

**FIRST PARISH BROOKLINE
PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
November 7, 2016**

Note: These minutes were approved as written below at the December 5, 2016 PC meeting.

Attending: Sue Andrews, David Cave, Michele David, Ben Davis, Ann Dinsmoor, Laura Hatfield, Alice Mark, James Shillaber. *Process Observer/Time Keeper: Michele*

Chalice Lighting/Reading: Rev. Rebecca provided a reading by Robin Morgan

Check in: Rev. Rebecca invited each of us to briefly speak about our “best self responses” to the current presidential election.

Prior Minutes: The minutes from October 3 were approved with one correction.

Minister’s Report

Song: “Love One Another”, led by Sue Andrews

Strategic Issues discussed:

1) Religious Exploration Program - Rev. Rebecca requested Parish Committee support for the following two actions re: our Religious Exploration program. After discussion (A. and B. below), unanimous support was expressed by the Parish Committee.

A. As soon as possible, form a small group of congregants to gather information from the congregation re: our long term vision for RE . This group will theoretically consist of a member of the Transition Team, 2 members of the RE Committee, and one Parish Committee Member.

B. Take immediate steps to plan to spend monies up to the amount remaining in the budget line item for DRE to hire personnel (1 or more persons), January 1-June 30, 2017, to administer the RE program. This (these) personnel is not intended to be a Director of Religious Exploration. Rather, they will provide presence and assistance to teachers on Sunday mornings, as well as aiding in building an infrastructure for RE, establishing best practices and policies so that a potential incoming DRE next year will be able to step into a well functioning program. It is hoped that adding this person or persons as temporary staff member(s) will decrease the overall stress level of the current RE teachers, children, and parents.

Rev Rebecca reported that Kevin Hoskins will continue as administrative support person for the RE program.

2) Goal implementation: Each PC member who is leading a goal effort was asked to present a brief report of their work thus far and action plan for the future.

A. Staffing model- Michelle David

Plans:

- Collect information re: current staffing and job descriptions. James Shillaber will assist with this.
- Invite 1 member from each of several already functioning committees, as well as some congregants not currently on a committee, to work on our staffing model as a temporary task force.
- Use models from other UU congregations and advice from the UUA New England Region.
- Present a proposal for FPB staffing model to the PC at the January 9 PC meeting.

B. Sustainable Budget – Ben Davis

Plans for Finance Committee:

- A committee consisting of 2 past Treasurers Ryan Kim and Stacey Raczek, current Treasurer Ben Davis, Canvass Team representative Karla Baehr, and congregants Steve Davis and Kim Whelan, with Ann Dinsmoor and Rev. Rebecca and Sonya Abbott as ex-officio members has been formed.
- The finance committee will meet monthly, the third Monday of each month. Thus there will be a finance committee meeting 2 weeks before each Parish Committee meeting.
- At the meeting on December 19, the Transition Team will present to the Finance Committee the results of the “Finances” portion of the recent Congregational Survey.
- Ben is currently recruiting members of the Finance Council from 7 working groups, including Buildings and Grounds, RE, Diversity Caucus, Worship Committee, Immigration Committee, and others. The Finance Council will meet Quarterly, beginning December 19, to receive and give input re: proposed budgetary considerations.
- Ben will present a quarterly financial report to the Parish Committee at the meeting on December 5.
- A preliminary budget for 2017-18 will be proposed at the February 6 PC meeting.
- A congregational budget hearing will take place on Sunday, April 30, after the preliminary budget has been approved by the Parish Committee at the meeting on April 3.

Rev Rebecca urges the Finance Committee to strategize budgetary concerns into the future (e.g. a five-year plan) before the Search process for a Senior Minister begins .

C. Multicultural/Diversity – James Shillaber

- Actions taken: A task force consisting of Bob Williams and Jami Jordan from the Transition Team, Ron Wilkinson and Gene Thompson-Grove from the Diversity Caucus, James Shillaber from the Parish Committee, and members-at-large George Maryniuk, Almas Dossa, Karla Baehr, Ann Gilmore, Sara Warren, plus Rev. Rebecca met on October 26. They brainstormed a scope for a project to hire a consultant for “celebrating multicultural diversity” at FPB. A preliminary list of possible consultants to vet was assembled.
- Plans: This task force will meet again in November, and James will present their recommendations to the Parish Committee for approval at the December 5 PC meeting.

Bylaws – Sue Andrews

Actions:

- The Bylaws Task Force met several times during the summer months to create a draft of proposed Bylaws Amendments. This draft was presented at the August 28 PC Retreat, and was affirmed as a list to propose to the congregation at the September 12 PC meeting.
- Three congregational discussions re: the proposed Bylaws Amendments, as well as revisions suggested by the discussion participants, were held on Sundays September 25 after church, October 16 before church, and November 6 after church. Between 10 and 18 members attended these conversations and offered good suggestions for revisions of the proposed amendments.
- Since one of the amendments includes removing the current procedure for selection of a search committee from the Bylaws and making this procedure a Policy which matches current UUA recommendations, this Policy needs to be written and approved by the Parish Committee.

Plans:

- Before the December 5 PC meeting, Rev. Rebecca will send to PC members suggestions for how the Policy for Selection of a Search Committee can be written. PC members are urged to consider these suggestions before the December 5 PC meeting. At the December 5 PC meeting, such policy will be agreed upon and approved by the PC.

- The final draft of proposed amendments to the Bylaws will be presented and approved at the January 9 Parish Committee meeting. Sue will send the draft to all PC members well ahead of the January 9 meeting.
- The congregational meeting to accept the proposed amendments to the Bylaws will be held after church on February 12, 2017.
- A mailing will be sent to all current members of FPB no later than January 13, 2017, containing notice of the Feb 12 meeting, and containing a list of all proposed Bylaws amendments to be voted on at that meeting.

Stewardship – Laura Hatfield

Actions:

Laura is currently doing the data analysis for the Transition Team Congregation Survey. She reports that over 100 surveys have been completed and returned, and that the modal amount of time the responding members have been active at FPB is 11 years. Methods to engage newer members are being brainstormed. Alice will contact the RE Committee, asking that they encourage parents to complete the survey immediately.

Plans:

- Work with the Canvass Committee to recommend incorporation of current behavioral research findings re: financial giving and generosity into the Canvass strategy.
- Work on a “human hours” budget to look realistically at time commitments necessary to do the work of First Parish in Brookline. The hope is that this may expand our lens when we think about stewardship.

At the close of our discussion on goal implementation, Sue Andrews encouraged us all to think about ways to engage our younger families in conversations about the life and health of the church, especially since we will be entering Search for a new Senior Minister. One way would be to always have an opportunity for discussion before church whenever a discussion after church is planned.

Meeting was adjourned after debriefing at 9:15pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Andrews
Acting Clerk