

Chautauqua United Church of Christ

Annual Meeting

August 30 2020

Zoom Meeting

Unapproved Minutes to be approved at the August 2021 Annual Meeting

The first ever virtual annual meeting was held at 4:00 p.m. Sunday August 30 2020 EST. A virtual (zoom) meeting was necessary because of the Covid 19 pandemic and the 2020 Chautauqua Institution was not open for the season. All programming was virtual the entire season through The Chautauqua Assembly.

President John Botti welcomed all and called the meeting to order shortly after 4:00 p.m. 35 members were in attendance. Protocols were shared (the meeting was being taped and everyone was going to be on mute, unless they needed or requested to speak). Welling Hall, Web Master hosted the meeting on zoom, managing any technical glitches.

Peggy O'Connor, Co-Chaplain Administrator opened with prayer:

Opening Prayer: Holy One, as we gather virtually for our Annual Meeting, we are both glad to see one another and sad not to be in our chapel; not to see our buildings; not to be able to walk by the lake; not to have been able to share the 2020 season in person with one another. We are poorer for it.

Yet, as we see one another via ZOOM, our memories of summers past surface. We can see the lake and the bell tower; the Amp and the walkways; we can hear the cacophony or voices in our kitchen and dining room; we can imagine sitting on the porches of the Mayflower and the RCH and of course in the yellow rockers of the Headquarters porch...and we can picture our Randall Chapel. We pray that these memories feed our souls and give us hope for our return in person.

Now, as we gather virtually to conduct our business and to affirm our love for Chautauqua and our Society, we ask for your blessing on us and our society. Amen.

Memorial Moment: John Rodgers and Peggy O'Connor, Co-Chaplain Administrators, led us in memorial moment, remembering Chautauqua UCC Society members who died since the annual meeting in August 2019.

Members remembered:

Jolen Bock

Robert Rodgers

Floyd Mueller

Carolyn Windsor

Elizabeth Wright

Rev. Thomas Kerns

Elizabeth Witzleben

Service of Remembrance Prayer: Holy Creator God, we remember these members who have died in the past 12 months. Each is a loss we can never regain. Each leaves a hole in the fabric of our Society. Our sorrow binds us together in this moment. We grieve for their loss and for the suffering of those closest to them. As we ponder the sad mystery of death, deepen our trust in the light of your kingdom. Bless us and all who mourn with the knowledge of your ever abiding presence. In Christs name we pray. Amen.

Approval of Minutes from Annual Meeting 2019: Ruth Becker, Secretary

John Botti moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Curt Ackley. Unanimous approval.

Co-Chaplain Administrator's Report: Rev. John Rodgers & Rev. Peggy O'Connor

There was no report given.

President's Report: John Botti

I think it's fair to say that the 2019-20 Chautauqua year was like no other year in the long history of our Society. Our November and February BOD meetings were like most....planning for the arrival of our members and guests who would stay with us for a week or two over the summer assembly season. However, by the time the April meeting date arrived, it was clear that our summer assembly might be a "virtual" assembly and not the "on campus" assembly that we have always had. And our June meeting, while comparatively brief, was not held at our HQ house on the grounds as it usually is.

It was fortuitous that in the fall of last year Welling Hall asked if the Board might consider doing our long distance conference call BOD meetings using an online platform called Zoom. I'd never heard of it before but was willing to give it a try. By the time most of the country was getting familiar with Zoom our BOD was already proficient, thanks to Welling. Thus far we've had 5 BOD meetings on Zoom!

I want to thank all the members of our Board who put in a considerable amount of time and effort over the last 12 months. As our committee chairs give their reports I think you'll find that we were busier than you might think. Of particular note is the completion of our bathroom remodeling project that I know you will all appreciate next year when we gather for the summer assembly at CHQ. Evadne Giannini was our link between the BOD and our contractor. She did an amazing job. We also beefed up our web site to include lots of special offerings that have been seen and enjoyed by many. You will hear more about this in the Programs and Promotions Committee report. We can thank Welling Hall for her efforts on that.

I also want to thank our wonderful staff. Our Chaplain Administrators, Rev. John Rodgers and Rev. Peggy O'Connor, did an amazing job lining up weekly chaplains for the 2020 season and hopefully most will come to CHQ next year. Our Registrar, Grace Lipman, went above and beyond this past year. First, making and confirming reservations for our rooms then cancelling and refunding room gifts once the Institution cancelled the on campus assembly. Grace also contacted each of our guests this summer in the week they would have been on the grounds

had there been an in person season. Grace is one of our gems!

And last, I want to acknowledge all of our members and guests who donated part or all of their 2020 room gift to the Society. Those gifts have enabled us to carry on and pay our fixed expenses for the balance of this year. We are indeed fortunate to have so many generous members and an Endowment that could spin off enough income to supplement the gifts of members and keep us in the black for this year. Thank you one and all!

Vice President's Report: Sue Peterson

Sue said her job is to lend support to the president in any way she can and that was her focus this year.

