

Minutes for the Annual Congregational Meeting of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, June 11, 2023

APPROVED

1. Call to Order

Having observed that the audience present constituted a quorum, Ken Stephenson, TVUUC President, called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. (photos available for verification)

2. Confirm Covenant [4:56]

Ken Stephenson read the covenant expressing the points in Chris Buice's sermon of this morning reinforcing the points for the best ways to work together in covenant as expressed in the RE manual: 1) show respect for all, 2) be kind and fair, 3) participate and encourage each other, 4) share and take turns, 5) include everyone, 6) settle disagreements in peaceful and caring ways, 7) take care of each other, our space and our world, 8) challenge racism and oppression wherever we find them. At this point, the chalice was lit to begin the meeting. [6:23]

3. Motion to allow virtual voting [6:53]

Ken announced the motion to permit virtual voting, which is necessitated by multi-platform participation, including in-person and on-line (e.g. ZOOM) presence. He noted that this motion will be integrated into the Church by-laws for future Congregational Meetings.

"We, the members of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, vote to henceforth hold all called congregational meetings simultaneously, in-person and virtually. All votes by members in such meetings will be valid, just as if we were all meeting in-person in the Church space. Our Church is not the building itself, but the people of which it is made."

He called for a vote on this motion by a show of hands.

Motion carried unanimously. No opposed. No abstentions. [7:59]

4. Approval of minutes from June 2022 Congregational Meeting [8:36]

The minutes for the Congregational Meeting on June 22 have been on-line for some time. Ken called for additions, corrections or comments to the minutes as posted. Seeing none, he noted that the Meeting Ballot contained a line for the approve of these minutes and that the tally would be made available when all votes on the Ballot were counted.

Motion for approved of the minutes carried. Yes 99 No zero Not voting 3 [9:02]

5. Reports on Nominations from the Leadership Development Committee (previously Nominations Committee) [9:21]

In the absence of Melissa Reed because of a recent injury, A.B. Coleman presented the nominations. He began by wishing Melissa a speedy recovery on behalf of the entire congregation and by thanking the members of the Committee :

- 1) Melissa Reed (Chair)
- 2) Chloe Airoidi-Watters
- 3) Susan Kersey
- 4) Seema Singh
- 5) Eddie Chin

6)Mark Mohundro

7)Trevor Palmer

8)A. B. Coleman

for their service in putting together a great slate of nominees. [11:00]

Nominees	
Position	Person
President-Elect	Heather Kistner
Board Secretary	Jeff Mellor
Treasurer-Elect	Steve Drevik
Board Member	Roy Kersey
Board Member	Maddie Kulpa
Board Member	Bella Thomas-Wilson
Leadership Development Chair-Elect	Denise Coleman
Leadership Development Committee	Lynn Hixson
Leadership Development Committee	Kristen McBee
Endowment Fund Committee	David Massey
Endowment Fund Committee	Taylor Thomas
Program Council Co-Chair	Barbara Lamm
Program Council Co-Chair	Betty Bumgarner [18:33]

A call for nominations from the floor did not result in any new names, so the slate as announced will stand and be subject to the votes on the TVUUC Congregational Meeting Ballot as distributed. The congregation applauded in appreciation of the Committee’s work. [18:47]

NB: Because of uncertainty on procedure, the candidates for Program Council Co-Chairs were omitted from the ballot. The situation emerged that Barbara Lamm had in fact already been instated as Program Council Co-Chair and Betty Bumgarner was proposed as Rising Program Council Co-Chair. The members present warmly recognized both Barbara and Betty in their respective roles and the Congregation greeted this recognition with approval.

Program Council Co-Chair	Barbara Lamm
Program Council Co-Chair	Betty Bumgarner

The meeting paused for voting and pizza. [19:34]

6. Proposed Budget for 2023-24 - Eddie Chin (substituting for Bill Cherry, who is out of town) [22:05]

At the request of Bill Cherry, Eddie Chin presented the **Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Proposal**, a summary of which had been distributed to the members (on-line and hard copy for in-person participants, inserted here:)

Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Proposal - Annual Meeting 11June2023	
Revenue	
Giving	
410001 Pledge Contributions (All types)	\$533,397
410002 Share the Plate - TVUUC Portion	\$10,500
410003 Non-Pledge Contributions	\$15,000
410006 Generosity Sunday Contributions	\$12,000
Total Giving	\$570,897
Fundraising	
410101 Gift Cards (1)	\$14,000
All Fundraising Events (2)	\$27,000
410201 Building Rental	\$10,000
Total Fundraising	\$51,000
Total Revenues	\$621,897

