

Parish Board Meeting
Wednesday November 3, 2021, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM via Zoom
Minutes

Present: Karla Baehr, Alfred Brownell, Emily Cherry, Jen Guillemin, Jody Leader, John Mignano, Margaret Williams, Bob Williamson (chair), Rev Lisa. Absent: Micaela Coady

Chalice Lighting, Reading, and Check-in

Chair Bob Williamson called the meeting to order. Rev Lisa lit the chalice and shared an excerpt from Amanda Gorman's Inaugural poem, *The Hill We Climb*. Margaret led a whole group check-in designed to build cohesion and organized around the question: what is holding you up or weighing you down?

Board Covenant

Karla reviewed for new and old Board members the Fist-to-Five [Consensus](#) process the Board has used in recent years, describing what it is and why we use it. The Board reached consensus to adopt this Covenant to guide us during our meetings for 2021-22: (1 4 and 7 5's)

1. Energy: We will focus our work on policy level issues especially as they relate to the community's well-being and rebuilding of a sense of community
2. We will be responsible for our own limits and self-care
3. We will invite fun and joy
4. We commit to listen to understand and learn.
5. We will practice deliberate ways to give all voices a chance, making space for minority views, and for differences in processing and reflection time.
6. We will bring clarity and focus to our work.
7. The board will be a small group ministry with each other, providing support and personal and spiritual growth as we accomplish our work
8. Our goals will be aligned with the mission of First Parish in Brookline: *We strive to be a welcoming, diverse and loving congregation that nurtures spiritual growth for individuals and families, celebrates multicultural community, and works together to demand social justice, dismantle racism, and care for our living earth.*
9. We commit to hold each other and ourselves with tenderness and care, especially during this liminal time.

RE Consultant

Rev Lisa introduced Deb Weiner who joined us to describe the work she will be doing as our RE consultant helping us with visioning and programming during the transition to new RE leadership. Her focus includes support for RE staff and Committee; getting the Challenge and OWL programs in place (UU's Our Whole Lives Sexuality program); engaging leaders and members in conversation about their experiences and hopes; observing Board meetings to learn about governance and identity; and preparing a report for FPB leadership with recommendations for charting the future for RE and Faith Formation.

Ministers' Report [11.3.21 Ministers' Report](#)

Rev Lisa shared her monthly Minister's Report and invited questions.

Decision: participating in the Pastoral Care Team's pastoral calls (Nov-Dec) is a collective Board responsibility with members who need to limit their engagement inviting to contact Rev Lisa. (4 4's and 4 5's)

Fiscal Health Status Report

Treasurer Margaret Williams offered a *Fiscal Health Status Report*, reporting that the one major change in projected income and spending so far is the loss of two major tenants (Sai Center and Lin Center) and their \$24,000 in rental fees.

Authority and Responsibility of the Reopening Planning Group (RPG)

After substantial discussion, the Board expressed confidence in the RPG's criteria and process for decision-making and reached consensus that the Board will resume responsibility to review and affirm RPG's recommendations about building use. (4 4's, 4 5's)

Board Goals development

Margaret and Jody reported on the work of the Board's 5-person subcommittee on goals development (Margaret, Jody, Bob, Micaela, Alfred)

The subcommittee identified the characteristics members felt every goal should embody:

- Constitute policy work appropriate for the Board,
- Are concrete and specific,
- Can be accomplished in one year,
- Represent a priority issue that supports the vibrancy and viability of the church, and,
- Are aligned with our mission and in service of our longer-term goals.

They proposed six goal areas. After discussion, Board members agreed to assume responsibility for responses to these two questions for each goal: *What specific Board work will be required? What will it look like if we are successful with this goal?*

The goal areas are:

1. Continue to learn how to work on our goals through the lens of Social Justice, Climate Justice and Anti-Racism Work, including Building Sustainability. (Alfred & Jody)
2. Come up with a framework for the future of RE. (Micaela & Rev Lisa)
3. Data Dashboard for Planning and Organizational Health (Micaela & John)
4. Senior Minister Support and Evaluation Annual (Bob & Em)
5. Inclusive and transparent budget development and monitoring (Margaret & John)
6. Make space to share our feelings of possibility, connection, and growth. (Jen & Rev Lisa)

The Board intends to review the responses and complete goal planning in December.

Board Meetings Schedule:

The Board confirmed its schedule for 2021-22 and members agreed that Sunday meetings will be in person, Wednesday meetings via Zoom.

Triad gatherings

Members agreed to continue the practice of 30-minute, between-meeting trio gatherings to deepen our relationships. November trios are: Alfred+Margaret+Micaela, Karla+Jody+Jen, Emily+John+Bob

Closing

Board members used the chat to share what they felt worked well about tonight's meeting and what could be improved for next time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Baehr, Clerk