Registrar's Report: Grace Lipman

The year began with all the usual excitement and enthusiasm as we and our prospective guests all looked forward to the 2020 summer season at Chautauqua. Little did any of us know how quickly and how soon the whole world was about to change.

Our annual Room Registration process begins on January 2nd of each new year when our CUCCS website (cuccs.org) becomes active. Our first 2020 request arrived at 12:07 a.m. on January 2nd. By the end of January, we had more requests than rooms for Weeks 1, 2, 7 & 8, and 14 requests on our Wait List for Weeks 2, 7 & 8. Five rooms would have been occupied all summer by seasonal guests. During Week 3 two rooms were to be 'gifted' to four Homeboys being brought to Chautauqua by the Collaborative Union.

In early February rooms were assigned. Our brand new Family Suites would have been occupied throughout the summer except for Weeks 4 & 6. We had no requests for the new airconditioned Office Suite on the 4th floor so the decision was made to move the registrar into that room. Her room (41) would have been occupied all summer. Notifications of Room Assignments were mailed by late February. We were to have had 134 different guests with us throughout the 2020 season.

By mid-March the coronavirus was in full swing and the world as we knew it came to a standstill. It was unclear at that time whether there could be a 2020 in-person summer season at Chautauqua. Eighty-six (64%) of our guests had already paid in full; forty-eight (36%) had only paid the deposit and did not complete their final room gift payment. The Board, in a hopeful move, decided to extend our final payment deadline to June 1st.

On May 1st the Chautauqua Institution announced the cancellation of this year's in-person season.

Our Board made the decision to offer guests the opportunity to:

1. Donate their *paid in full* room gift to the Society (36 guests/ 27% did so)
2. Donate the deposit or a portion of their room gift payment and receive a refund for the remainder (if any) – 72 guests/54% did this
3. Receive a full refund (26 guests/ 19% did so)

During a 'usual' spring our reservations continue to come in and rooms continue to be assigned. That did not happen this year due to COVID-19, thus we did not receive any room gifts at all for the 36 rooms that were never requested. We also did not receive the final room gift payment from the 48 guests who only paid their deposit.

This year we added nine new Life Members and six new Annual Members.

It has been a privilege and a joy to have had contact via email and phone with each of our guests who would have been with us this summer. Steve and I, as well as each of our intended guests, agree on how deeply we have missed the fellowship and stimulation of our time together at Chautauqua in our UCC houses. We very much look forward to reuniting with everyone at Chautauqua for the 2021 summer season.

Treasurer's Report and 2021 Budget: Rachel Barnard

Summary Report – see attachment

Rachel gave a narrative report about our status at the end of 2019, expenses and income since then in 2020 and our outlook for 2021. We were in good shape at the end of 2019 – income wise. The season had been successful in capacity guests and donations. Many bank accounts were in existence for purposes of saving, holding money for the bathroom renovations (2020 fund), and general expenses.

The Endowment funds were healthy. Funds were moved out of the UCC Fund and consolidated into Vanguard investments after the 2019 annual meeting. All funds are invested in socially responsible ETFs.

We were reminded that most of our general expense money comes from room gifts. With no season this year, our income from room gifts is way down. However, several guests donated their room gifts or deposits to the Society, and we received several donations in addition, allowing all the bills to get paid. Many contracted expenses are incurred whether we are open for guests or not; utilities, taxes, credit card service charges, insurance and the like. Those expenses easily reach about \$50,000 yearly. Those expenses this year are covered by the generous gifts and money from the endowment fund.

The bathroom remodel was the big push and expense this year in the off season. The 2020 fund has pledges of @ \$150,000. \$131,000 has been collected, with outstanding pledges (\$17,085), hopefully, coming in before the end of the year. The remodel went over budget at \$170,000, due to unexpected delays: Covid/tariffs, trade war, slowdown in construction and the like. The bathrooms are done and fabulous however. The money to pay the over expense had to come out of the Society funds and so the savings, etc. has been depleted some. Rachel feels confident, however, that we can get through the year successfully and move into 2021 with confidence.

The last thing addressed was the 2021 budget. The budget was crafted with lots of unknowns. We are counting on a season next year with guests willing to stay in the houses, and living in community as in the past. The budget was crafted with a fair amount of normalcy in the planning (upkeep gifts, capacity of guests, expenses).

Two significant things were decided by the finance committee and approved by the board:

1. Increase of room gifts by 10% in 2021
2. Caution was used in estimating room gifts. It was decided to take the maximum amount allowed for the Society from the Endowment Funds, based on the average balance (up to 4%) in the Endowment account over the last 3 years.

A question was raised as to the exact amount of 2020 income needed to cover final cost of the project, and to get an accurate \$ amount on outstanding pledges.

A question was raised about the designated money for windows and money set aside for RCH basement repair.

The treasurer referenced line item 2080 – RCH Foundation Repair - \$5900.

The “window fund” money was initially transferred to the 2020 fund to be used for some of the rooms affected by the remodel in the Mayflower. No windows were replaced. Some repairs were done. Until we know the actual cost of those repairs, or if the donors accept use of the money on partial repair, not window replacement, the restricted line item “Window Fund” has been restored in the budget in the amount of \$6,087.50.

