

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the North Parish

May 22, 2016

The Annual Meeting of the North Parish was called to order at 11:22 by Moderator Peter Race. A quorum was met with 91 members in attendance.

The Reverend Lee Bluemel relit the chalice in memory of Don Steven Stidsen, a former member of the congregation.

Peter Race mentioned that people who wish to speak should be recognized by the moderator and should use the microphone.

**Article 1.** Alison Sparks, member of the Board of Trustees, moved Article 1 as printed in the warrant. It was seconded; then Alison introduced several speakers.

Bill Putnam spoke about stewardship. And said that we increased our net budgets by about 4%. 53% of the members increased their pledges and there were 24 pledges from new members. We have focused on fair share giving; however 60% of income comes from 20% of members. Half of all pledges are under \$100 per month. Many of the larger pledges are coming from aging baby boomers and will be falling off as time goes on. Studies show that we are at an average rate of pledging per member, but the concern is that our expenses are near the bottom and our budgets are much less. We are underfunding our church and staff and don't have the money for additional programs. He thanked everyone who pledged and asked for more stewardship members. 30-40 people will be needed to help with stewardship in the fall.

John Lennhoff spoke about adding revenue by renting out our facility for uses that do not conflict with its primary purpose.

Howard Amidon spoke about our small endowment committee. Pat Grimm is helping to launch a planned giving committee. If anyone is interested in working on this, see Pat.

Fred Glore mentioned that we will try to replicate other churches and set up a separate 501c(3) organization to preserve and restore this meeting house. A lawyer has been hired at no cost to the church to research the best way to go. The goal would be to reduce requests to the congregation for significant expenses. The idea is to reach out to the community to help support ongoing significant costs. This isn't intended to eliminate the need for a plant fund.

Rev. Lee explained that we have just moved to having one Sunday Service, which has led to many forums and groups after church. She summarized the work she has done this past year including making more community connections, interfaith work and becoming an internship supervisor. She pointed out the ministerial intern, Wendy Page, who received enthusiastic applause. Lee listed all the employees and the lay leaders and thanked them for their great work. North Parish is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest congregation in Massachusetts and the 12<sup>th</sup> largest in New England. We have recently contributed \$3.8 million to the physical plant of North Parish, the most iconic church in North Andover. She also remarked on the closing of Andover Newton Theological Seminary and discussed its history briefly. In 2045 the North Parish will be 400 years old; this has been Rev. Lee's 17<sup>th</sup> year as its minister.

The article was unanimously voted.

**Article 2.** Deb Olander, member of the Board of Trustees, moved Article 2 To accept the slate of new Trustees and Officers for 2016-2017, and it was seconded and voted unanimously.

**Article 3.** Deb Olander moved Article 3 and nominated Bob Weldin as the new Endowment Committee member. It was seconded and unanimously voted.

**Article 4.** Steve Vail, member of the Board of Trustees, moved Article 4 and it was seconded.

A member of the congregation questioned why this “Covenant of Right Relations” is being put forth. Deb Olander responded that it is a congregational best practice which evolved as a natural follow on to visioning, mission, and the strategic plan. We looked at visioning and the work done by other congregations. It is something that is best to put in place when things are good and we have a very healthy climate right now. In response to a question about where it will be published, Deb stated that the covenant might be put on cards in pews. A comment was made that we don’t need it. A majority of the congregation voted in favor of the article; there was one vote against it.

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**Article 4 - North Parish of North Andover Covenant of Right Relations**

This covenant of right relations is an expression of our collective values in an inclusive, free-thinking faith community.

It is a statement of promises to one another about how we want to be in community together. Building community is an ongoing spiritual practice. Inviting the spirit of love and gratitude into our interactions, we each work to develop skills and promote practices that strengthen the bonds of relationship. We aspire to co-create a spiritual community of people with open hearts and open minds.

**At North Parish we:**

- Cultivate attentive listening, speaking with care, and compassionate honesty in a way that respects that each person has a unique path and truth.
- Ask for help, support, and collaboration when needed, and encourage others to do the same.
- Provide opportunities to share diverse ideas, recognizing that differences in thoughts and opinions, ideally, communicate caring and involvement.
- Assume positive intent, recognizing that our actions have an impact, regardless of intent.
- Acknowledge that everyone makes mistakes, and therefore seek and offer forgiveness and compromise.
- Take responsibility for ourselves and speak from our own experience. We do not rely upon second-hand information.
- Communicate our discomfort directly, when we hurt another or are hurt by another.

- Resolve conflicts through compromise and collaboration and, when necessary, request mediation through committee chairs, group facilitators, our ministers or others.

When practicing right relations, people may disagree vigorously but still treat each other respectfully, stay connected, and learn together. Through these actions, we build trust and create an inclusive, free-thinking faith community.

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**Article 5.** Allison Sparks moved Article 5 and it was seconded. She then invited Gary Martin forward to discuss the proposal for solar panels. He described the purpose as lowering the carbon footprint of the church and setting an example for the community. The original plan was not approved by the Old Center Historic District Commission because of their concern with the historic appearance. He plans to go back to obtain approval for additional solar panels on the new wing. The solar panels will be all black and have a uniform appearance. Depending on the type and number of panels, they may be able to generate 25% of the electricity for the building and may save \$3,000 per year. The church would also receive solar production credits for ten years.

A question was asked about whether it was completely off the table to have panels on the sanctuary?

Harry Voorhees responded that it stays off the table at this time. We need permission from the Old Center Historic Commission and the North Andover Historic Commission.

Another question was asked about whether solar panels would impact the warranty on the roof and whether they would have a warranty.

Gary Martin said that more efficient panels carry a 25 year warranty. An inverter carries a 25 year warranty. Solar panels usually lengthen the life of a roof.

