

First Parish of Concord Standing Committee

Meeting Date: January 12, 2021

Fifi Ball	Manager of Operations	Y
Jane Barnes	Treasurer	Y
Jeff Brainard	Standing Committee Member	Y
Howard Dana	Senior Minister	Y
Laurel Doggett	Clerk	Y
Jim Hawks	Standing Committee Member	Y
C.C. King	Standing Committee Member	Y
Peter Nobile	Chair	Y
Jim Reynolds	Standing Committee Member	Y
Liz Rust	Vice Chair	Y
Susan See	Standing Committee Member	Y
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee Member	N
Jade Sylvan	Ministerial Intern	Y
Virginia Taylor	Standing Committee Member	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

Peter Nobile opened the meeting with the words from *A Blessing for the New Year* written by John O'Donohue.

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the December 2020 Standing Committee (SC) meeting minutes and to incorporate them into the permanent record.

Senior Minister's Report

Howard discussed virtual attendance and noted that 1,000 people have registered to participate in any First Parish event, from which 25-30 are out of state or out of the country. He will send out the Christmas eve attendance for comparison to the complete list of possible attendees. Susan See agreed to review and identify members who may be disengaged from FirstParish.

Howard reviewed the 2021 housing policy and the amounts submitted by ministerial staff to be voted on by the Standing Committee.

Motions were made and seconded, and it was unanimously

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VOTED to approve

1. Howard Dana's housing allowance for \$34,300/ year
2. Liz Weber's housing allowance for \$9,600 / year
3. Amy Freedman's housing allowance for \$47,800 / year

Director of Operations' Report

Fifi answered questions and noted that the likely budget challenges next year would be replacing income from the PPP loan of \$118,000 and the auction of \$25,000. Because of some increases in income lines and some decreases in expense lines, it appears our bottom line this year might be as much as \$70,000 over budget. This would flow into "available cash" and might be used next year, when we have no PPP loan/grant or Auction income.

SC members discussed the importance of the pledge campaign and the need to increase participation and annual contributions, in addition to exploring alternate fundraising ideas to replace the live auction.

It was noted that there would likely be a need to offer a virtual attendance option when the Church returns to in-person services. This will require a continuation of some the technological costs incurred this past year.

Appraisal of FP Furnishings and Fine Art

Fine arts appraisal: \$136,400

Furniture: \$85,000

Howard and Fifi reviewed the appraisals to appraise the Standing Committee members of the value of various items in the context of security and future conversations on creating a more inclusive and welcoming church building.

Peter Nobile volunteered to reach out to Tom Putnam at the Concord Museum to discuss archival storage and security concerns.

Members' Reports

- **All Chairs Meeting**

There was an all Chairs meeting in December; 25 attendees representing 23 groups were present. It was a successful meeting and provided a vehicle for various Chairs to meet, support, and collaborate. The next meeting is scheduled for February and will focus on one topic.

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- **Ministerial Support Committee** – Jeff, Peter, Susan and Howard – Discussion in the meeting included ways in which FP can maintain connection with members of the congregation.
- **Finance Committee** – Nothing new to report.
- **Governance Committee** will reform based on the first Standing Committee goal.
- Peter noted that he and Susan See are planning a Valentine's Day drive-through community event: TBD

Long Range Planning

SC Two-Year Goals

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept all four SC goals for 2021 - 2023

It was noted that CC King was not assigned to any goal.

GFPC task force – Jim Reynolds to assist Peter with moving forward the Greening of First Parish Task Force.

Belonging Team – Congregational Life Committee (CLC) charter was reviewed by Liz Rust. List will send out the Charter. Peter to manage a virtual vote to be completed by January 26, 2021.

Annual Campaign – More stewards the better. Everyone is welcome to join.

A motion was made to close the main meeting at 8:52 p.m. There was no executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurel Doggett, Clerk

Addendum– Standing Committee 2-year Goals, 2021-2023

1. **Reassess our Governance Structure:** Improve upon or replace our current governance model to better align with our congregation and mission.

- I. Measurements for this goal
 - a. Test that policies and procedures are not stale or ineffective but are proactive and flexible.
 - b. Test that any governance model is current with UUA trends and guidelines and meets the needs of the congregation.
- II. Activities and Initiatives around this goal could include
 - a. Evaluate existing governance model for its effectiveness and clarity in roles and responsibilities. Compare against other models
 - b. With the Senior Minister, make recommendations for any changes to the Standing Committee, and then the congregation for implementation
- III. SC initial stewards for this goal: Peter, Jeff

2. **Focus on Community and Belonging:** Improve the feeling of community and belonging at First Parish.

- I. Measurements for this goal
 - a. Increased attendance and participation in worship services, programs, committees, and other activities.
 - b. Positive feedback from new and current member outreach efforts.
- II. Activities and Initiatives around this goal could include
 - a. Establish a Congregational Life Council (CLC), which is the primary recommendation coming out of our Belonging Team’s final report (issued 10/29/2020).
 - b. Engage as appropriate with CLC work around accessibility, Radical Welcome, Leadership Development, and other broad initiatives.
- III. SC initial stewards for this goal: Virginia, Susan, Liz

3. **Improve Communications:** Increase channels of communication to allow for greater participation, outreach, sharing of information, and dialogue among ministers, lay leaders, staff, internal and external communities.

- I. Measurements for this goal
 - a. Increase in use of various communications channels, including focus on potential new members and existing members who may be disabled, elderly or otherwise marginalized or underrepresented.
 - b. Uptick in digital metrics such as email open rates and website visits/page views.
 - c. Positive anecdotal feedback from telephone outreach and/or surveys.

First Parish in Concord – Standing Committee 2-year Goals, 2022-2024

- II. Activities and Initiatives around this goal could include
 - a. Establish a Communications Systems Working Group (CSWG), which is another recommendation coming out of our Belonging Team’s final report (issued 10/29/2020).
 - b. Engage as appropriate with CSWG work around web site, virtual communication, and program accessibility.
 - c. Create a formal pathway for dispute resolution at all levels.
- III. SC initial stewards for this goal: Kate, Laurel

4. Develop a Long-Term Fundraising Plan: Design a plan with achievable goals to ensure financial stability for First Parish in Concord.

- I. Measurements for this goal
 - a. Increase in number of households or pledge units, size of pledges, reduced reliance on few large donations to meet annual budget.
- II. Activities and Initiatives around this goal could include
 - a. Recharter the Finance Committee with clarified purpose and vibrancy looking at all of FP revenue from a total Development perspective
 - b. Establish an annual SC review of the church budget and finances, e.g. looking at 3-5-year budget priorities, in partnership with staff and lay leaders.
- III. SC initial stewards for this goal: Jane, Liz, Jim H., Jim R.

/pn