

Regular Attendees		Present
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	Y
Rev. Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Dave Elwood	Standing Committee member	N
Michelle Fortier	Treasurer	Y
Kristin Haddad	Chair	Y
John Lowe	Standing Committee member	Y
Peter Nobile	Clerk	Y
Patty Popov	Standing Committee member	Y
Zach Roe	Social Action Coordinator	N
Toby Smith Ropeik	Standing Committee member	N
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Standing Committee member	N
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee member	Y
Jo VonRue	Minister in Residence	N

Kate lit our chalice and Howard read *What You Missed That Day You Were Absent From Fourth Grade* by Brad Aaron Modlin. Kate read our Standing Committee (SC) covenant.

Minutes from our September 10 meeting, with minor adjustments, had already been approved via email.

**Chair Report**

The semi-annual compensation report and chair feedback report will both be discussed at next month’s SC meeting. Kristin thanked Kate, Lora, Howard and Tom for this month’s excellent leadership workshop. After the workshops, Kristin was approached by a Parishoner willing to help with the Year for Reflection and Visioning work.

During our meeting, Kristin formed an SC Chair selection committee comprised of Jeff, John and Patty.

Kristin also reported learning interesting perspectives from her monthly UU Lay Leadership conference call, including one church that has formed an independent Leadership Committee focused entirely on leadership development.

**Goal Status Review**

The group reviewed our SC Goals and Measurements, noting several achievements including the above-mentioned leadership development workshop, as well as Kristin’s Lay Leadership calls, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade UU Explorer’s upcoming visits to the Weston and Sherborn churches for services. It seems like the work we are doing this year is actively reinforcing our goals.

**Minister’s Report**

Howard’s report was gratefully received.

**Director of Operations' Report**

Fifi distributed hard copies of our August 2017 financials, and detailed a few specifics about recent fiscal activities. Howard and Fifi intend to use part of last year's surplus to fund a gap year for the auction.

**Treasurer's Report**

Michelle encouraged all SC members to read the Stewardship report that was distributed last month. About a dozen people attended today's forum on the Legacy Investment Fund, where the discussion included review of a change in fund type that will likely save thousands of dollars in management fees.

Michelle discussed recent Finance Committee thoughts about uses of the church's current surplus funds, with priorities focusing on staff compensation, deferred maintenance, and UU Fair Share dues. Michelle shared an example of a one-page, concise presentation (from first Parish Cambridge) of a 20-year fiscal goal plan.

And finally, the Finance Committee has been making initial preparations for how the budget will be presented in the future if any changes are made to the current 7.5% SAC set aside.

**Member's Reports**

- Lora reported hearing that the Leadership Workshop was very well received.
- Members reported positive experiences at the intergenerational square dance last night. John reported that a young couple stopped in to the church last night after hearing the square dance music from the street.
- Michelle reported positive feedback during the RE Family Night event.
- Jeff reported on a member's wish that there might be a more concerted response to address recent teenage deaths in the community. Howard reported that Amy and Dawn are working around death/dying/suicide issues with the Coming of Age group, and that we are thinking about work with parents along these lines as well.

**Liaison and Subcommittee Reports**

- Dave Elwood reported via Kristin that the *Religious Education (RE) Council* is doing very well.
- Patty and Kate reported that *Nominating Committee* membership is now 6 members, and that one additional member is needed.
- Fifi reported that Tim Jacoby is going to step down as both Chair and member of the *Parish Trustees*.
- Kate reminded us that the square dance was sponsored by the *Membership Committee*.
- John reported that the *Forum Committee* is wondering about committee membership and general purpose of the Forum.

**Sanctuary Level 2 Congregation Discussion**

Kristin reported on recent activities of the Level 2 Congregation group, and opened the floor to discussion. In general, the SC believes that certifying First Parish as a Sanctuary Level 2 Congregation, in support of efforts at First Parish in Bedford, is very much the right thing for us to do. John moved, and Patty seconded, that First Parish officially become designated a Sanctuary Level 2 Congregation. The committee approved the motion unanimously.

**7.5% Discussion Update**

Kristin reported (including observations on behalf of Toby) on the relatively forward-looking tone of conversations during recent discussions about the 7.5% issue. There do not seem to be significant objections to absorbing social action back into the general church budget, but there are some concerns about where the church is headed around social action. In other words, some people would like more clarity about what we are moving toward, not just what we are moving away from. Discussion at Kristin's recent "Dessert with Zach" was a good indicator and experience, and Zach is eager to do more such casual events. The committee generally observes that there is not much anxiety around the 7.5% discussion, and that as a congregation we are thoroughly and openly exploring this important issue.

**Leadership Workshop Next Steps**

Kate and Lora reported on themes coming out from attendant feedback, including a real interest in learning how to deal with conflict, dealing with male domination, and better ways of balancing leadership with management skills. Several workshop attendees expressed interest in future how-to workshops on topic including chairing committees, addressing disfunction in groups, or in generally facilitating meetings. The committee encouraged more leadership development workshops, as this past one was not only well attended but as noted before was very well received.

**Final Words**

- A governance subcommittee meeting is to be set up by Kristin and John in the next few weeks.
- All upcoming Liaison and Subcommittee reporting will be done electronically via Google Docs prior to SC meetings.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, was seconded and unanimously approved, and the meeting ended at 7:41PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter Nobile  
Clerk