

<b>Regular Attendees</b>		<b>Present</b>
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	Y
Rev. Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Dave Elwood	Standing Committee member	Y
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	
Toby Smith Ropeik	Standing Committee member	Y
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Standing Committee member	
Kate Svreck	Standing Committee member	Y
Rev. Jo VonRue	Minister in Residence	Y
<b>Guests</b>		
Gib Metcalf	Finance Committee	

Howard opened our meeting by reading Becky Blodgett’s obituary from the February *UU World* magazine and reminded us that we are neither the first nor the last to sit around this table, and we blessed Becky’s memory. We then enjoyed a moment of silence, Kristin lit our chalice, and Kate read our Standing Committee (SC) covenant.

**Approval of minutes**

Our February minutes were approved unanimously.

**Goal Status Review**

- The committee expressed deep gratitude to Kate, Toby, Lora and Tom for all their work leading up to and throughout yesterday’s All Parish Retreat.
- Dave and Kate met recently with Weston’s Standing Committee, who find themselves facing some similar challenges that we face. Dave expanded on similarities and differences between our two congregations. The Weston standing committee is comprised of 8 committee heads (e.g. Religious Education, Music) plus 6 at-large members.

**Chair’s Report**

Among other chair-newsworthy items, Kristin received a letter of thanks from Jericho Road for our support of their activities. The annual pledge campaign kicked off with last Sunday’s Celebration Sunday service. The most recent large church conference call that Kristin participated in revealed that we are the only church in the group that does not have a covenant regarding how we treat one another.

Kristin encouraged the committee to think about what we’d like to accomplish for the rest of the year, and

the ordination of Mark Richards will be an upcoming discussion topic.

Kristin will be attending the next Social Action Council (SAC) meeting. Kristin shared her thinking with the SC regarding this upcoming meeting, especially given the issues around the automatic 7.5% set aside from our annual budget for social action. Kristin's four suggestions for the SC's recommendation, which will eventually translate into Warrant Article language at our Annual Meeting changing the current automatic 7.5% set-aside to something new, were discussed at length.

We then reviewed the history of the mechanisms of Social Action funding and granting at First Parish, as well as current feelings and trends in the congregation today about how we spend social action dollars. It was agreed that Kristin will merge items 1 and 4 from above into a revised recommendation for committee review.

### **Minister's Report**

From Howard's most recent report, it is evident that there is a lot going on in the Senior Minister's corner! The committee discussed comments in Howard's report about how the Social Action 7.5% vote process may or may not proceed.

### **Director of Operations' Report**

In addition to her excellent written report, Fifi told us of a recent restricted gift of \$5,000 to be used for SAC grants. Howard encouraged the SC to have a future conversation about restricted gifts. Fifi noted that more pledges are coming in, currently totaling \$506,000 from 166 pledgers so far.

Of note, in January First Parish submitted numbers for the UUA's annual certification of congregations. We currently have 670 Members, 179 Friends, 190 enrolled in Religious Exploration (RE), and average weekly attendance of 296.

And finally, Fifi noted that she will be moving FP cash into better interest-earning vehicles in the coming days. These moves could earn First Parish over \$5,000 additional in interest each year, and Fifi thanked Patty and others for help in researching this activity. Fifi also briefly updated us on the some current UUA fiscal policies.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Michelle and Gib described the possibility of placing a cellular antenna in the steeple. Both Holy Family and TriCon both have cellular antennae in their steeples. This antenna, with Verizon, could possibly generate some \$31,000 in annual income for the church. But there are several unknowns and concerns, and more background work needs to be done before a next step can be evaluated. Gib and others are following through.

### **Questions & Answers from Liaison document**

Updates included positive remarks on the RE team structure, which Dave reported seems to be working well. Dave also noted that summer RE programming and other work is well underway.

**Members' reports, what are we hearing?**

Patty reported no names were submitted in response to the notices regarding Nominating Committee openings.

**Chair Selection**

Kristin and Jeff reviewed the interview, analysis and collation process that was used by the SC working group to arrive at the recommendation that we elect Toby Smith Ropeik as next year's SC chair, for a one-year term. Jeff reviewed the working group's recommendations about Toby, which included her exceptional gifts, skills, abilities and passions, as well as the appropriateness of her style of leadership given where First Parish and the UUA are headed today.

Jeff then motioned that Toby Smith Ropeik be elected to be chair of the First Parish Standing Committee for a one-year term, following Annual Meeting 2018 until the day after Annual Meeting 2019. Toby was then elected chair!

**Year for Reflection and Visioning—so far**

Kate reported very good, strong feedback about yesterday's retreat. The facilitators did an excellent job, the energy coming out of the day is high, and the sense of community building was and is palpable. A total of 114 people checked in, including 8 teenagers who participated for parts of the workshop. Some of the next steps could include an analysis of the Post-It notes, a wider sharing of the survey results, and some sort of prioritizing on the general "buckets" of action moving forward. The retreat will be reported on via various venues, and Dave agreed to be the Post-It collator. More specific recommendations are to come.

**Other Business**

The SC Policy Proposal discussion has been tabled until next month.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded and unanimously approved, and the meeting ended at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter Nobile  
Clerk