

<b>Regular Attendees</b>		<b>Present</b>
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	N
Rev. Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Dave Elwood	Standing Committee member	N
Kristin Haddad	Chair	Y
Peter Nobile	Clerk	Y
Patty Popov	Standing Committee member	Y
Toby Smith Ropeik	Standing Committee member	Y
Mark Russell Prior	Standing Committee member	Y
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Treasurer	Y
Kate Svreck	Standing Committee member	Y
John Lowe	Standing Committee member	Y
Jan Hutslar	Ministerial Intern	Y
<b>Guests</b>	(none)	

We lit our chalice and Howard opened with words from Henry David Thoreau, who died 155 years ago yesterday at the age of 44. John read our Standing Committee (SC) covenant.

Minutes from our April meeting, with minor modifications, were approved.

**Chair’s report**

Kristin reported on preparations for June 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. A motion was made to ratify the trustees’ re-nomination of trustee Laura Bernstein for another term; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Kristin described how the SAC board is preparing for the annual meeting. Lora agreed to recruit an adult to oversee child care during Annual Meeting. A draft Call for Annual Meeting warrant was distributed. The draft has been reviewed by Moderator John Stevens, and includes two noteworthy items: the initiation of a year-long discussion about our annual allotment of 7.5% for social action (item V) and the hanging of banners (item VI). Kristin will revise the draft and have an original left in the church office for SC signatures.

Kristin announced that meetings would continue to be scheduled on the second Sunday of each month next year, with a few exceptions due to holidays. We also discussed Howard’s desire for a meeting time other than Sunday evening.

**SC goals review**

At Howard’s suggestion, printouts of our SC goals were distributed to the full committee before sharing observations about our progress. Kate remarked on Howard’s leadership workshop in April, which was well received and appreciated. Kate also recommended SC sponsorship of other workshops, not necessarily led by Howard. John attended the UU New England Regional gathering in April, and reported about the denomination’s ongoing discussions about race relations within the UUA. John reminded us that First Parish is allowed 14 voting delegates at this year’s General Assembly. John Lowe and Lora Venesy agreed to serve as virtual delegates, attending GA via the Internet. There is a

preparation meeting for delegates on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30, and Peter also expressed interest in serving as an off-site delegate.

Members inquired about the status of the "Join the Conversation" banner that had been removed from the front of the church. Howard explained that the wind on the corner of the building was hard on the banner. Howard agreed to find a solution to rehanging the banner.

### **Minister's report**

Howard's report was gratefully received. In addition, Howard announced that Christa Champion's contract would not be renewed for the coming year. Howard stated that the reasons behind Christa's contract not being renewed had to do with his and Amy's dissatisfaction with the COA service and negative parent feedback.

Howard and SC members discussed the need for improved communications between SAC and Howard. There were uncomfortable moments at the end of the SAC May meeting, but Howard said he was glad to have attended to continue his conversation with the SA council. He mentioned that the group is challenged with finding a new chair next year, as no one is rising in the ranks and no new volunteer has stepped forward yet.

It is important that Howard's oversight role relative to congregational groups be understood. Kristin will reach out to the SAC Board to discuss.

Howard continues to evaluate Adult Religious Education patterns at First Parish, which are different than his previous congregation. Our congregation seems quite busy and Howard is still trying to figure out how parishioners want Adult RE to fit into their spiritual life and their schedules.

### **Director of Operation's report**

Fifi reported that additional received pledges have compensated for the use of \$15,000 in savings that had been budgeted in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. Additionally, we are proceeding with Phase 2 of the sanctuary sound system overhaul. The church will need to spend \$9,475 on 4 new speakers and some additional enhancements in the Sanctuary, and \$8,230 on 2 new speakers, a new mixer, and other improvements in the Parish Hall. The total expenditure is \$17,705. A motion was made to approved this expenditure; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Semi-annual staff compensation report**

Fifi reviewed specifics within the staff compensation report that was distributed. Members had several questions and comments and expressed universal gratitude for the level of detail in the report.

### **Budget introduction**

The FY 2018 budget was discussed, and SC comments included:

- The budget includes increases to staff costs, such as cost of living increases and moving salaries toward UUA midpoint guidelines.
- The Social Action Coordinator is compensated out of the annual 7.5% of pledges designated for Social Action.