Expenses	
Building & Operations	
Mortgage & Debt	
510001 SBA Loan Payments	\$7,692
Total Mortgage & Debt	\$7,692
Building & Grounds	
510101 Utilities	\$26,400
510102 General Maintenance & Supplies	\$17,000
510105 Grounds Upkeep	\$25,000
510109 Property Insurance	\$8,000
Other Building & Grounds	\$3,200
Total Building & Grounds	\$79,600
Operations	
510203 Copier Lease & Supplies	\$7,000
510204 Telephone/Internet	\$5,200
510210 Online Donation Processing Fees	\$3,000
510214 Realm	\$4,000
510219 Inova Payroll Processing	\$2,500
510222 Lic & Subscription Fees	\$4,000
Other Operating Expenses	\$4,930
Total Operations	\$30,630
Denominational Connections	
510301 UUA Fair Share Dues	\$18,000
Total Denominational Connections	\$18,000
TVUUC Programs	
510401 Music Program	\$1,200
510405 Worship Committee	\$1,750
510411 Lifespan Religious Ed (C & Y)	\$5,000
Other Program Expenses	\$5,750
Total TVUUC Programs	\$13,700
Total Building & Operations	\$149,622
Personnel	
Salaries and Wages	
510501 Sr. Minister (Salaried - FT)	\$73,097

Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Budget Proposal - Annual Meeting 11June2023	
510502 Sr. Minister Housing Allowance	\$25,700
510511 Dir of Fin. & Ops. (Salaried - FT)	\$62,162
510521 Dir of Lifespan Rel. Ed (Salaried - FT)	\$58,147
510531 Dir of Music (Salaried - 30 Hrs)	\$38,413
Other Salaries & Wages	\$93,391
Total Salaries and Wages	\$350,910
Payroll Taxes	
510505 Sr. Minister SE Tax Offset	\$7,558
510515 Dir of Finance & Operations P/R Tax	\$4,755
510525 Dir of LRE P/R Tax	\$4,448
510536 Dir of Music P/R Tax	\$2,939
510544 Office Administrator P/R Tax	\$2,406
Other Payroll Taxes	\$4,739
Total Payroll Taxes	\$26,845
Retirement	
510503 Sr. Minister Retirement	\$7,403
510512 Dir of Finance & Operations Retirement	\$4,351
510522 Dir of LRE Retirement	\$4,070
510542 Office Administrator Retirement	\$2,202
510573 Asst. Dir. of Religious Ed Retirement	\$1,201
Total Retirement	\$19,227
Health Insurance	
510506 Sr. Minister Health Plan (E+S)	\$18,514

510507 Sr. Minister Disability Insurance	\$446
510524 Dir of LRE Health Plan (Family)	\$15,329
510535 Dir of Music Health Plan (E+S)	\$11,969
510574 Assist Dir RE Health Plan (E+C)	\$7,535
Total Health Insurance	\$53,793
Other Personnel Expenses	
510504 Sr. Minister Professional Expense	\$5,500
510802 Workers Comp Insurance	\$2,400
510815 Staff Professional Expenses	\$3,000
Total Other Personnel Exp	\$10,900
Total Personnel	\$461,675
Independent Contractors	
510821 Video Production	\$9,600
510823 Sound Operators	\$1,000
Total Independent Contractors	\$10,600
Total Expenses	\$621,897
Net Total	-\$0
Notes to Expense Budget: 1) \$2,000 from Gift Card revenue will be earmarked for the Sustainability Fund 2) Income will be tracked by specific event but rolled into single line for reporting	
C a p i t a l B u d g e t	
Transfer Funds from Capital Reserve	\$40,000
Potential Expenditures for Parking Lot Resurfacing, HVAC Replacement, Office Carpet	\$40,000

The detailed budget, available on request from Claudia Pressley, contains for each line item, the proposed and the current dollar figure. [22:59] This proposed budget was developed by the Finance Committee, with input from the staff and the Personnel Committee and was approved by the Board in its last meeting of May 7 for presentation to the Congregation.

