

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	
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	Y
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee member	
Rev. Jo VonRue	Minister in Residence	Y
Guests		
Bob Brack	Social Action Community	
Wendy Holt	Social Action Community	
Ted Bayne	Social Action Community	
Sue St. Clair	Social Action Community	
Liz Rust	Social Action Community	
Fred Van Deusen	Social Action Community	

Howard opened our meeting by reading a poem by Joel Showalter entitled *Suitcase*. We held a moment of silence, Howard lit our chalice, and Michelle read our Standing Committee (SC) covenant.

Approval of minutes

Our March minutes were approved unanimously.

Goal Status Review

- Lora and Kate reported for the Evaluation Committee that both Howard’s and SC evaluation comments are due by the end of April. A final evaluation of both Howard and the SC will be ready for the June SC meeting. A general discussion of goal setting ensued.
- Kristin reported more activity by the Social Action Community (SAC) on the 7.5% discussion.
- Toby has asked Eric Van Loon to draft a list of arguments in favor of the 7.5% allocation, which will be worked into the language regarding changes to that policy.
- Tom noted with pleasure several ongoing collaborations between First Parish (FP) Bedford and FP Concord.

Chair’s Report

- Kristin attended two SAC Board meetings to present the SC proposal regarding changes to the

7.5% policy proposal.

- Kristin attended an ELT meeting to ask more about cellular antennae. The upcoming Climate Justice event, and a fossil-free FP proposal were also discussed.
- Mark Richards' upcoming ordination process continues to evolve.
- Kristin noted that the SC Chair selection process worked well but she suggested once the recommendation is on the table the current Chair should formally accept or deny the recommendation.
- The first phase of the Annual Pledge Campaign has wrapped up.
- Kristin has been soliciting ideas for a stand-in for John Stevens as Moderator for the annual meeting, as John has developed a conflict.
- Kristin would like to see an affirming vote on our church's Mission Statement at this year's Annual Meeting.

Minister's Report

Howard's most recent report was reviewed, and Howard made a clarification about how we count pledge income. We discussed where we "anchor" the suggested minimum pledge amount. Michelle noted that FP Lexington's anchor point is \$3,000 per household; our per-household median pledge is \$1,080. Howard noted that half our annual budget is borne by 10% of the congregation.

Director of Operations' Report

Fifi reported a current total of 297 pledging units making a confirmed running total pledge of \$741,427. Fifi noted that a donor is going to cover the cost of an upcoming renovation, through a restricted gift, to our current non-functional irrigation system in anticipation of a lawn reseeding project this coming fall.

Prior Year Pledge Payments and Share-the-Plate results were discussed. Box Collections were down \$2,000 as of 12/31/17. Michelle noted that this may have been caused by fall disaster relief collections. Box Collections are down an additional \$1,000 since the six-month Share-The-Plate pilot began on 1/1/18.

The SC was pleased to learn we now provide muffins on Sunday mornings with no accompanying requests for cash donations.

Fifi noted that thanks to help from Patty, interest on cash in our current bank accounts will likely increase dramatically in the coming year. The FP cash position was briefly discussed.

Treasurer's Report

Michelle reported 100% SC participation in the annual pledge campaign. Michelle also thanked the Finance Committee (FinCom), Fifi and Tom for their report. Gib Metcalf is continuing his cellular antenna discussions with Verizon and Doug Baker. FinCom membership in 2018-19 was also discussed.

Update from the Congregation: SAC update/introduction to a Hybrid Giving Model

Wendy presented a review of Social Action giving at First Parish over time, including a 30+ year timeline, a review of criteria and methodology, and other comparisons and feedback analysis. The SC thanked Wendy for a very clear and concise presentation, and for her work over the long term on Social

Action giving at First Parish. Wendy answered several questions and provided more clarifications on her excellent analysis.

Bob and Ted discussed a handout describing a proposed “Flexible Hybrid Model for SAC Giving.” The committee asked several clarifying questions.

Current Initiatives: SAC Policy recommendation update

Kristin shared her latest proposed wording regarding SAC Policy in relationship both to FP’s other priorities, or pillars (including music, religious education, etc.), and to the larger annual budget. The SC discussed how this wording better integrates social action and creates more flexibility and clarity about the head of staff’s role. Several clarifications were suggested, and a subset of SC members will work to revise the wording by April 29th.

Members’ reports, what are we hearing?

- Toby reported the results of her survey regarding SC meeting time, that the most promising option for a change to an alternate time for future SC meetings appears to be Tuesday evening. The group noted that any change will need to be coordinated with the Nominating Committee, so they can inform potential SC candidates, as well as with other committee meetings, newsletter deadlines, and so on. The meeting time would potentially be 7PM.
- Toby noted that we promised that the results of the Year for Reflection and Visioning (YfRaV) retreat and survey were promised to be more widely shared – see update in the next item.
- Patty moved that Darien Smith be the SC nominee for the Nominating Committee, *Nunc Pro Tunc*. The motion passed unanimously.
- Tom raised the specter of the upcoming Proud Boys march in Concord on Patriot’s Day, and what FP might do in response. Lora noted that Reclaiming Our Democracy and other groups are planning a counter-demonstration march, and Jo encouraged us to show up as a church.

Year for Reflection and Visioning (YfRaV) update

The subcommittee will be making a presentation on the survey and retreat results this coming Tuesday to the FP Staff. The group discussed the best time to present results at a congregational meeting, perhaps in early May.

SC Policy Update

The vote on this policy will be held at next month’s meeting. It was agreed that a draft of the minutes will be posted by the day after the SC meeting for committee review, that SC members will get comments back to the clerk within one week, and the revised minutes will be redistributed and voted on electronically.

A motion was made to adjourn the main meeting; the motion was seconded and unanimously approved, and the main meeting ended at 8:54PM. The group entered into Executive Session. A motion was then made to close the Executive Session, and that meeting adjourned at 9:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter Nobile, Clerk