



Foothills Unitarian Church

Special Congregational Meeting  
1 pm October 6, 2019

Minutes Approved June 14, 2020

**Board members in attendance:** Sara Steen, Sue Sullivan, Brendan Mahoney, Glenn Pearson, Joan Woodbury, Debbie Gentry, and ex-officio board member Rev. Gretchen Haley

103 Members in attendance (Quorum established)

Welcome and chalice lighting by Bob Bacon and Owen Powell.

Motion to approve the agenda for the meeting (consisting of presentations and a vote to authorize beginning a capital campaign for construction of an expanded campus) made by Nate Donovan. Motion seconded and passed.

Motion to approve standing rules for the meeting made by Bob Bacon. Motion seconded and passed.

Margaret Cottam of the Building Expansion team presented an overview of all of the research, congregational communication, and studies, both internal and external, the congregation has done over the past dozen years in preparation for this building expansion.

Board President Sara Steen expressed gratitude for the members of the various teams that have worked on this project over the years, including the facilities team, the futures committee, the space committee, and the current building expansion team.

Erin Hottenstein presented an overview of why we have needed to expand our physical space for years now, solicited specific stories from members of the audience about the

ways our space limitations have negatively impacted us, and presented the 3D animated tour of the proposed new campus.

Sue Sullivan, board vice president, then explained how the capital campaign has been planned, as a 12- to 14-week concentrated, connective, and uplifting series of individual visits with every household that supports Foothills, sharing the vision of what we need and what we can do with that new space, and respecting everyone's individual financial circumstances. She described the various teams that will be formed to do the work of the campaign, including a financing team that will research grants, outside donors, green building incentives, and financing options, to assemble a total financial package for the congregation to vote on at the conclusion of the campaign in early February. She said that the board was in favor of using the church's current endowment fund, which stands at about \$300,000, in the building expansion financing package. She asked for congregants who have thoughts about this option to share their responses with board members prior to the end of the capital campaign.

Brendan Mahoney then presented the estimated construction costs of the various segments of the new campus, which total \$9.3 million. When combined with additional fees, furnishings estimates, and required contingency funding of \$1.5 million, the total estimated project cost comes in at \$10.8 million. He noted that the project can be built in phases if needed.

Lay leaders Tom Rhodes and Patti Nash then presented the highlights of the 17 focus group meetings, which drew 277 people who were overwhelmingly positive about the project, the timeliness of the campaign, and their own willingness to participate financially and as volunteers.

Board member Joan Woodbury then presented the Board of Trustees' recommendation that we move forward with a capital campaign, and that we set a campaign goal in about a month, once the financing team has done its initial research.

Jenn Powell made a motion that we call for a vote on authorizing the capital campaign, and the floor was opened for questions and comments from the congregation.

Cory Carroll indicated his support of the campaign and said he would love to see a cost breakdown of meeting LEED certification for the new building. Rev. Gretchen Haley and building expansion team member Peg MacMorris said that getting the new building LEED certified is possible but that we could also build it to LEED standards without taking on the extra costs of getting formally certified. LEED is the top green building

certification program in the world and indicates a building project has been sustainably designed, constructed and operated.

Chris Hutchinson said he supported the measured and careful way that we are moving forward with this capital campaign and building expansion.

Suzanne Skok wanted to confirm that we were simply authorizing the campaign, and that final design plans would be drafted after the campaign is completed and a total financial package has been assembled. Gretchen confirmed this and gave a tentative timeline of beginning construction of the new sanctuary by the end of 2020 and having a dream of having Christmas Eve 2021 services in the new building.

John Brubaker expressed support for embarking on the capital campaign and said that while money is often an intimidating subject and projects with large dollar amounts can be shocking, the time value of money can make it feasible in the long run. Time value of money refers to the concept that money available at the present time is worth more than the identical sum in the future due to its potential earning capacity.

Jeanne Patton asked if “friends” of Foothills would also be asked to participate in the capital campaign, and Gretchen affirmed that we would be reaching out to all of the approximately 480 households who currently financial support Foothills and that those households include both members and friends.

Kirsten Hartman wanted to know why the campaign would be so short, and Gretchen clarified that the 14-16 weeks is just the part of the campaign when we are asking members and friends to make their pledges. The work of identifying outside funding will continue long beyond that. Tom Rhodes offered the clarification that we will be asking for pledges that can be fulfilled over the next 3 to 5 years.

Jody Donovan then called for the question and the vote to authorize the capital campaign passed by unanimous vote.

Board president Sara Steen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:05 pm.

Minutes presented by  
Sue Sullivan  
Secretary of the Board