Revenues for this coming year are only \$17,000 greater than the current budget, largely because pledge revenues have remained substantially flat. Non-pledge revenues are based on historical numbers in these categories, though with the end of COVID restrictions, Sunday plate contributions should rise as attendance increases. Eddie reminded the Congregation of the continuing opportunity to establish or increase pledges if that has not already been done. This opportunity is always available during the year. A Fund Raising Task Force is being organized to help realize the ambitious fundraising goal budgeted. In addition, proposals to increase membership should help realize revenue projections. The RaiseRight gift card system should also contribute to a rise in revenue. More information on this opportunity for the church will be forthcoming. [25:13]

Expenditures: The greatest proportion of expenditures by far is for salaries and other personal expenses. These expenses are increasing by about \$60,000. We increased the pay for sextons and childcare personnel to \$15/hr in the hopes of maintaining our ability to attract and keep quality employees. There was a 7% increase in salaried positions, but that unfortunately did not meet the recommended 14% cost-of-living increase the Personnel Committee recommended. Leadership will continue to look for ways in which additional adjustments can be made. Capital expenditures are pretty straightforward with the money coming from the existing Capital Reserve Fund including some unspent monies from capital budgets in recent past years. The proposed expenditures are on most everybody's wish list: parking lot resurfacing, HVAC replacement, office carpet. Final decision on these items will come from the Building and Grounds committee.

Eddie then opened the floor to questions. Beauvais Lyons asked about the number of pledging units now and in the recent past.

Actual count: 203 pledging units of about 373 members. The number of pledge units is roughly the same from recent years. The structure of pledging is *top heavy*. Approximate 25% of pledge units account for about half of our budget, most of them over the age of sixty. [28:45] Grier Novinger asked about available COVID relief loans. About \$80k is still available from the original \$149k loan. The service fees and interest are modest about \$640/month repayment. Gene Burr asked about maintenance and other expenditures in relation to the solar panels on the roof. Ken Stephenson noted that we have a special earmarked fund for the solar panels from which the panels have now been paid off. About \$7k remains in that fund to cover ongoing expenses. Ken added that the SBA loan covered about \$50k of badly needed re-roofing expenses to fix the leaks that had plagued the church. Interest is a little less than 3%. [32:33] We can earn 5% in CDs until we have settled on specific projects. Elnora Williams asked about some of the creative aggressive fund raising ideas that have been mentioned. Ken expressed eagerness to hear suggestions. The Rummage Sale and Auction were examples of past ideas from members. Currently they bring in about \$5k down from earlier years of \$25k. He gave the example of using RaiseRight on his phone and got a 4% donation from Home Depot (or Lowe's) on his purchase at no cost. This is something like the gift cards at our table in McKendry Hall, but with hundreds of available merchandisers available. LL Bean does 14%! **We pay no more, the seller gives us a cutback.**

The meeting paused again for casting ballots and eating pizza, possibly in that order. [36:29]

As members prepared to vote, David Massey discussed the background for proposed changes in the Motion on the Endowment Fund Charter. The Endowment Fund Committee is charged with balancing the fiduciary responsibility of maintaining the integrity of the funds and funding legitimate projects outside the scope of the annual church budget. In light of recent market declines, one portion of the formula for calculating recommended distributions has proven to be unnecessarily restrictive. Massey noted that both the EFC and the Board recommend that the Congregation adopt the amendment deleting the "Adjustment for Market Declines" provision in Article III of the Charter. Without this provision, the "rolling average" formula in Article III will still account for market fluctuations, while also factoring in the impact of new donations. Moreover, the rolling average formula is in line with best practices observed in other well run endowment funds, e.g. the East Tennessee Foundation. With the proposed change, the Board must still approve distributions for projects and programs. He then opened the floor to questions. In response to a question about the current fund status, he gave it as \$780,000 as of close of business on Friday, June 9, 2023. He noted for information that the passage of the proposed changes requires a 2/3 majority to be accepted. [42:13]

To confirm that the Congregational Meeting was in fact operating under the quorum of 50 members, Ken asked that this be determined by unanimous consent, which was approved. [48:02]

The meeting reconvened. [52:34] Ken reminded those present that the gift card table remained open for those interested and that even as the RaiseRight option was coming into use, the gift card table would continue to function as before. [53:05] In response to a question, Ken clarified that if one's Raise Right account was linked to one's bank account, then the transaction cost was minimal, around twenty-five cents, whereas the credit card procedure incurred somewhat larger costs.

7. Report on the Endowment Fund - David Massey

David began his report of the Endowment Fund Committee by stating that it was available in two forms. The first is a two-page summary which had been distributed here in the Sanctuary this morning. Online members could see a copy of this report by emailing him at EndowTVUUC@gmail.com for a copy.

The second part of this report are the actual financial statements for Calendar Year 2022 and the first quarter of 2023. Again, any member of the Congregation can email EndowTVUUC@gmail.com to receive a copy of these statements. David said he would also be available to respond to any questions or concerns after this meeting, or

in the days ahead by calling him directly at 865-621-8352.

