **SECONDED** by Carol Houde
Motion **PASSED**, including in-person and online votes:
The minutes are now finalized
- c. Goal and centering of our purpose today: Of the three plans that the Building Our Vision team has crafted based on the congregation's feedback, this special meeting is to learn which of these you would like the team to gather additional information on, so the congregation can examine them in more detail

4. Building Our Vision Team Presentation, Jess Woods, Frank Grossman

- a. See details of these three options and Video Tour
<https://uunashua.org/building-our-vision-plan-options-video-tour/>
 - i. Core Plan
 - ii. Welcoming Plan
 - iii. Visionary Plan

- b. Sample screenshot from presentation, infrared image of current heat loss:



- c. Questions and discussion about the presentation

i. Topic from David Price

1. When mentioning the three plans with their approximate price tags of three-times, five-times, and seven-times our annual giving, does this mean one year of giving?
2. Answer: Yes, e.g. the 5x plan means that the Capital Campaign would raise five times the amount of money that we contribute for one year of stewardship
3. Also note this is the aspiration, not the definitive budget for these plans – many steps in this process to get there

ii. Topic from Steve Hedges

1. Clarification: the baseline funds that we're seeking for these 3x, 5x, 7x plans doesn't include using the Endowment?
2. Answer: correct, only relying on pledges

iii. Topic from Bob Keating

1. Original ballpark figures we'd heard were as high as \$3.8 million, is this related to today's draft 3x, 5x, 7x plans?
2. Answer: that number was the highest possible figure if the congregation felt that we should take every suggestion
3. Instead, we have scaled it back to not change the floorplan
4. The current 7x "Visionary" plan is \$2.4 million as of today

iv. Topic from Geri Davidson

1. We'd like to understand the length of time and target dates for this Capital Campaign?
2. Answer: next phase is a Feasibility Study, this study seeks to uncover whether we can actually raise that much money, and how long it might take to do so – this isn't yet planned

3. Typical campaigns are over 3 years, so our two-hundredth anniversary in 2026 is a good target to aim for, but all is TBD as we go forward together
- v. Topic from Karen Murray
 1. For seating changes with rows of chairs in the front rows, will this cause changes to the pews?
 2. Answer: the pews will stay, they may be moved back, and there will be a nice variety of chairs
- vi. Topic from Russ Leonard
 1. If we agree to do all the changes in the Core plan, does that make us an official UU Green Congregation?
 2. Answer: we will likely be at least the majority of the way to meet these criteria. We will check and respond back to the congregation – this has not been one of our explicit goals yet
- vii. Topic from Tina Marshman
 1. These three plans are strict subsets of each other, so we can first build one and then build the next step later. Doesn't this mean we can avoid making a commitment right now, and simply gather details now about the whole project without a single focus, and then make the final decision later?
 2. Answer: in theory we could do this, but it wouldn't be as organized. We need some baseline from which to take the next step of a financial feasibility study. Our experienced consultant will determine if we can achieve our focused choice, this sequence will use our consultant effectively
 3. Follow-up question: could we have asked for this financial assessment first, then make our decision?
 4. Answer: the consultant will spend a weekend interviewing many of us, and if he hears a great amount of enthusiasm for a moon-shot choice vs. if he finds that we're not really serious about our plan, these sentiments will affect the guidance that he'll reflect back to us for our ongoing conversation
 5. Also this consultant has performed a similar study at over 100 UU congregations around the country, we can best use his experience by following his advice. He will probe our intentions, which is difficult if our focus is too amorphous. He'll try to learn if this congregation is ready to commit ourselves emotionally/spiritually, who do we want to be in this community, how big do we want to dream – not merely what we can buy for a given price tag
- viii. Topic from Craig Lange
 1. Would the windows need to be fully restored before they get encapsulated? He knows a New Hampshire company that does this work
 2. Answer: the outside would still be exposed to the elements

- ix. Topic from Burns Fisher
 - 1. Will the pipe organ get fixed in the middle Welcoming Plan?
 - 2. Answer: No, in fact any changes to the organ are not included on any of these plans. Some congregations do upkeep their pipe organ and give a lot of concerts, they really take advantage of it.
 - 3. The organ consists of hundreds of wires and hundreds of pneumatic tubes, in addition to the pipes. So if we want a movable console, it's a very complex thing
 - 4. There could be another way to generate a similar sound without using these pipes. However, organ music hasn't been a high priority that we've heard so far as we've gathered input

