

**First Parish in Concord  
Standing Committee Meeting  
April 11, 2023**

Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Michael Beer	Standing Committee Member	Y
Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Senior Minister (Interim)	Y
Jim Hawks	Standing Committee Member	Y
Jennifer Izzo	Clerk	Y
C.C. King	Standing Committee Member	N
Gib Metcalf	Standing Committee Member	Y
Caroline Washburn Minkin	Standing Committee Member	Y
Heather Packard	Treasurer	Y
Jim Reynolds	Standing Committee Member	Y
Liz Rust	Chair	Y
Susan See	Standing Committee Member	Y
Virginia Taylor	Standing Committee Member	Y
Rev. Liz Weber	Minister for Congregational Care	Y
Dian Pekin	Congregant	Y
Darien Smith	Member of COIC	Y
Irmingard Doane	Congregant	Y
Dana Snyder-Grant	Member of COIC	Y
Toby Smith Ropeik	Member of COIC	Y
Cindy Soule	Member of COIC	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM.

Heather Packard offering a reading.

The SC acknowledged and confirmed the Standing Committee Covenant. We covenant to:

- Listen to each other with enough focus and space to receive what is shared

- Assume best intentions
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate
- Welcome questions and different perspectives
- Make space and take space so that everyone's voices can be heard
- Lead collaboratively
- Take the necessary time for the work without rushing into decisions
- Show up prepared to do the work
- Speak with one voice about decisions
- Trust each other's wisdom
- Communicate directly with each other

Everyone checked in about how they are doing.

### **Interim Senior Minister Report**

- Holy Week & Easter. FP co-hosted the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services with First Parish in Lincoln this year. Easter Sunday was very well attended and seemed to be well received.
- Special Upcoming Services
  - April 16<sup>th</sup> – the service will be tied to our covenant process, reflecting on perfectionism and how it's normal and ok to be imperfect
  - April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Rev. Amy Freedman will lead an All Ages service that celebrates Earth Day and addresses environmental justice
  - April 30<sup>th</sup> – Beth Norton will lead a special music service, featuring the Rutter Requiem
  - May 7<sup>th</sup> – the Coming of Age class will share their credos.
- Leadership Team. Implementation of the Leadership Team is on hold pending the outcome of the Search Committee selection process.
- Sanctuary Technology Modernization. The firm, Shanahan, has been selected to design and implement the technology modernization plan for the church. The goal is to complete plans and fundraise this spring, install over the summer, and have the new system ready to go for the start of the next church year.
- Half-time Church Office Administrator. Catherine Hill has begun work as our half-time office administrator.

### **Update from the Minister for Congregational Care**

- Liz W. reported that the Covenant team has been very busy. They will soon have a new draft of the covenant available.
- Two new members signed the membership book last week. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, there will be a ceremony for additional new members, when they can sign the book. Five people have expressed interest so far.
- Liz offered a New to UU class this spring, but there wasn't sufficient interest.

### **Commission on Institutional Change (COIC) Status Report**

- Darien Smith offered a status report on the COIC's activities this year. The COIC has been meeting every 2 weeks during the church year. The current COIC members will continue in the role next year.
- Mike Beer asked whether the COIC has solicited feedback from the congregation. Darien answered that their efforts so far have been limited to surveying the church leadership, but they intend to do further outreach. She agreed that it would be advisable to contact people of color and indigenous people to get their perspectives.
- Welcoming Walls. The COIC wants to redecorate the vestibule, central hallways, Parlor, and Parish Hall to reflect current First Parish activities, engagement, and social justice work. There appears to

be widespread interest and momentum in the project. They had their first planning meeting last week. At least 3 people at the meeting stated that they are willing to serve on the committee.