Report for the full calendar year 2022

As of 12/31/2022, the Fund's ending balance was \$569,522, down \$107,563 from 12/31/2021.

Donations totaled \$14,285, down from \$31,825 in CY 2021, and \$76,877 in CY 2020.

- The Vanguard accounts suffered an unrealized market loss of \$122,117 – offset by dividends totaling \$14,644.
- During CY 2022, the Fund provided \$18,281 for five projects including the lobby monitor set up by Beauvais Lyons and Ted Jones that scrolls photographs and videos of TVUUC members and activities.
- These projects also included the cameras and lighting needed to livestream this meeting and all Sunday services.

January–March 2023

Donations to the Endowment Fund in the first quarter totaled \$170,377 — due in large part to gifts from Jamie Adcock and from the estate of Kim Haynes.

Apart from donations, the Fund has not recovered from the substantial losses suffered during 2022, but during the first quarter the Vanguard accounts did show an unrealized gain of \$30,609 and income returns of \$268. With the latest donations, the Fund's ending balance was \$770,775 compared to \$638,511 on March 31, 2022.

Within the parameters imposed by market cap provision in the Endowment Fund Charter, the EFC allocated up to \$7,075 for three projects in 2023 — a community garden water system (\$475), worktables for the community garden (\$600), and facilitator training for the Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education program (\$6,000).

As of close of business Friday, total assets have reached a high water mark of \$781,386 – more than double the \$375,000 that was in the fund in early 2020.

Again, the gain since December is due in part to the market clawing its way back from the debacle of 2022, but mainly because of the two large gifts previously mentioned.

But, in fact, all gifts are important and have an incremental benefit to the growth of the Fund, and to our ability to support special projects. As Marion Von Beck says, every little bit helps, and many bits add up to a lot. Thank you to everyone who has made gifts to the fund and who have included the Fund in your Wills.

Gifts Made “In Memory of” or “In Honor of”

Members and friends who donate to the Endowment Fund can honor someone they admire or memorialize someone who has passed on. Those memorialized by Endowment Fund gifts in 2022 were (in alphabetical order):

- Chris Brown, Duane Chafee, George R. Cooper, III, Bobbie DeRidder, Kim Haynes, Larry Kitchen, Bob Palmer

Finally, as chair of the EFC, he expressed his privilege to be representing an absolutely fantastic and dedicated group of folks who serve as stewards of your generous donations to the TVUUC Endowment Fund. They are:

Gail Anderson, Joy Fels, Maureen McBride, Robby McMurry, Grier Novinger, Stephanie Seay, Bill Cherry (ex-officio), Linda Randolph (ex-officio).

He concluded with a special shout-out to Gail Anderson who is cycling off the committee this month after

serving a 3-year term. We will miss her on the committee and wish her well. [59:45] He opened the floor to questions, but there were none. [59:58]

He reminded the congregation that the new cycle for proposed projects will begin with requests for proposals when it resumes its work in October, 2023. Decisions on these proposals for calendar year 2024 will be made in January, 2024 by the committee, then transmitted to the Board for final approval after which the funds can be made available. [60:44]

8. Report on the Eighth Principle Task Force - Mark Mohundro

Mark began by refreshing people's memories of the wording of the Eighth Principle:

"We covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

He then listed important milestones from this past year.

- 1 Dedication of the Elandria Williams' Room
- 2 September 4th Service-Ableism and Disability Justice by Rob Spirko
- 3 Help producing the October 16th Service-Diwali
- 4 February 25th Workshop- Abundant LUUV and the 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism -Featuring Rev. Duncan Teague
- 5 February 26th Service- At the Boundaries of Our Love and Faith--Rev. Duncan Teague

Upcoming events this year will include the UUA Common Read Program entitled "Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism." The UU Common Read builds community in our congregations and our movement by giving diverse people a shared focus for reflection and action. A Common Read can take us on a powerful faith journey into what it means to be human and accountable in a world filled with both pain and joy. It shares how five diverse congregations encounter frustrations and disappointments, as well as hope and wonder, once they commit to the journey to create multicultural, antiracist Beloved Community.

Sometime in September there will be a six-session webinar called "Trans Inclusion in Congregations" focusing on transgender inclusion in congregations.

He reminded the congregation that the Eighth Principle encompasses ALL forms of oppression, such as women's rights.

Other plans include a field trip to Cherokee, NC, a field trip to The Legacy Museum in Montgomery Alabama: "From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration" as well as more services on additional topics.

