

First Parish in Concord Standing Committee

Meeting Date: May 11, 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	N
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	N
Susan See	Standing Committee Member	Y
Kate Svrcek	Standing Committee Member	Y
Jade Sylvan	Ministerial Intern	Y
Virginia Taylor	Standing Committee Member	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM AND RECORDED FOR MINUTES

Senior Minister's Report

First Parish has experienced fairly consistent worship attendance through COVID. Howard anticipates a possible decline as more people become vaccinated and have increased options for Sunday activities. Current attendance data identifies the number of devices and not the number of attendees, as in prior years. Looking ahead, some people may feel very uncomfortable returning to in-person gatherings. This will impact attendance data moving forward.

There was a conversation around offering “New to UU” classes this spring. Howard indicated that staff is currently at capacity and that Liz Webber will be leading these in the fall and spring. If there are lay folks interested in leading a welcome series now, staff are willing to help promote it.

To reduce burnout, Howard has been encouraging staff to take accrued vacation time and not save it. He hopes once staff are all vaccinated that they might be able to gather in person.

Director of Operations' Report

There was a thorough review of the second version of the FY22 proposed budget. Howard and Fifi met with staff for input on all proposed suggested budget cuts. The second version of the budget has a projected \$150,000 cash surplus and includes the mandate to set aside 10% of operating expenses toward a rainy-day fund.

There was a consensus among SC members to restore some of the \$150,000 cash reserves, to the following top three areas:

- Religious Education
- Sustaining Membership
- Technology for hybrid services

Fifi and Howard will consider our input and propose a final budget that will be voted on at the June 8 Standing Committee meeting.

Subcommittee Updates

- **Ministerial Support Subcommittee** – The assessment is underway, and Peter is gathering input with the intent of having the Ministerial Support Committee meet with Howard at the end of May.
- **SC Chair Selection** – If you would like to nominate someone to the Chair next year or self-nominate, please send your nomination to Peter Nobile by the end of the week (May 14). The five departing Standing Committee members; Kate, Jeff, Jane, Peter, and Laurel, will gather names and talk to each of you. The group will make a recommendation to vote on at our next meeting.
- **SC Goal Updates** – Congregant Michael Beer has offered to be an expert advisor to our governance group. Peter will pull this group together before his departure as SC Chair.
- **Nominating Committee:** Susie Weaver has agreed to serve on the committee. There is still a second spot open. The intent is to fill the opening with a male representative from the RE committee.
- **Preparation of 2021 Annual Meeting Warrant**, due June 6th. Wright Tavern Futures Task Force would like to make a report. SC to hold June 1st, 7 p.m., to review the budget and upcoming warrant.

Long-Term Initiatives

- **Greening First Parish Church (GFPC) Task Force:** The group is working with Bruce

Davidson on developing specifications for insulating the sanctuary, a foundational step to greening the campus. The next meeting will focus on the RFP for the campus-wide heating system.

- **Congressional Life Committee (CLC):** The CLC held its first meeting on May 5th, and plans to meet two more times before the end of June. Priorities include:
 1. Drafting a committee mission statement and covenant
 2. Prioritizing and identifying top Belonging Team initiatives to implement
 3. Providing coordination support for three listening sessions that it will co-sponsor with the Re-opening Team in May and June. These sessions will give the FP community an opportunity to ask questions about the re-opening FP and discuss any concerns regarding in-person events at FP.

- **Widening the Circle/Laying the Groundwork (FP COIC):** This group has been working on the following:
 1. Attending other FP committee meetings to introduce the Widening the Circle of Concern report and the proposal for an FP COIC
 2. Running weekly *FP Weekly* entries to share excerpts from the WTCOC report and to methodically and slowly introduce the idea for an FP COIC
 3. Collaborating with Howard on the June 13th Sunday Service

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurel Doggett
Clerk