

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bozeman
Annual Meeting/Town Hall
January 17, 2021, 11:45 am by Zoom

Call to order, Peg Wherry, UUFB President

Chalice lighting

“We Shall be Known,” by the “How We Thrive” Virtual Choir

Establishing a quorum

Peg Wherry reported that a quorum will be established based on the number of mail-in ballots returned, not the number of participants on today’s meeting.

Zoom participation instructions were given by Peg.

2020 Budget Presentation

Bruce DePriester, Chair, Finance Committee

Bruce reported that UUFB is in a strong financial position despite the COVID shut-down in 2020. With 98% of pledges paid in 2020, there was a positive cash flow for the year and UUFB was able to fund the three reserve accounts and give end-of-year bonuses to staff. He reported that 2021 pledges to date meet 94% of the pledge goal, and that additional fundraising efforts are already underway for 2021.

Checking and Savings account balances at First Security Bank total about \$100K. UUFB also holds investments through North Fork Financial. They include include reserve funds for capital needs, sabbatical reserve for the minister’s position, and operating reserve in case the checking/savings accounts are not sufficient to meet operating costs.

Overall, Bruce considers UUFB to be in solid financial shape due to the congregation’s generous pledging. He found that remarkable given that the fellowship was unable to meet in person for 9 ½ months in 2020.

Questions for Bruce:

Did we get COVID PPE funds which were available to churches? UUFB did not apply for PPE funds because we didn’t have a great financial need compared to other congregations.

Do we have a legacy donor program? **Not** now, but work has started and money go into the endowment.

Why is the Sunday services budget higher for 2021 than in 2020? We have used outside speakers more often this year because they can easily participate in online services, alleviating the need to fly people here. When we go back to in-person services there would presumably be transportation costs for some outside speakers.

When we go back to in-person services, is there money in the budget to continue broadcasting those services over the internet? We have committed to streaming services even after in-person services resume, and a task force is working on that now. If new equipment is needed, it would come from the capital improvement fund.

Is there budget for COVID-related precautions such as masks and sanitizer, and increased janitorial services?

We already have masks and sanitizer, and don't anticipate needing additional janitorial services once in-person services resume. But if those needs arise we could shift funds from other categories.

Is the RE Coordinator salary increasing, since she will now be overseeing the Youth Group? No, Beth Witte and her supervisor (Rev. Duffy) feel she can add youth group supervision without increasing her current hours. However, youth group coordinator hours were added to the budget for Christine Wilcox. Both could have increased hours if deemed necessary by the Board during 2021.

Are we intentionally avoiding paying benefits to people by keeping them under 15 hours/week? No, though we are aware that UUA guidelines specify any employee working over 15 hours/week should be paid benefits, we are not chiseling hours to avoid paying benefits.

Bylaw change

A proposed change to UUFB by-laws to allow meetings and voting by the membership either in-person or remotely, or by a combination of the two, will be on the mail-in ballot along with the budget approval item. The need to make this change emerged because of COVID safety restrictions this year which prohibited in-person gatherings for events like today's annual meeting.

General Questions

If you didn't receive a ballot, please contact Christy. Postmark deadline to return ballots is January 25. Peg will send out another email to include the new language in the by-laws.

Gratitude

Peg thanked the staff, Caring Committee, Sunday Services committee, auction coordinators, and everyone who contributed and pledged to UUFB this year. It was an enormously challenging year and the staff, volunteers and membership responded with flexibility, generosity, and many extra hours of hard work.

Closing words

Extinguish Chalice

AFTERNOTE: The official count for the mail-in fellowship vote was tabulated by Janine Roberts and Sally Russell on January 29 as follows:

91 ballots returned

91 "yes" votes to approve the 2021 Budget

90 "yes" votes to amend the by-laws as proposed

1 "abstain" vote to amend the by-laws as proposed