



FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY of WESTCHESTER

A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

P.O. Box 26

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706-3227

914-478-2710 • fusw.org

Minutes of the Corporate Meeting on Sunday, February 25, 2024

This duly scheduled corporate meeting met after the Sunday service on February 25, 2024. This hybrid meeting was attended partly in person at the South Church chapel in Dobbs Ferry, where we currently hold Sunday services, and partly on Zoom.

Rev. Arlin Roy lit our chalice with praise for the thoughtful and caring work that led to this meeting, the purpose of which was to seek congregational approval of a move to Suite 130 at 210 North Central Avenue in Hartsdale, NY, and details related thereto. The email announcement of the meeting included as attachments the agenda, a sketch of Suite 130, and two financial statements.

President Denise Woodin called the meeting to order at about 11:35 and caused four electors to be specified: Sarita Roy and Paul Gross for the in-person congregation, Gary Haas and Sara Kelsey for the Zoom congregation. It was determined that there were 18 voting members in the chapel and 16 on Zoom; this is a quorum (and a large fraction of our active membership). (Incidentally, it turned out that counting Zoomers present and, later, their votes, proved to be harder than in-person counting because of quirks in Zoom and its users.)

Lisa deMauro, co-chair of the New Home Committee, then gave a review of the Committee's recent activities. The Hartsdale property (referred to below as "210") is the fourth one that has been seriously considered. The other three turned out to be unsatisfactory for various reasons, such as the fact that assembly would not be permitted, or an uncooperative landlord. None of the four would provide what we had when we owned 25 Old Jackson Avenue; 210 is no exception, but it is deemed a good answer for us and by far the best of the four. Lisa said we have been

getting good service from our lawyer, and the proposed landlord has been open to our concerns. She ended by praising the work of the New Home Committee, singling out Lenore Lupie and Susan Greenberg. (Lisa herself was singled out later in the meeting.)

Next, Treasurer Susan Greenberg reviewed some of the financial aspects of the proposed move to 210 and the sketch from our architect of the space at 210. Details of her presentation can be inferred from resolutions in the Appendix.

The Question & Answer part of the agenda elicited the following information: HVAC is covered in the lease; the property is in the Town of Greenburgh; monthly rent starts at \$3,684, increasing 2% per year; the total commitment is about \$260,000 (it emerged later that there is no provision for early exit from the lease); cleaning is included in the rent but internet access is not; we won't have cooking capabilities in our pantry; no problem is anticipated regarding a certificate of occupancy, according to our architect; signage is allowed to some reasonable extent; other current tenants include Empire State College, medical practices, and a center for children with special needs; future expansion is a possibility at the same address; the building is completely accessible; our proposed landlord has owned the property since 2016 and, for twenty years before that, the owner was Empire State College.

We then went to the main business of the meeting, consideration of three resolutions; these were included in the agenda for the meeting. The agenda was distributed on paper in the chapel and included as an attachment in the email announcing the meeting.

The **first resolution** asked the congregation for a vote of confidence in the Board of Trustees in signing the lease for Suite 130 at 210. (See 8. in the Appendix.) Paul Gross moved the resolution and Ken Perry seconded his motion. Discussion was invited but there was none. The resolution passed: yea votes were 18 in the chapel and 15 on Zoom; there were no nays and one abstention on Zoom.

The **second resolution** authorizes the Board to spend up to \$71,000 on expenses related to the move to 210. (See 9. in the Appendix for

details.) Diane Guernsey moved the resolution and Michael Carman seconded her motion. Discussion was invited but none occurred. The measure passed with 18 yeas in the chapel and 15 on Zoom; there were no nays or abstentions.

The **third resolution** asks the Congregation to approve the use of \$55,000 from the sale of 25 Old Jackson Avenue for rent, electricity, and insurance at 210 in the 2024/2025 budget (See 10. in the Appendix). Lisa deMauro moved the resolution and Diane Guernsey seconded her motion. There was a brief discussion as to why this resolution does not request all five years of rent. The answer is that we hope to grow, and/or increase pledging, and/or have fundraising success, and therefore plan to seek, on a yearly basis, any funds from the sale of 25 OJA needed for that year's budget. Then the resolution passed with 18 yeas in the chapel, 14 on Zoom and no nays or abstentions (it seems that some people may have left the meeting).

Denise then spoke briefly about moving forward. This will require much congregational involvement, partly outlined in a handout distributed to members attending in person. It covers design and construction, interior design and furnishings, and strategic financial planning.

Rev. Roy extinguished the chalice with words of hope and commitment. Paul Gross expressed congregational thanks to the New Home Committee, especially Lenore Lupie and Susan Greenberg. The meeting adjourned at 12:30.

Respectfully submitted by Corporate Secretary John Scheuneman on 2/27/24.

Appendix

Resolutions from the AGENDA of the FUSW Corporate meeting of 2/25/24

8. Resolution: Request from the Board of Trustees for a vote of confidence in the action of the Board of Trustees in signing the lease for Suite 130 at 210 North Central Ave, Hartsdale.

9. Resolution: The congregation hereby authorizes the board to spend up to \$71,000 from Operating Reserve Funds to pay for expenditures related to the move to 210 North Central Ave, including but not limited to: architectural, legal, and contractor fees; furniture; technology; signage, etc. Any additional expenses will be funded from the proceeds from the sale of 25 Old Jackson Ave and fundraising efforts.

10. Resolution: The congregation hereby authorizes in advance the transfer of \$55,000 from the proceeds from the sale of 25 Old Jackson Ave to cover rent, electric, and insurance for 210 North Central Ave, Hartsdale, Suite 130, in the projected 2024-25 operating budget.