

**First Parish in Concord  
Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
October 8, 2024**

Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Lisa Bennett	Governing Board Member	Y
Kimma Brainerd	Clerk	N
Neil Brock	Governing Board Member	Y
Jennifer Izzo	Governing Board Member	N
C.C. King	Governing Board Member	Y
Gib Metcalf	Chair	Y
Kristin Moore	Governing Board Member	Y
Jim Reynolds	Governing Board Member	N
Leah Russell	Treasurer	Y
Susan See	Governing Board Member	Y
Virginia Taylor	Governing Board Member	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON AT FIRST PARISH, CONCORD.

Lisa Bennett offered opening words on what community means.

Check in - reflect on the words from the FP covenant: As a community of members, friends, ministers, and staff, we cultivate a culture of appreciation for one another.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS**

Resolution to Adopt 2025 Restatement of the Unitarian Universalist Organizations Retirement Plan

Approval of September 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes. The Governance Board Meeting Minutes from September 10, 2024 were approved by the Board via an email vote that occurred in June of 2004.

**All attending agreed to approve both actions.**

**OPERATIONS REPORT**

Fifi said there wasn't much to report as we're only 2 months into the fiscal year.

The main news today is that Tina is leaving. Fifi has an appointment for a local bookkeeping company on Thursday. Will place an ad. Gib recommended a password manager. Catherine adjusting well to her new responsibilities, including reserving space. Has all the publications as well. Seems calm and happy. Bruce was out sick last week, which made Fifi aware of all that he oversees.

Trustees bookkeeping is going well, but work on the cottages is taking a lot of Bruce's time and his assistance.

re: HR, we need to improve our processes around independent contractors' 1099 with hourly rate. We should move them to payroll. Heads up that we're expecting calendar year increases in insurance (typical).

- Question asked about HR Manual - does it need looking at? Jennifer recommended having a lawyer review the manual.
- Idea suggested to form an HR Advisory Committee from the congregation. Relates as well to Operations generally and using volunteer staff. There's a need in this particular area.

Coffee hour with apples - cost was \$200. Everyone appreciated it, but it would be expensive year round. There appears to be an unmet need that could be handled by volunteers. Suggestion on whether a committee could take-on coordinating volunteers. Given the role of the Governing Board's policy focus it was agreed that this is the kind of thing that should go back to Operations with volunteers involved in Operations. Jennifer agrees on a need to address staff working together with volunteers on Operational needs.

### **SENIOR MINISTER'S REPORT & Items**

Emphasized how much we (Jennifer and GB) are both bringing together during the worship service. Mutual appreciation. How she is preaching has a lot to do with how people are showing up for the service.

Jennifer wanted to name the concern about her depletion. Out of necessity, she needs to show up for what is going on now. Will need to recalibrate and get to a sustainable rate within the next month. Can feel it coming and is actively thinking about her self-care and practices.

We need to have an Installation Service. In our tradition there is a ceremony of installation and a party to formally acknowledge that we are in ministry together. In talking to Staff and Worship Committee, the date proposed is May 17, 2025. Didn't want to do April given Concord 250 celebration. Traditionally done in the spring. Usually visiting ministers, host the invited preacher (and pay travel expenses). Rev. Shana Lyngood, Jennifer's mentor, has been invited to preach. Date works for the staff, Jennifer and the visiting minister. 2 o'clock P.M. followed by reception.

Fifi - budget is ballparked at \$5,000. Fifi will make a budget adjustment recommendation at a later date.

Request that GB members get back to Jennifer within a day if there is a conflict.

### **Banner Policy Adoption**

Banner Policy Adoption issue was addressed with an **External Messaging Policy**.

Clarifying question: Is there a change process for policies defined? Yes, we can update it in the future. Expecting that this year we will be looking through many of the policies and updating them. Further discussion points:

- After discussion on where to place this policy, it was agreed that it belonged with the Executive Limitation policies (Governing Policy 2).
- We have both Operational and Governing Policies. A lot of the policies affect committees and committee chairs and they are not always informed of them. Chair acknowledged and made note to include notice of this policy in his next update from the Governing Board. Could also use the bulletin board more effectively.
- Jennifer proposed there could be a monthly/quarterly communication to Committee Chairs to be aware of. Feel a sense of responsibility for doing that. Idea well received. Fifi offered that we could have a link to all policies, but highlight 1-2 occasionally.

