

Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta  
**DRAFT Congregational Meeting Minutes**  
**Fall Meeting**  
**October 27, 2019**

M=Motion S=Seconded P=Passed F=Failed

**Opening Words/Chalice Lighting**-Provided by Reverend Craig Schwalenberg

**Call to Order and Verification of Quorum**

Moderator Karl Seeley called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm

There is a quorum--40 members signed in

**Approval of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes**

***Motion: to approve Minutes from the May 2019 Annual meeting: M/S/P***

**Approval of Final 2019-20 Budget**

A member called for a paper ballot for the budget vote.

***Motion: The final budget be approved as presented. M/S/P***

Yes: 29 No : 5 abstentions: 2

**Budget Discussion**

Concern expressed that there be a projection of the budget with the appropriate sized type.

Request made for paper copies of the budget—these were provided.

A member inquired about his voting rights---it was confirmed that the member has voting rights for this meeting having been a member for over a month.

Discussion took place about lack of clarity of the number of UUSO members currently. The official count is 185 currently that was reported to the UUA January 2019. Board is in process of culling membership which is described specifically under Policies on our website. Concern expressed that not all 185 members were listed in the registry for the meeting.

There was a question about definition of church size: We are a mid size congregation: Between 150-200 members

Concerns were expressed that the fundraising prediction may not be realized. Kari, Finance chair, explained we will be aiming to add fundraising events

Concerned that some pledges may come in lower. It was noted that they may also come in higher as they did during the past year.

Payroll service: It was explained that the initial May budget showed a reduction in that line but it has been raised back up. This happened because a payroll service change has

not been made yet officially. Kari, Finance Chair, stated that “ the majority of people are not comfortable with quick books. Alan Zimmerman (Treasurer) is looking into a lower cost service for payroll.”

Merchant account fees, why are they down? Alan Zimmerman (Treasurer) explained that we are not paying a non-compliance fee anymore.

White column total expenses on Revised Proposed Budget: supposed to be \$206,840.00

Properties Committee member, Duncan Smith, wanted to make it known that some of our maintenance or repairs of our historical building will be coming from the Preservation Fund.

***Motion: Beginning Jan 1, 2020 all UUSO year round hourly employees be paid no less than \$15 an hour. M/S/F***

13 in favor, 19 opposed, 5 abstentions

Previous to the above motion and vote the following occurred:

***Motion to call the question: M/S/P 1 opposed, 2/3 vote passes***

Comments concerning above motion:

- 1) Acknowledgement of our hard working staff was stated.
- 2) It was noted that we have a Personnel Committee that studies and implements the Fair Compensation Guidelines and caution was stated that this is not the right venue for talking about individual staff salaries.

Question about utilities cost---\$11,000 is what is proposed.

Question about retirement increase---Minister's was raised per his Agreement—extended to all employees.

Deficit noted at 10,000—greater than 5 % . Is this wise? Treasurer, Alan Zimmerman, explained that these are the recommended budget lines. Can use the healthy reserve that we currently have. This is a standard practice for one year but not good to have a deficit budget repeatedly.

Statement made that the reserve is a good way to solve the deficit issue. Margaret Davis, former UUSO Treasurer and Finance Chair, stated that we have had 3 deficit budgets and we recovered the deficit each time.

It was noted that the Minister's professional expenses are not part of salary + housing--- Minimum per UUA Fair Compensation guidelines is \$8000.

There was a discussion on the difference in ledger accounts vs. bank accounts.

A member expressed appreciation regarding the conversation around the budget to gain a better understanding.

A member requested that Rev. Craig step out during the budget vote. Another member disagreed---“Rev. Craig provides valuable information and we need to keep our doors open.”

During the discussion of budget, the Minister provided a comment. A concern was expressed by a member who objected to the Minister having a voice at Congregational Meetings due to the power of the role. The member stated that the Members should have the sole power of voice in the Congregational Meeting.

### **Review of Financial Operations Report**

Kari Reynolds, Finance Chair, presented a summary of the how the report was developed.

Many of our financial processes are in good shape.

Recommendations: Safety and Security Issues—i.e. OBH Office, security of files

Question about the door in the office—Safety and Finance recommend more secure door and will have ability for Evelyn to see through door but more security.

Question about locks on building.—it was clarified that the report recommends just changing keys on office locks.

It was clarified that the Finance Committee is responsible for monitoring our insurance with Church Mutual.

### **Bylaws Revisions**

Karl Seeley, Moderator and By Laws Committee Chairperson, explained that the first page pertains to small “housekeeping” issues.

***Motion: to consider 1<sup>st</sup> page as single item to vote: M/S/P unanimous***

***Motion to approve 1<sup>st</sup> page of ByLaws revisions: M/S/P unanimously***

Moderator read through changes proposed

***Motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> page of ByLaws revisions presented: M/S/P***

Question about clarity of specifying majority of vote. It was clarified that the phrases are from separate sections.

***Motion to change language: rather than “dismissal of minister”—change to “respectful ministerial change” M/S/P 1 objection***

***Meeting Adjourned at 2:12pm***