

.Regular Attendees		Present
Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Jeff Brainerd	Standing Committee member	Y
Rev. Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Dave Elwood	Chair	Y
Michelle Fortier	Treasurer	Y
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	
Valerie Vallancourt	Standing Committee member	Y
Lora Venesy	Standing Committee member	Y
Tom Wilson	Standing Committee member	Y
Laurel Gray	Ministerial Intern	Y
Eric Moore	Nominating Committee	

Howard opened our meeting with a reading by Robert Frost, *Unharvested*. Toby lit our chalice, and we held a moment of silence.

Standing Committee (SC) minutes from July, August and September, as well as the Annual Meeting minutes, will be posted with minor corrections for electronic approval.

Director of Operation’s report

The group discussed several items in Fifi’s August report. Fifi updated us on the state of lawn improvements underway. The audit process is ongoing, moving a bit more slowly than anticipated, with the auditor, Richard Brown, making helpful observations and interesting best-practice type suggestions along the way.

Senior Minister’s report

The group discussed the two-year goal around Doug Baker’s retirement, especially regarding ongoing property maintenance. Howard reviewed his proposed sabbatical activities which will include a trip with the UU College of Social Justice to Honduras, and the UU Senior Minister’s conference which this year is focusing on anti-racism, as well as time for rest and relaxation, and reading. This is Howard’s 21st year of Parish ministry and he is looking forward to getting out from under especially the crush of email for a short period of time to reflect and regenerate. By consensus the committee approved Howard’s verbal description of his plan for his sabbatical. We discussed ways to relieve the email and other pressure on Howard – some of which is a natural part of a growing and active church, but which is nevertheless quite stressful. Howard noted that the “un-churched” in our communities still tend to turn to Ministers for weddings and memorial services, which is part of what keeps Howard so busy.

Howard also updated us on Youth Group development efforts, which are moving along with Religious Education (RE) Council, Rev. Amy Freedman, and Madzie Burnham's guidance. The youth group is meeting weekly on Sunday evenings, and while it is too soon to tell how things are going the goal is to establish a multi-year pattern to get our youth group effort back off the ground. Plans are uncertain for hiring a Youth Director; that will depend on how the current arrangement works and how the group evolves. The biggest challenge is that our youth are over-scheduled, so the youth group pitch is focusing on unstructured time. The guiding group is considering the eventual hiring of a paid youth coordinator. Lora mentioned the idea of possibly developing a Junior Youth Group.

Treasurer's report

Michelle reported that a draft letter from the auditor (Mr. Brown) is due in October, who will also attend our November Standing Committee meeting. The Finance Committee is now looking for one additional member, with the first Finance Committee meeting coming up on October 18th.

Liaison and Pillar reports

Dave noted that regular liaison reports are not required, but that notable events or issues should be discussed with the committee. This month's reports included:

- RE: Jeff noted that the structure of the RE Council has changed to a set of themed working groups, and that the themes include welcoming, youth group, and social action. Around youth group development, Lora advocated reaching out to other churches to possibly combine efforts and inspire one another, for example to learn more about the new Youth Coordinator at TriCon.

The group also discussed how to create synergies generally around communications and outreach.

Governance Subcommittee update

John noted that the task of ensuring annual SC self-evaluation has been added to the Governance Subcommittee's annual goals. A motion was made to approve the revised Governance Subcommittee's charter, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The committee discussed goals and responsibilities for a proposed Ministerial Support Subcommittee. Kristin noted that what is often lacking is a way to clarify roles and responsibilities between the SC and the Senior Minister (SM), and that the intent of this subcommittee is to better align SC and SM goals and to generally better support the SM. This subcommittee would have a different and more detail-oriented function from the ministerial "sounding board" group. A motion was made to accept the proposed charter for the Ministerial Support Subcommittee, and the motion was accepted unanimously.

Discussion of proposed Standing Committee goals

The proposed 2-year SC goals are as follows:

1. Move first Parish towards a vision inspired by our Year for Reflection and Visioning findings
 - i. Establish teams to work on categories identified in our September retreat
 - ii. Set short-term goals and timelines; measure outcomes
 - iii. Involve other committed First Parish members
 - iv. Propose policy changes

2. Strengthen and better define our shared leadership model with Senior Minister
 - i. Develop a model for aligning goals
 - ii. Establish a Ministerial Support subcommittee with charter
3. Review policies and improve governance
 - i. Adopt a charter for a Governance subcommittee
 - ii. Review and revise as needed our evaluation process
 - iii. Come to an understanding of what confidentiality standards should adopted, if any, by the Standing Committee as policy or operating standard
4. Become a more reflective body (inspired by the SC retreat)
 - i. Streamline our meetings; allot time for visioning
 - ii. Enhance the spiritual elements of our work

Several comments were made to modify and consolidate the sub-goals, which will be adjusted in the future, and a motion was made to accept the four main goals. The motion was accepted unanimously.

The future of First Parish (SC retreat follow-up)

Dave distributed proposed goals for the church, the categories of which were developed in consultation with Meg Hargraves, based on the discussions during last month's retreat. The committee discussed how best to begin acting on working toward these goals, and a suggestion was made to consider the model of the RE goalsetting meeting that happened earlier this fall. The four categories that we will work on are:

1. Our culture is one of kindness, is welcoming, and fosters interconnection
2. We are a diverse and growing congregation
3. We are connected to other communities and groups
4. We heal our broken-ness by living our benediction and being grounded in our UU beliefs

Other business

Val described the idea of "Wanted Posters" for the 2018 Auction purposed featuring committee members, which the committee thought was neat. Lora reminded us about the Jericho Road relaunch on October 20th at 6:390PM. Jeff reminded us that Friday 10/19 at 6:30PM is the RE Council-sponsored "rock the vote" pizza event. SC members were encouraged to attend both events.

A motion was made at 9:06PM to adjourn the main meeting, and the group entered in to Executive Session, which was then adjourned at 9:23PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter Nobile
Clerk