**Unanimous vote to approve the policy.**

### **Governing Board Covenant**

Lisa reported on survey results. Various opinions on the need for a separate covenant. The GB discussed the need for a separate GB covenant with general agreement that much of the value of a covenant is in the intentional and reflective process of creating it.

Discussion resolved that we're learning towards reflecting on the use of the First Parish covenant and governing board policy and how we live those. The process is in those reflections and in future discussions – create mechanisms for having those discussions.

- Jennifer suggested a separate process meeting to return to how we are functioning, how we are living up to our values, our purpose, so we can return to the relational observations.
- GB will take up defining mechanisms for future discussions.

### **Mission, Ends, and Oversight**

Virginia shared a hand-out on Mission, Ends and Oversight and their connections. Attached to minutes.

Policy governance is intended to free everyone. Frees the Minister who has Executive Limitations to work within. GB is not in a reactive mode to proposals. We lead by policy, spell out the limitations. We set the vision for achieving the mission.

Does it make sense to continue to use the existing Ends Statement?

Clarifying questions

- Has Jennifer seen these? Yes
- Was there congregational input? Seth worked with Staff and the Governance group to create these.
- Does this overlap what Jennifer needs for full fellowship application? There is overlap, she has organized the full fellowship evaluation process around pillars from the staff.

Discussion ensued. Resolved while we are doing strategic assessment work this year in preparation for establishing a new Ends Statement, we will use the three mission goals to guide Operational execution.

Jennifer added that references to staff in the Ends Statement doesn't just mean paid staff. Under policy governance, it can be extended to lay volunteers with oversight from the Minister.

Jennifer also observed that GB can bring oversight concerns to the GB agenda. That doesn't interfere with Operations. Chair emphasized that anyone can bring an item to him to add to the agenda and he will address it.

### **GOVERNING BOARD OPERATIONS**

Dinner on the 19t

Seems to be doing well.

We're up to 34 people. Don't sell any more tickets. We can just cook a bit more.

The Governing Board went into executive session.

The Governing Board meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:20pm.

## **Attachment: Means, Ends and Oversight**

### **MISSION, ENDS, and OVERSIGHT**

#### **Mission**

First Parish is a welcoming Unitarian Universalist congregation that seeks to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the world.

#### **Ends**

According to Policy Governance, the Congregation entrusts to its elected representatives, the Governing Board, the responsibility for determining visionary goals, or **Ends**, to advance our mission. The Ends are articulated in an **Ends Statement** presented to the Lead Minister every 3-5 years. Developing an Ends Statement with the involvement of the Congregation is the pivotal responsibility of the Governing Board.

The Governing Board delegates authority for operations to the Lead Minister, who is responsible for **Means**, or leading the Staff toward achieving the Ends. The Board also delineates any unacceptable means, or Executive Limitations on Operations.

#### **Oversight**

Staff achievement of the Ends using the Means Policies is considered successful Head of Staff performance.

#### **Key Points about Policy Governance**

Policy governance is a framework intended to encourage visionary Board leadership and to liberate the creative energy of the Staff and the Congregation. The Ends describe the destination, but not the map of how to get there. This model ideally frees the creativity and inspiration of the Lead Minister to choose any Means to achieve Ends within preestablished limitations. The model of leading through policy frees the Board from being in a reactive position and the need to ratify every plan. Having means policies in place allows the Governing Board and Staff to know whether a plan is acceptable, since criteria for disapproval are clearly stated. Staff includes paid staff, lay leaders, and congregants in roles as volunteers.

The distinction between Ends and Means is critical to policy governance. The Board decides the ends and its own means but does not tell the Minister how to do her job.

The Governing Board enacts four categories of policies:

1. Ends
2. Executive limitations
3. Means policies for Board operations
4. Governance—Staff link.

#### **Resources:**

Carver, John. *Boards that Make a Difference*

Hotchkiss, Dan. *Governance and Ministry*

Park, Laura. *The Nested Bowls: The Promise and Practice of Good Governance*

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