A proposal was made to have the solar task force come forward with a more definite plan and budget. A special meeting would then be called next fall to ratify. Another person said that they appreciated the intent of this suggestion, but she would vote against it. She trusts in the task force, which would be very open. She hoped people would participate without an official meeting.

A question was asked about how long the solar panels would last? Another comment was made about a warranty. Harry Voorhees stated that it is hard to predict what solar technology will look like in another 25 years.

Diane Huster said that the Department of the Interior has a list of energy-efficient recommendations that should be undertaken before solar technology is considered. In her opinion, designated historic landmarks should be restricted from solar technology. North Andover is the most iconic building in North Andover. It's not just about the building, it's about the historic landscape of the Common. North Andover Historic District was the only district that excluded solar panels.

Fred Glore said that there are solar panels that have been permitted within this historic district and we have to recognize the importance of what is going on with our climate and its impact on our children.

In response to a question, Gary Martin proposed a timeline, and the first step would be going back to the Old Center Historical Commission.

After approval has been obtained, we will decide on the solar company and the type of panel. Timing of installation will depend on the company's backlog. The hope would be late summer or early fall. The original quote for the panels was \$50,000 or over.

Debb Putnam remembered that solar panels and energy efficiency was extensively discussed for both of the building projects. To the extent that we are able, we have installed many energy saving measures such as heat sensors, light sensors, automatic faucets, and thermostats that are controlled. The biggest impediment is our own usage.

We would go with flat black panels, but there are at least two manufacturers; one's panels are more efficient, but also more expensive.

Harold Amidon said that the warrant says to go forward as planned and he wanted to trust and give permission for the task force to proceed.

Fred Glore requested that the solar task force come back to the community with a more definite budget and more definitive plans to allow us to financially participate individually and have a clearer impact. He doesn't want to slow down the project, but would like full clarity. He'd like to participate in more expensive panels if they are more efficient.

Peter Race suggested an amendment to Article 5 to require further ratification by the congregation. It would add the words at the end of the article,

"...subject to later ratification by the congregation."

The amendment was moved and was seconded. Discussion ensued about the need to call a special meeting. A vote was taken and the amendment was defeated.

A question was asked about the life of the proposed panels and what would be the future impact on the congregation? Someone answered that the roof does have a warranty and the documents are available, we don't want to invalidate that. Harry Voorhees stated that the life of the panels is approximately 25 years. It's hard to say what the available technology will be in 25 years.

The article was passed unanimously.

**Article 6.** Dan Gerron, member of the Board of Trustees, moved article 6 and it was seconded. The Moderator read each section of the budget. An update on capital campaign pledges was requested by Keith Connors. Peter Calkins stated that \$1,760,000 has been collected. \$52,000 in pledges are unpaid. Some people have left, some are still paying. The mortgage is currently for \$475,000, our original target was \$400,000, and the budget assumes a mortgage of \$450,000.

The budget was voted unanimously.

A question was asked about the Mass. Bay District dues status. Wally Anderson said that dues will continue to the New England Region.

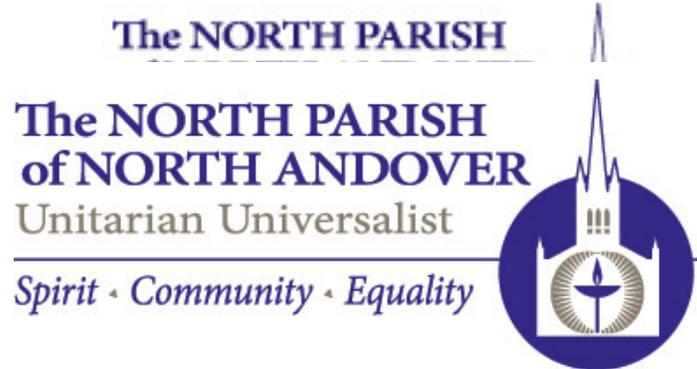
**Article 7.** Rev. Lee Bluemel asked that the meeting recognize the work of many people who are stepping down from their positions on the board or as committee chairs. Peter Calkins was especially thanked for

all his work chairing the board, the finance committee, and stewardship and for his good advice and positivity. Steve Vail presented him with two gifts and he received a standing ovation.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Carbonell, Clerk



*The Rev. Lee Bluemel, Minister*

**Warrant**

**Annual Meeting of the North Parish of North Andover  
Sunday, May 22, 2016  
North Parish Meeting House**

Greetings! The Annual Meeting of the North Parish of North Andover will be held on Sunday, May 22 at 11:15 a.m. following the 10:00 a.m. service. The Parish will act on the following articles:

**Article 1** To receive and place on file the reports of church officers, committees, church organizations, the Minister, Director of Religious Education, Music Director, Membership Coordinator, the Parish Council and the Board of Trustees.

**Article 2** To accept the following slate of new Trustees and Officers for 2016-2017:

Trustee:	Keith Connors	Three-year Term
Trustee:	John Lennhoff	Three-year Term
Treasurer:	Nancy Sarro	One-year Term
Clerk:	Carol Carbonell	One-year Term
Collector:	Nancy Lennhoff	One-year Term
Moderator:	Peter Race	One-year Term

**Article 3** To accept the slate of new Endowment Committee member:  
TBD Three-year Term

**Article 4** To adopt a North Parish Covenant of Right Relations, as put forth by the Board of Trustees.

**Article 5** To accept the recommendation from the Board of Trustees that we proceed with a plan to put solar panels on the roof of the New Wing, according to the report of the Solar Panels Task Force.

**Article 6** To review and vote on the annual budget proposed by the Board of Trustees for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

**Article 7** To act upon any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

NOTE: Childcare will be available during the Annual Meeting until it is adjourned.  
Respectfully submitted: Carol Carbonell, Clerk