- Addition of funds to a long-term building maintenance fund was discussed.
- Pledging patterns have become somewhat predictable.
- Howard noted that the SAC is considering a “share the box” model, which might make box collections grow significantly.

Tom confirmed that revenue and spending projections on which the proposed budget were based would be sustainable in the coming years. The committee was generally supportive of the budget as structured. A suggestion was made to target some contribution toward a long-term maintenance fund.

### **Member’s reports**

- Toby reported hearing nice comments about the service this morning.
- Tom reported feedback on how members are feeling a better connection to history – that of First Parish and of Concord – more now than ever before.
- Howard reported on a lovely memorial service for Marion Wheeler on Saturday.
- Jan heard comments about both the meaningfulness and the discomfort about last week’s teach-in service.

### **Group liaison reports**

#### Groups

- Nominating: Patty and Kate moved that the SC nominate Mark Russell Prior to serve on the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded and approved.

#### Liaisons

- Denominational Affairs: John reiterated the need to have one more voting delegate to this year’s GA.
- RE Council: Dave (via Kristin) reported a discussion on how best to communicate to parents about Christa’s dismissal.
- Membership: Kate reported 4 new members in April, increasing the total so far this year to 20.
- Arts Council: Kate reported a very full agenda, with activities ongoing.
- Forum: John reported the committee is moving forward with great vigor.

### **Senior Minister evaluation:**

At 8:19pm, the Standing Committee entered Executive Session in order to freely discuss all aspects of Rev. Howard Dana’s evaluation, submitted by Lora, Mark and Kate. During the session, it was decided that the overview and methodology for the evaluation would be included in the minutes (see below). In addition, any parishioner interested in reading the full report can receive one by requesting a copy from Kristin. She will include this information in her meeting report as well as in the June issue of the Meetinghouse News.

### **Senior Minister Evaluation Overview**

Each year, the Standing Committee of First Parish in Concord is responsible for completing an evaluation of our Senior Minister. The Standing Committee is committed to creating a thoughtful evaluation process that will allow the Standing Committee to assess the performance of the Senior Minister, and accurately communicate with the Senior Minister, feedback about successes, as well as opportunities for improvements. The evaluation is also intended to support the development by the Senior Minister of

goals for future years. An evaluation subcommittee is formed each year to complete this project with the help of the Standing Committee members, parishioners, and staff.

This year's evaluation results show many clear successes for Howard in all areas, most notably stewardship and worship. There is a high level of positive energy in the congregation and many people are engaged in activities that help us deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world. The evaluation results also indicate opportunities for growth. , work with the social action community has been challenging and social action related goals are still a work in progress.

### **Senior Minister Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation subcommittee chose to use both the annual goals set by the Senior Minister, and UUA Senior Minister performance areas to frame a complete and representative picture of Howard's progress and accomplishments.

The evaluation was multi-pronged, and involved members of the Standing Committee, staff, congregation members at large, as well as members of the social action and adult religious education communities.

The eleven members of the Standing Committee were asked to comment on both the Minister's goals and UUA Standards. Eleven members of the congregation, a mixture of newer and long-time members who had not previously participated in Senior Minister evaluation surveys, were selected to complete a survey about Howard's performance in four key UUA performance areas for Senior Ministers.

The Minister for Pastoral Care, the Minister for Religious Education and the Ministerial Intern, all mentioned in Howard's goal regarding adult religious education were asked to provide input on the support Howard provided to them in their work in this area. Three other members of the congregation involved in adult religious education were also invited to participate.

The Social Action Board, which includes 8 members, was asked to provide feedback on Howard's social action goal. The Treasurer was asked to provide supporting data about Howard's stewardship goal. As part of the evaluation process, Howard was asked to complete the same survey completed by SC members. The report of the evaluation subcommittee will be discussed in conjunction with Howard's self-evaluation.

Regular session was reinstated at 9:05pm. The next SC meeting is scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup> at 6PM with a focus on approval of the budget for Annual Meeting. The SC meeting on June 11<sup>th</sup> will focus on the SC evaluation process. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter Nobile  
Clerk