

**First Unitarian Church of South Bend  
Special Congregational Meeting  
September 12, 2010**

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by our vice president Dave Wistreich. It was determined there was a quorum with 51 signatures (see a list of members present attached). [on file]

**Presentation of the Resolution**

Dave Wistreich read aloud the letter [attached] that was mailed to the congregation concerning the misunderstanding over the appraisal of the building and the selling price of our current facility. Bob Asplund moves that the Board of Trustees be authorized to negotiate the sale of the current church building located at 101 E. North Shore Dr., South Bend IN 46617 under a transaction to realize the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for the church less customary expenses of sale. Roger Birdsell seconds the motion.

**Discussion**

Gary Metzler asked if we have a lease yet. Chuck Leone responded that the final copy of the lease has been signed by the mortgage lender and Good Shepherd Montessori School and will begin Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>. Elizabeth Scarborough added that our church will be signing the lease on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Jim Curlee asked if there will be a walk through before we sign. Dave Wistreich answered that David Mayfield did a walk through last Friday and provided the board with a thorough report. David Mayfield then discussed some of his findings with the congregation. Dave Wistreich then read a statement written by our president given in his absence (see attached document). Darlene Catello would like to know what is going on with the signage issue. Chuck Leone responded that we attached exhibits and photographs of our current sign to the lease and it was approved and signed by all parties. Kathy Platt spoke up to let the congregation know we are moving our wayside pulpit to Eddy street. She says this will save us \$600.00 but now the issue is moving the sign. Darlene Catello wants to know if any crosses will be staying in the sanctuary. David Mayfield responded and said that the altar is being removed completely. Heather Eschbach added that they are in charge of all of their items and we are in charge of ours. They will remove and store all of their items prior to Sunday morning and we can then move all of our items in before services. Melanie Smith-Guillaume asked about the school's use of the sanctuary. Dave W. stated that we have exclusive rights on Sunday between 8-1 and all other times will have to be scheduled beforehand. Jim Curlee announced that he is with Don Wheeler. Jim wants to vote yes in good spirit and love. He praised Chuck Leone for his generous offer and claims to have confidence in all in charge that they will make good and appropriate decisions for our congregation.

**Vote**

Kay Azar called the question. Roger Birdsell seconded.

The vote went unopposed.

The vote on the motion had one abstention and one no vote. The motion carried.

Peggy Stevens moved to adjourn, seconded by Kay Azar. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

## **Letter from Don Wheeler, Board President**

Members of our community:

Because of a prior commitment, I cannot preside for this meeting. I'm sorry that's the case, but you are in good hands. I did want to give you my perspective about this important issue, and how we got to this point.

Our Building Feasibility Task Force has done a lot of hard work for a very long time in seeking a more suitable home for our community. I feel confident in telling you that these folks are heartsick over the misunderstanding that has occurred.

It turns out that there never was any purchase price negotiated or agreed to for the sale of the church. The language invited the inference that the selling price was for the appraisal figure (supposedly) on file – but that was not the intention. So when you're considering this question keep in mind that there never was an offer to buy the building for \$220,000.

What I didn't know (and you may not as well) is that the original offer to purchase (dollar amount unspecified) carried with it a commitment to contribute \$50,000 towards the purchase (or construction) of a new permanent home. \$20,000 of that is already in our bank account.

What we have now is an offer to purchase for \$200,000 - \$35,000 more than the appraised value of the property. And given the market, there's no guarantee that we could sell it for \$165,000.

I'm sure you'll each think very carefully about which path carries greater promise for our community in terms of the vote today. As for me, though it wasn't what I thought I'd agreed to, with the \$50,000 additional contribution it nets out \$30,000 better than what I thought I'd agreed to. I'm cool with that.

I strongly advocate passage of this motion today.

Don Wheeler

Read at the Special Congregational Meeting, September 12, 2010