

<b>Regular Attendees</b>		<b>Present</b>
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	Y
Rev. Howard Dana	Senior Minister	
Dave Elwood	Chair	Y
Michelle Fortier	Treasurer	
Kristin Haddad	Standing Committee member	Y
John Lowe	Standing Committee member	Y
Peter Nobile	Clerk	Y
Zach Roe	Social Action Coordinator	
Toby Smith Ropeik	Standing Committee member	Y
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee member	Y
Valerie Vallancourt	Standing Committee member	
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Standing Committee member	Y
<b>Guests</b>		
Jan Power	First Parish member, 2018 GA remote delegate	
Jim Sherblom	First Parish member, 2018 GA on-site delegate	
Beth Norton	Director of Music Ministries	

Dave opened the meeting with a short reading by Albert Camus, and Peter lit our chalice.

The minutes from our May 20<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting had both been modified with minor corrections and are ready for approval. A motion was made to accept both into the record, and the motion was approved.

**General Assembly (GA) report**

Members and guests discussed the experience of being on- and off-site delegates to this year’s GA in Kansas City. Jim summarized his thoughts about the change from last year’s GA to this year’s, both operational and administrative. The changes that Susan Frederick Gray is helping to bring about included the promotion of Cary McDonald to Executive Vice President, which brings a young and energetic new voice of color into the center of the UUA administration. The average age on stage at this year’s GA was about 50, and about half of the presenters were people of color. However, there were about 1,000 fewer delegates than ever before, mostly due to older white people not showing up. But defying expectations, denomination-wide giving has actually increased, and congregations that are embracing changes coming out of work at the UUA are growing and thriving because of, not despite, the turmoil. Jim also noted that leadership in general is moving away from the Baby Boomer to Millennial and younger generations, from old to young, and from white to non-white.

John observed that First Parish is in a good place to be proactive about embracing the changes being wrought within the UUA, and that we likely have the enthusiastic backing of both our Senior Minister and several strategically thinking people in the congregation. Jan was impressed with the call from our denomination to decidedly take on racial issues, and that we collectively possess the wherewithal and

ability to embrace these currents – and that we are clearly being called to do so. Beth was struck by the youthfulness and diversity of the denominational leadership.

Jim suggested that First Parish quickly begin an effort to define who we want to be by 2025, to mirror the UUA’s Commission on Institutional Change process which is currently working on the national and denomination-wide level.

The group discussed how we might approach effecting GA-inspired change, especially in line with our Year for Reflection and Visioning (YfRaV) outcomes. We talked about how the process may be messy and not entirely comfortable, but that the call to us is to move forward, to not overthink things, and to act rather than make the process too cerebral. The need to keep the “old guard” engaged in the process is critical – that while we may be beginning to envision a new and exciting future, we must involve both those born before and after 1965 in the visioning and transition process.

### **Director of Operation’s Report**

Fifi briefed the group on a proposed personnel change: Beth has asked Howard to promote Gail Carey to become an Assistant Director of Music Ministries, increasing her time to 15 hours a week. The promotion was enthusiastically received! In addition to her marvelous work with our youth, Gail has also been working with Matt Meyer in Boston exploring the idea of an alternate service, perhaps a Vespers-like service with contemporary music and programming geared especially toward youth and other communities. The change to our budget would be about \$8,000 total (for the increase to Gail’s salary), and we will formally approve this change at next month’s SC meeting.

The coming year’s budget is tight but in general the financial news is good. Fifi reported two additional changes to the budget. We are compensating Jo Von Ru for unused vacation time (a total of \$2,238) and making minor but well-deserved adjustments to Dawn Van Patten’s salary (a total of \$2,038). A motion was made to approve both changes to the budget; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Other thoughts**

John and others reported on an excellent service this past Sunday (7/8) with Jim Sherblom’s inspiring sermon and Steve Caldwell’s terrific reading of a poem he has written.

### **Senior Minister Evaluation Process**

The Senior Minister evaluation report will be ready before the August 14<sup>th</sup> meeting for SC review. The SC will have an Executive Session on August 14th, and the subcommittee will then meet with Howard to discuss the report after that meeting.

### **Standing Committee Goals**

The group discussed working backward from what might need to be voted on at the 2019 Annual Meeting, which may include several process-specific issues, finance and stewardship issues, and potential other action coming out of the work around GA (see above). Some of these goals will likely be multi-year efforts. The group discussed the development of new end statements, and the idea of aligning our new SC goals with both the YfRaV and GA outcomes. A subcommittee of Dave, John and Tom will draft up goals/objectives/end statements for the SC to discuss. The group discussed how to more deeply

fold congregants already engaged in the process (e.g. through their YfRaV leadership) to follow through and honor their commitment to the overall goal setting process. The SC will be gathering on July 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at Kate's house, and the focus of that gathering will include structuring an approach to addressing this year's YfRaV outcomes to help the congregation hit the ground running in September.

We discussed a more general SC retreat for the fall, with date and agenda TBD.

**Liaisons**

The group discussed continuing our liaison work and organizing our efforts more specifically around the five pillars of our ministry.

**Greeters**

The SC will continue to greet, and Peter, Lora and Kate will begin to look at how we might transform greeting this coming year especially by involving our youth.

The public meeting was closed at 9:00 PM and the group entered an Executive Session. The Executive Session was closed at 9:40 PM, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter Nobile  
Clerk