

Parish Board Minutes, 12/8/2017

Attendees: David Cave, Michele David, Ben Davis, Dave Demerjian, Laura Hatfield, Charles Sandmel, James Shillaber, Gene Thompson-Grove (phone), Rev Rebecca

Absent: Alice Mark

Minister's report:

- For the past few years the board has not been involved with identifying potential candidates for the Nominating Committee to consider for positions on the board. The board feels thinking about board membership early is a smart move, because finding names is a challenge. Nominating committee is small and would appreciate input.
- In addition, the board should be articulating the skills or experience needed, based on who will come off the board in any given year, and the specific challenges facing the board and congregation. For example, as James and Ben leave, we will have gaps in HR and Finance next year.
- The process for this could be that Michele or someone on the board talks to the Nominating Committee to share the skills the board will be looking for and share names of anyone we think should be pursued.
- We could consider inviting three to join next year so that we're not needing to recruit four the following year.
- Announcements: Rev Jim had made a point of not having announcements during the service. Used to be just Canvas and then Search Committee - but now it seems like other announcements are creeping in. Rebecca feels that she needs to pull back a bit and try to limit announcements from the pulpit.
- The board agrees that it is important for the minister to be empowered to make decisions about what is included and not included in the Sunday services.
- The board noted that several action items over the past couple months have been time sensitive and had to be addressed via email. The board agrees is appropriate to be working via email in certain circumstances, but it is critical that we are clear up front about what the issue is and what the decision criteria are that will be used, if a decision is necessary.
- Decision: we will use email to conduct board business. For some issues the email will be strictly informational ("here's an issue, I'd love to get your input before I make a decision") vs. consensus/vote ("I need you to vote on this"). Board members will say what they're looking for, and other board members will provide input and be clear when they can't support an issue. If it becomes clear a decision via email cannot be made, the issue will be tabled until the next meeting or until a meeting can be called.
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Rescheduling the board meeting with the multicultural consultants - DEEP:

- As part of DEEP's multicultural consultation with the church, they had planned to meet with the board on November 30th to explore the church-wide support and leadership of the initiative. We cancelled because four out of nine board members couldn't make it.
- The board recognizes there are only a handful of things we are going to get behind that are central to the character of the church like this, and we are eager to learn more and support this.
- Recognizing scheduling all the board members and the minister outside regular meetings is a challenge, the board decided to meet with DEEP during a board meeting? **February 5** is the first time DEEP can do it.
- Laura will handle the rescheduling of the regular board meeting and logistics.

Brookline High School racism issues:

- Rev Rebecca wrote a letter to the editor of the Tab regarding racial incidents that have happened in the school recently. It needs to be submitted quickly if it is to have the impact and timeliness we hope.
- DECISION: Laura will line edit the letter and Rebecca will send it to the Tab

Finance report

- The Finance Committee reports the church is in a good position with respect to pledges, spending and the budget mid-way through our fiscal year.
- The Finance Committee is developing an approach to "mission-based accounting" that will be shared with the board at a future meeting
- The church has an opportunity to register as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Finance Committee feels like we should do this because it makes us eligible for certain grants and to qualify for employer matched contributions in some cases.
- The Finance Committee wishes to reactivate the Building Use Committee to look at how we might be able to expand the use of the building and increase revenue.
- Planned Giving is another area the Finance Committee feels we should place more emphasis on. Charles will meet with the Deacons in January to explore this further, including setting up policies around gifts.

Safety:

- Rev. Rebecca asked the board to approve a task force to develop safe congregation policies covering a wide range of issues (health emergency, weapons, etc.). The plan would be to get started quickly and attempt to wrap it up before Rev. Rebecca leaves (May), this means it could/should come to the board in April. Ann Dinsmoor, Sue Andrews, Laci, Alisa, (and other members to be announced) expressed interest in supporting this work, and the committee was approved by the board.

Benefits: The hiring of new staff last summer, preliminary work on the new settled minister's employment agreement and a booklet from the UUA called the "Benefits Tuneup" have all provided focus and attention on the benefits we offer staff. The UUA has done tremendous work over the past couple years in developing a comprehensive package of employee benefits and providing support for congregations to implement them. FPB's benefit offerings have not completely kept pace, and following research by James, Ben and Rev. Rebecca, the board voted to align benefits offerings with the UUA recommendations.

Health Benefits: Our "Subscription Agreement for Employers" was completed in 2006 and is now being updated. It specifies which health plans we support, when coverage becomes effective and what our contributions will be.

The following motion was passed: FPB supports all UUA health plans and/or Medicare Supplement Benefits on the date of hire for the employee. We further resolve that, in accordance with UUA recommendations, FPB will pay 80% of the cost of the premiums for health and dental plans for employees who work more than 30 hours, and 50% of the additional cost to insure partners or family members. For employees who are scheduled to work 15 or more hours, but less than 30 hours per week, FPB reimburses 50% of the cost of employee-only coverage, and 25% of dependents' coverage. FPB will continue to reimburse 100% of dental insurance until the end of this fiscal year, and then employees will assume their appropriate portion of those expenses.

Life Insurance/ADD, Long-Term Disability - Although our personnel policies say we offer these benefits to employees, we have historically required employees to pay for them in full. The UUA recommends that congregations pay for these coverages, which the board has agreed to do. We anticipate that this will add roughly \$3300 of unplanned expense this year to add Alisa, Laci, Boateng and Keith to the policies (the minister is already covered, per contract).

The following motion was passed: FPB offers Life, ADD and LTD insurance programs to all employees who work 750 hours per year or more (15 hours per week), and resolves that, in accordance with the guidelines from the UUA, FPB will pay the entire premium. FPB further recognizes that our employees did not have the opportunity to add Life/ADD and LTD insurance benefits on a timely basis in accordance with the provisions of the plans from the UUA, and we move to petition the UUA to allow our employees into the plans by filing the appropriate paperwork with the UUA Office of Church Staff Finances.

Retirement – FPB is in compliance with our retirement plan obligations.