In conclusion, he thanked the members on the committee for the valuable assistance: Elnora Williams, Chloe Airoidi-Watters, Patsy Farmer, Seema Singh, Mary Rogge, and Eddie Chin. Additionally, he recognized with gratitude the work of Ken Stephenson, the Board, Catherine Farmer-Loya, Chris Buice, and David Massey for funds to support Rev. Duncan Teague's workshop and service [66:14]

To address an earlier inadvertent omission, Ken announced the appointment of Doug Cox as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Introducing the co-chairs for the Program Council, Ken announced that the Program Council will now be headed by co-chairs, Barbara Lamm and Betty Bumgarner, because it is a big job requiring the services of two

people. They were greeted with enthusiastic applause. [67:13]

9. Report from the Program Council - Barbara Lamm and Betty Bumgarner

Barbara reviewed the renewal of the Program Council’s activities following COVID, featuring the successful Homecoming Event. Program Council has resumed regular meetings on first Monday of every month, to which all are invited. There are currently forty-seven (47) programs and three additional ones will soon be added. Three youth programs have been supported: Let’s Connect, Garden Club, Nature Exploration. Betty and Barbara emphasized the need for volunteer sponsors to keep programs functioning well. [71:19] The Program Council supported the refurbishment of the Linda Kraeger library and shelve the many book donations. The Alliance also provided funds and help in this endeavor. The Program Guide covering all these activities will be made available soon. [74:09]

Ken then opened the floor to questions and comments. The RE Program came in for great appreciation. [76:02]

10. Recognitions

Ken expressed thanks to the staff and host of volunteers whose collective and cooperative efforts keep the church and its programs running. He urged members who may be looking for something to do to reach out to committees and task forces such as Buildings & Grounds, Strategic Planning, Finance, Leadership Development, Endowment Fund, Technology Task Force, Eighth Principle, Reproductive Justice, Fund Raising Task Force, all of which are looking for new blood, active support and fresh ideas. He expressed deep appreciation of all the members who already spend their time and energy to do this valuable work. [77:27]

11. Recognition of Incoming Board Members and Thanks to Departing Board Members

Ken thanked Board Members Ryan McBee, Linda Randolph, Wendy Syer, and Alice Woody. His words of gratitude to Chris Buice, Claudia Pressley, Catherine Farmer-Loya, Miriam Davis, Michael Miller, John Montgomery, Mark Mohundro, and David Asbury were greeted with a round of applause.

A request from the floor suggested that additional information on the Stewardship Campaign would be desirable with such information as number of pledge units and pledge levels because of the impact that has on the budget. Ken reported that the Board would be considering that issue. [82:56]

The voting tallies were reported as follows:

Voting Results as tabulated and reported after balloting was completed.

102 total ballots including in-person and online were tallied.

• Minutes of Congregational Meeting of June 12, 2022: Yes 99 No 3

<u>No</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>President-Elect</u>	<u>Heather Kistner</u>	<u>99</u>
<u>102</u>	<u>Board Secretary-Clerk</u>	<u>Jeff Mellor</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>0</u>	<u>Treasurer-Elect</u>	<u>Steve Drevik</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>101</u>	<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Roy Kersey</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Maddie Kulpa</u>	<u>102</u>

<u>0</u>	Board Member	Bella Thomas-Wilson	102
<u>0</u>	Leadership Development Chair-Elect	Denise Coleman	101
<u>1</u>	Leadership Development Committee	Lynn Hixson	102
<u>0</u>	Leadership Development Committee	Kristen McBee	101
<u>1</u>	Endowment Fund Committee	David Massey	102
<u>0</u>	Endowment Fund Committee	Taylor Thomas	102
<u>0</u>			

- The Budget for July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024 was approved. **Yes 101 No 1**
- The Amendment of the Endowment Fund Charter
[That Article III, Section B, Paragraph 1,
“Adjustment for Market Declines” be removed from the Endowment Fund Charter” be deleted]
was approved **Yes 100 No 2**

Ken concluded with a note of personal thanks to all those who had helped and supported him in his role as President, in particular Ryan McBee and Chris Buice. [88:34]

12. Introduction of Incoming President

Ken’s introduction of Eddie Chin as incoming President was warmly welcomed.

13. President’s Remarks and Adjournment

Eddie thanked the congregation for the honor of election and President and acknowledged his excellent and supportive predecessors in providing superb examples to follow and adjourned the Congregational Meeting at 2:03 pm. [90:53]