

**FPB Board Minutes
Tuesday, February 2, 2020
1:00-3:00**

Present: Gene Thompson-Grove (co-chair) Karla Baehr, Ellen Blaney, Janet Britcher (co-chair), Micaela Coady, Dave Demerjian, Steve Pratt-Otto, Charles Sandmel

Absent: Bob Williamson

Others: Rev Lisa Perry-Wood

Call to Order

- Co-Chair Gene Thompson-Grove called the meeting to order with a chalice lighting and reading of Elizabeth Nguyen's *Hope Does Dwell*. We took turns reading our Covenant:
To be our best selves and do our best work we will:
 - *Mission: Commit to the three parts of the Mission (Called by Love, Sustained By Commitment, Committed to Justice) in order to accomplish meaningful work and so that our decisions are always values-driven*
 - *Generosity and Forgiveness: Bring a spirit of generosity for self and others that creates a safe space for all*
 - *Space: Make space for all kinds of voices and ways of engaging*
 - *Honesty: Bring and welcome honesty and challenging questions*
 - *Limits: Take responsibility individually and collectively to set limits and ask for help*
 - *Joy: Nurture spiritual growth, personal connections and joy*
- Our "fun and connecting" activity was "keys"!

Minister's Report

- Rev Lisa offered highlights and responded to questions.
- The Board concluded that the decision of whether or not to host Brookline's MLK Interfaith Service lies with the Senior Minister and Worship Committee.
- The Board asked **Rev Lisa** to update the trend data related to membership, Sunday attendance, RE participation, canvass pledge income, endowment draw and other similar indicators that the Board has used in past years to help assess organizational health.
- The Board asked **Rev Lisa** to report in April about RE programming and goals going forward.

Finance Report by Treasurer Charles Sandmel

- Operating Budget
The operating budget for church year 2019-20 is in solid shape, with rental income nearly 100% higher than expected; income from Sunday Collection may be off; it appears that we may not have to withdraw all of the \$175,000 approved by the congregation for the 2019-20 budget
- Endowment
 - FinCom member Margie Beal and Charles have organized investment data over past years to make it easier to track trends
 - The FinCom will be meeting with the UUA's endowment specialist to learn more about the UUA's approach to investing
 - The FinCom is continuing to examine "community investment" options for our endowment
- Loan Options
 - Charles has engaged with Eastern Bank to explore loan options should the Board ultimately authorize a loan to help finance the possible BSSCC renovation of the ground floor.
- Insurance
 - The Finance Committee is looking at alternatives to our current insurance carrier and policy to ensure adequate coverage at less cost.

Budget and Canvass Planning

- The Board reached a high level of consensus (6 5's and 2 4's) on the following calendar for canvass and budget development
 - 3/13 and 3/15: Conversations about FPB “money culture”
 - 3/22: Canvass Rollout
 - 3/25 Finance Committee Meeting on Budget
 - 3/29, 4/5 and 4/12: Canvass, with canvass-related events in worship
 - April 5-28: Finance Committee meeting(s), as needed
 - 4/19: First Congregational Budget Conversation at 12:30 (Gene facilitating with Ellen)
 - 4/26: Second Congregational Budget Conversation at 12:30 (Gene facilitating with Ellen)
 - 4/28: Third Congregational Budget Conversation at 7:00 (Karla facilitating with Dave & Micaela)
- 4/29: Finance Committee
 - 5/3: Parish Board meeting at 9:00 am (if needed)
 - 5/5: Parish Board deliberates budget
 - 5/6: Mail draft budget with annual meeting warrant and agenda
 - 5/17: Annual meeting—vote to adopt a budget for 2020-21 church year
 - 6/7: Parish Board Meeting

Records Retention Policy

- The Board reviewed a draft policy prepared by Bob Williamson to guide decisions about what records must be retained and for how long.
- The Board applauded Bob Williamson for his work to research and prepare an initial draft
- A policy is needed in order to free up storage space needed to accommodate the needs of rentals
- Janet Britcher will consult the UUA and other experts to review and advise on the draft policy.
- The Board agreed to delegate to Janet, Bob and Karla the decision about a final policy based on two criteria: meeting legal requirements and practicality.

Shared Leadership

- The Board discussed the RJAC request for a shared leadership meeting to look at how the pews in the Sanctuary might be changed to make the Sanctuary a more welcoming, flexible and inviting space.
- The Board agreed to ask the RJAC to facilitate a shared leadership meeting to begin to identify for the Board the issues and interests involved in considering changes in the Sanctuary, and to recommend next steps given what is learned through the shared leadership meeting.
- The Board suggests engagement with representatives of at least these groups to help identify interests (not positions): Deacons, Worship, Welcoming, Buildings & Grounds, and the Board. Gene will communicate with RJAC

Next Steps with ByLaws

- The Board discussed the need to respond to the congregation's inability in November to reach consensus on the proposed revisions to the ByLaws related to requiring a financial contribution to maintain friendship.
- The Board agreed that the congregation is not ready to achieve consensus about the recommended bylaw changes and that several events planned for the remainder of this year will help lay the groundwork for deeper conversation on the bylaws next year: the March conversations on money, the April congregational budget conversations, and the planned use of a consensus model for decision-making at Annual Meeting in May.

- **Gene** will communicate directly with relevant committees - including ByLaws, Membership and RJAC – about the need to follow existing bylaws for this year and our hope to revisit the questions raised next year. She will also include this conclusion in the March Newsletter.

Board Composition and Leadership for Next Year

- Board members discussed:
 - Options for organizing Board leadership for next year including co-chairs
 - How many new members the Nominating Committee needs to recruit
 - The need to recruit a new member who can serve as Treasurer
 - The range of experiences and expertise needed among new members, including finance, social justice, worship, and music
- The Board agreed to deliberate on these issues at its March meeting.

Approval of December Minutes

Minutes for the Board meeting of January 7th approved via email vote prior to this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Baehr, Clerk