- Darien asked for confirmation that the Welcoming Walls initiative is an operational matter, and Seth confirmed. Paul Langston-Daley will be the staff liaison to the project.
- Darien asked if the Standing Committee is supportive of this project. Liz stated that she is supportive of the concept, but will want to hear the details.
- Cindy Soule mentioned that part of the process will be reaching out to people who may be concerned or invested in the current artwork.
- Darien said that the COIC will soon be approaching the SC with proposed changes to the Bylaws. If approved by the SC, the changes would not be voted upon by the congregation until the following church year.
- Darien asked for clarification on the COIC's authority to move projects forward and whether they need to check with staff or the SC before doing so. Liz answered that since many of the COIC's ideas appear to be operational in nature, the starting point would be Seth. Seth agreed.
- The COIC will soon be releasing its status report to the congregation.

## SC Operations

### Meeting Minutes Approval

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to accept the March 11, 2023 Standing Committee (SC) meeting minutes, and to incorporate them into the permanent record.

### Director of Operations Report

- Fifi distributed the Staff Compensation review.
- Surplus Funds Update. FP started FY23 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) with \$191,200 in surplus funds. Per our budget, we initially projected \$16,000 remaining in surplus funds after June 30, 2023. Examining and projecting differences between budgeted and actual expenses, we currently anticipate \$80,000 remaining in surplus funds after the end of this fiscal year.
- Mike Beer commented that we need to do some outreach to get new members in the church. And that we need to think about cutting our expenses.

### Pledge Campaign Update and Budget Meetings.

- Heather reported that so far 259 households have pledged, for a total of \$649,870. This represents about 2/3 of the amount that we had hoped to raise in the campaign. We are still collecting pledges.
- Gib proposed a series of meetings for the SC and congregation regarding the budget. The proposed schedule is as follows:
  - SC Meeting, 4/1/23. Budget information update to begin discussion and planning for 4/24 meeting.
  - Pledge Drive Officially Ends, 4/16/23.
  - SC Budget Meeting, 4/25/23. Draft budget options based on 4/16 pledge amount. Second set of options based on expected further pledges.
  - Budget Information Session 1, 4/30/23. Present tentative budget changes. Final opportunity for congregational input into budget changes.
  - SC Meeting – Review Budget, 5/9/23. Key donors who have not yet pledged should have been contacted. Near final budget presented for SC review.
  - Budget Information Session II, 5/21/23. Present near final budget to congregation for review.
  - Finalize Budget, 5/23/23. SC to approve final budget.
  - Annual Meeting – Present Budget, 6/11/23.

- The above timetable calls for two budget information sessions to be held for the congregation on Sunday April 30 and May 21, both after church. The Financial Sustainability Group will take responsibility for organizing and running these two meetings.
- A key activity will be conducting outreach with major donors who have not pledged by April 16, the official closing date for the campaign.
- Virginia asked how the SC can help. Gib answered that the SC could help contact households who have not yet pledged. Liz added that it would be helpful for the SC to attend the budget meetings to show our support. Every SC member should plan on attending at least one of the meetings.
- Heather mentioned that the Pledge Campaign Committee is also ready to make phone calls.
- Heather mentioned that everyone is invited on Friday, May 5 to an end of pledge campaign celebration event.

#### **Governance Subcommittee Update**

- Jen and Virginia presented the subcommittee's draft End Statements. The purpose of the End Statements is to provide short-term (i.e., 3-5 years), big picture goals for the congregation and staff in furtherance of our mission.
- SC will read and consider the draft End Statements, and will vote upon the end Statements at the May SC meeting. We should send any comments to Virginia by April 25.
- These goals are supposed to be aspirational. They describe who and what we want to be at the end of the 3-5 year period.

#### **Upcoming FP Events**

- 4/25: SC budget meeting
- 5/09: SC meeting: Confirm search committee ballot, review budget/s
- 5/20: Democracy Festival
- 5/22 (approx.): Budget approval deadline, warrant finalization
- 6/11: Annual Meeting
- 6/13: End of year SC meeting, Welcome new board members, elect next year positions, schedule summer/fall retreat

#### **Executive Session**

- The SC entered Executive Session.