5. **Straw Poll Explanation and Congregational Vote**, President Brenna Woods

- a. Straw Poll
 - i. This will be an informal straw poll, where we say Yes or No to each of the three plans in turn, so that we'll know which plan is the most favored by the congregation. Then after we know this, that's the plan that will go into our Motion as the main question of this meeting. The congregation will then vote Yes or No (or abstain) about the motion to explore that selected plan in greater detail.
 - ii. BOV team performs some short skits to illustrate how to indicate your preference because the three plans are subsets: e.g. if you like the changes in both the Welcoming and the Visionary plans, then you'll have to wait and raise your hand to vote ONLY for Visionary
 - iii. Overall votes for straw poll, including in-person and online:
 - 1. Core Plan = 15%
 - 2. Welcoming Plan = 32%
 - 3. Visionary Plan = 53% and thus will go into the motion next
- b. **MOTION** that the BOT will focus on Visionary plan, exploring all the necessary details, implications, and costs, so they may return to us in the coming months for our review and a formal commitment
MOVED by Carol Houde, **SECONDED** by Dave Hudson
- c. Discussion at the microphones: Pro, Con, and Informational
 - i. Comment at the Con microphone from Bob Keating
 - 1. We appreciate that the current target budget is lower than originally stated, \$3.8 million is harder than \$2.4 million
 - 2. Still, this means \$9,877 per member, double for a couple – worrying about the economic impact this can have on people
 - 3. We hope to look forward to the impact on the community
 - ii. Comment at the Con microphone from Sylvia Lundberg
 - 1. Raised my hand for Welcoming, not Visionary plan

2. Recently attended a funeral at Jewish synagogue that had been recently renovated – flattened the stage and put in chairs
 3. This didn't feel good, it felt commercial and institutional
 4. Wondering if there's a way to soften these proposed changes for our plans, then more of us would be in favor of Visionary
 5. Comment back from Brenna Woods: there will be time to dig deeper about prioritizing individual parts of the plan, how much of it to do or do even more, as we see fit
- iii. Comment at the Pro from Cecile Bonvouloir
1. Raised my hand for Welcoming, I find the cost of Vision is high, and I'm not sure we should dramatically change the sanctuary
 2. But I plan to vote for Visionary so the feasibility study will tell us more about doing every part of the plan – I know I can still give a lot of input as this process continues
- iv. Comment at the Pro from Joan Connacher
1. I've traveled a lot of distance in the past few weeks in my thinking about these issues
 2. Raised my hand for Visionary plan just now, because we do need a new entrance, and we need to balance everything
 3. For the past 40-plus years, this church has given me more than I can possibly express – so anything I can do to give it to people in the future, I'm willing to work with
- v. Comment at the Pro from Steve Ladew
1. I've been thinking and dreaming about all these possible changes
 2. The proposals match with our architecture and with our values
 3. History of our pipe organ and how we got it, and who contributed the money for constructing it for us today as a standalone project
 4. Let's have more flexibility with our stage, because of the variety of services that we can have – we found money for fixing the boiler, why not raise money for all these great possibilities
 5. I want to do absolutely everything – but let's keep it under six dollars! (just kidding)
- vi. Comment at the Pro from Jessica Price
1. I raised my hand for the Visionary plan because I support reaching for your dream. We can always pare back. You look at a new car at the top of what you can do and then cut it back.
 2. Last week I listened to the rain pouring down into the "swimming pool" next to this sanctuary, something needs to be done there
- vii. Comment by Zoom from Dan Murphy
1. The pipe organ is my main concern, I was disappointed not to see it mentioned in these plans. But because nobody seems to understand what can be done for the organ right now, it is old and there is very little expertise on exactly how to fix it and where to get that work done, so we cannot put a price on it right now

viii. Comment at the Pro from Harry Purkhiser

1. In the BOV presentation just now, Frank said we're not preservationists. Yet back in 1826 a bunch of people got together and built these buildings. They weren't preservationists either; they were visionaries, not thinking only of themselves; thinking about the future
2. That's the most important part of this. OK, the pews are great because they're each fashioned from a single solid piece of pine. But is pine part of our worship?
3. The visionary part now is us thinking about who and what do we want the church to be.

- d. Vote on the **MOTION** to investigate Visionary plan, after all discussion is done
PASSES with 67 votes or 89% in favor, 8 votes or 11% against, zero abstentions

6. **Adjourning and Chalice Extinguishing**

- a. Closing words by Brenna Woods
- b. **MOTION** to adjourn,
MOVED Paul Introcaso, **SECONDED** Megan Holmes,
Motion **PASSES**