Warren Thomas moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report and Budget. Nancy Loy seconded. Unanimous approval.

2020 Fund Report – Rachel Barnard

All on the Fund was reported in combination with the overall treasurer’s report. Co-chairs John Rodgers and Bruno Schroeder will be in touch with outstanding pledgees sometime in October, hoping to get the balance of \$17,085 in before the end of the year.

Endowment Trustees Report: Curt Ackley, Chair

The committee embraced the Hall Family Scholarship Fund, attempting to find a family to use it in 2020. The scholarship is offered to families with young children. There were no applications for the scholarship before the season was cancelled.

Bylaws for the Endowment Committee are on the website.

Governance Committee Report: Susan Peterson, Chair

The Candidates for board, Endowment Committee and The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors was presented:

Board Candidates:

Ruth Becker
Carol Ludemann
Meredith Townsend
Wayne Sautter

Endowment Committee:
Susan Laubach

Executive Committee:
President: John Botti
Vice President: Susan Peterson
Secretary: Ruth Becker
Treasurer: Rachel Barnard

The Governance Committee made the motion to accept the candidates, Dennis Esslinger seconded. Unanimous approval.

Facilities Report: Hal Simmons

Announced that Evadne Gianinni will be the Facilities Manager.

6 new rocking chairs have been secured for the Headquarters porch. Research was done through John Shedd (employee in the Colonnade of the Institution).

1 new blanket for each bed have been purchased; new technology with ability to have a warm feel from one side, and a cooler feel when flipped over. The old blankets are bagged and waiting to be given or thrown away.

Bathroom remodel (a 3-year project coming to closure): Evadne Gianinni, project chair and newly appointed Facilities Manager walked us through a power point slide show of the remodeled bathrooms and guest rooms (26/36/46). She reported that it is important to raise additional funds to replace the carpet in all hallways and on all stairs. A dream is to include the living room in the replacement as well. Mention was made to explore alternative faux hardwood for ease of cleaning, allergy control and sanitation. Hall and stairs replacement cost - \$23,000. Living room @\$3000.

The winter covering for the Mayflower will be replaced fall of 2020. It has been ordered. Lakewood Awning has deemed the covering insufficient for usage, thus the need to replace.

Evadne Gianinni and Sheila Gossett have worked together on the off season picking up used Corelle dishes for the kitchen.

Personnel: John Forrestal

John thanked Grace Lipman, registrar, for her work this summer. He also thanked Curt and Nancy Ackley for being willing to host for 2020, though they were not needed because of the season cancellation.

The 4 sets of hosts for 2021 will be:

David and Margaret Graves, David and Dana Wright, Tom Worley and Nancy Loy, and Evadne Gianinni and Maura Gianinni.

Program and Promotions: Joe Twist

Members: Shannon Washington, Welling Hall, Hal Simmons (technical assistant)
Joe Twist, chair, presented the following:

Newsletters and an Innovative Blog

Fall 2019 Newsletter

- Jared Memorial Service
- August Work days
- Hall Family Scholarships

Winter 2019/2020 Newsletter

- Room Registration
- F/U Reminder

Summer 2020 Newsletter

- John Botti Welcome
- Treasurer's Report
- CUCCS Statement of Intent on Systemic Racism
- Info of Bathrooms
- Remembrance

Annual Meeting Announcement and Proxy Statements

SNAPSHOTS

- Blog
- Initiated this summer
- Spearheaded by Welling Hall
- Objective
 - Help folks feel connected to CHQ and CUCCS during this season when we can't be at Chautauqua and with our CHQ community.
 - New posts regularly
 - Include excerpts from The Chautauquan Daily of 1960
 - Interviews with CUCCS members
 - Surprise features TBD
 - Can view the blog at cuccs.org/blog

Old Business: John Botti

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business: John Botti

Maggie Brockman offered a specific comment of thanks to Grace Lipman, Registrar, for her extra work during the “non season season” in writing notes to all the guests who had registered to attend Chautauqua in 2020. Going that extra mile is the best PR for our Society.

John Botti, President, thanked Hal Simmons for his 6 years of board service and David Graves for his years of service on the board. David is going off the board and he and his wife, Margaret, will serve the Society as hosts.

Introduction of 2021 Hosts: John Rodgers and Peggy O’Connor

No introductions were necessary at this time as they had been introduced and welcomed during the report by John Forrestal for the Personnel committee.

Closing Prayer:

The Chautauqua UCC Society Community gathered on zoom from all over the country joined together to recite the statement on Systemic Racism:

“The Chautauqua UCC Society acknowledges centuries of violence and harm that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color have endured in the United States, often at the hands of those who profess to be followers of Christ. We are committed to being and becoming an anti-racist organization, in both word and action. We believe that God is still speaking and calls us to work for justice here and now.”

Thanks were offered to John Botti, President, for the excellent job he has done. In response, John Botti thanked the board for their excellent work.

Rev. John Rodgers, Chaplain Administrator, closed in prayer.

The Annual Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:25 p.m. EST.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruth Becker, Secretary
Chautauqua United Church of Christ Society