

## **Special Meeting of the North Parish of North Andover Sunday, June 2, 2013**

Moderator Peter Race called the Meeting to Order at 11:22 A.M. Well over a quorum was present.

**Article I:** Debb Putnam moved Article I and was seconded. Peter Race clarified that the discussion would cover all the articles, even though only Article I had been moved.

Debb Putnam acknowledged the Visioning Team. She reminded everyone that the underpinning for all North Parish programs is the physical plant. The proposed building project should solve two problems: accessibility, and the need for unified space for programs and staff. She described the Advisory Group to the Design Task Force which contained representatives from all programs. These people were asked "Does it do what we need?" to make sure that we were considering the building project from all perspectives.

Peter Calkins went over the construction cost estimate again, and stated we do have \$200,000 in donations now to begin the 2013 work. Board member Nancy Cottrill reviewed the Capital Campaign Feasibility Study which said that we do have the ability to raise \$1.2 - \$1.5 Million.

Board member Brian Elowe then reviewed the options for financing the project: raising more money, selling part of our investment portfolio, selling our silver collection, and postponing the project.

Reverend Lee Bluemel thanked the leaders and said that they have made wise and prudent decisions in the past. She remembered that Lois Fisher, former Director of Religious Education, had thought that the Religious Education wing was too small as soon as it was built. She asked that we release the leadership energy. North Parish has been talking about this for 14 years. In the Old Testament people would ask Yah-Weh and the prophets, "Why me?" We, however, have to make this happen.

Concerns were raised that North Parish cannot afford this. What if the numbers change? What if the project costs escalate? In the last campaign there were unmet pledges of \$100,000. A similar situation would put North Parish at financial risk.

Ann Manson, Chair, Board of Trustees, said that this is the first of two votes. We are committing to \$200,000 only, and that number has already been raised. Two contingencies have been built into the project estimate.

A project supporter said that he doesn't want to give money toward the \$200,000 if the project is not going forward. Basically, members will need to give four times their annual pledge. It will be a sacrifice, but the need is not going away.

It was asked if some money could be shaved off the project. Peter Calkins responded that the HVAC could come off, but shaving off a few square feet does not help much. He is convinced this is the right project.

Another question was asked about mortgaging a higher amount to start and then moving money out of the reserves later. Brian Elowe affirmed this as a possible approach.

A question was asked about Old Center Hall expenses. Debb Putnam explained that another tenant is waiting, but Center Realty needs to do substantial upgrades and wants to start right away. If we stay, the rent will increase.

Dan Gerron, Board Member, said that we do have the resources needed. The Giving Collaborative interviewed 40 families and their combined estimated pledges total \$850,000-\$950,000. With 200 families in the congregation, we do have the resources. A question was asked about the timing of pledges and whether they would extend over a 3-year period. Peter Calkins answered that this would be refined going forward.

Someone expressed their difficulty voting for the project without being able to financially support it, but she and her family will do what they can. She realizes that this is important and she thanks the people who can write the big checks. She knows of another project completed by Windover Construction and thinks highly of them.

In response to a question about membership growth after the last project, Debb Putnam said there had been an ebb and flow and commented on the difference in the feeling of the building. It used to have dark halls, moldy offices, inadequate bathrooms -- the transformation has been huge and visitors have commented about it.

Leslie Young-Lemire said that the building project and plan has been very thoroughly thought out and called the question. The Moderator commented that a two-thirds vote would be required and the voice vote to end the discussion was in the affirmative.

John Van Drie moved that the vote be taken with closed ballot. It was seconded but the motion was defeated by majority voice vote.

Article 1 was passed by majority voice vote.

**Article II:** Peter Calkins moved Article 2 as printed in the Warrant. It was seconded and so voted.

**Article III:** Peter Calkins moved Article 3 as printed in the Warrant. It was seconded and passed by unanimous voice vote.

In conclusion, Reverend Lee Bluemel asked the congregation to sing a hymn and Music Director John Middleton-Cox accompanied everyone on the piano.

With no further business to come before the Meeting, a Motion to Adjourn was seconded and passed at 12:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Carbonell, Clerk

