



First Parish in Concord Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes - April 10, 2018

The meeting started shortly after 8:00 am in the Brooks Room at First Parish.

Present	Fifi Ball, Patty Popov, Michelle Fortier, Gib Metcalf, Rudi Scheiber-Kurtz, and Fred Van Deusen
Discussion	<p>A) We approved the February 13, 2018, minutes.</p> <p>B) Fifi reviewed the February 2018 financials and the recent update to the Standing Committee (SC). She noted the SAC Board made a presentation to the SC detailing the history of the 7.5% portion of pledge payments, SAC grant making, and a proposed hybrid model for future budgets. Howard and Fifi are working on a proposed budget for next year.</p> <p>C) We reviewed the response to the SC Year for Reflection and Visioning survey question about increasing funding for various areas at church. The top four responses were: (a) compensating staff, (b) investing in building repair and maintenance, (c) reaching 100% of commitment to the UUA, and (d) expanding social action dollars. Gib noted that work on social action was also rated highly as “extremely important” by survey responders.</p> <p>D) Michelle reviewed the status of the Annual Pledge Campaign (APC) and Legacy Giving Fund. Pledges are coming in slower than they have in the past two years. As of April 2, 2018, the APC had raised \$702k from 277 Pledge Units, compared to \$912k and 326 Pledge Units in 2017, and \$739k from 299 Pledge Units in 2016 at the same point in time. We discussed how the campaign still has a month left to finish, so it is prudent to wait to see where some remaining donors pledge. However, it does not seem likely that total pledges this year will exceed \$1mm. Michelle noted to the Finance Committee that 13 donors have joined the Legacy Giving Circle and thanked Fred and Patty for their great work on that committee.</p> <p>D) Gib updated the committee on his discussions with the town and Standing Committee about the possibility of adding a cell antenna in the steeple at First Parish. He had a meeting scheduled that morning with Verizon and Doug Baker to assess technical feasibility.</p> <p>E) Rudi updated the committee on the status of the proposed Review of Financial Procedures from Scheid & Co. Given the timing of tax season, they have been difficult to reach. Rudi offered to contact them after April 17 to follow up.</p> <p>Gib left the meeting for his meeting with Verizon.</p>

- F) We discussed the 7.5% SAC portion of pledges in the FY19 budget, and how social action funds are used. Fred offered to gather data on ways and amounts FP spends on social action beyond grants to help prepare for the June 10 Annual Meeting discussion and vote.
- G) Fifi reviewed the proposals from the vendors for steeple maintenance that range from approximately \$37k to \$150k+. The wide range of quotes raised questions about process and materials. Doug is following up. A discussion took place on total funds needed and how quickly to do the repair. Fifi will ask Doug when the steeple was last regilded. Fifi noted a donor is paying for the irrigation system overhaul in preparation for when the front lawn is reseeded this fall.
- H) Gib rejoined the meeting. Verizon said the space requirements at FP do not match what they need, so our church is not a viable site for a cell antenna. The committee thanked Gib for his work on this project, though it did not result in siting a cell antenna here.
- I) The Finance Committee, along with Fifi, typically makes a budget presentation to the congregation about a week in advance of the Annual Meeting. This year, because of the Annual Meeting vote on the 7.5% of pledges for social action, there will be two alternate budgets presented at Annual Meeting, and at the budget preview presentation. We decided the Budget Preview would be held Sunday, 6/3/18, at 11:30 am. Michelle volunteered to make sure this would not conflict with a Forum presentation and reserve a room with Doug. Gib volunteered to work on the PowerPoint presentation. Fifi is working on the draft budgets, which by that date will have been approved by the Standing Committee.
- J) Fifi has started to hear interest from First Parishioners in e-giving, particularly the possibility of donating to the plate collection via device while sitting in a pew on Sunday morning. She will explore WiFi capabilities in the Sanctuary. Rudi volunteered to help research options for First Parish. Fifi will provide Rudi with product information from Vanco, our current online pledge payment processing company.
- K) Michelle raised a concern from George Gilardi that too few donors, who pay their pledges using credit cards, are contributing the 2.75% it costs First Parish to accept such payments (or should be encouraged to contribute via less expensive ways). The group ultimately agreed these fees represent a relatively small amount of money compared to pledges and are a cost of doing business, and a dedicated missive from Howard might be better spent on larger amounts. Fifi agreed to add more encouraging language to the instructions parishioners see when they set up credit card payments online, and to add a line about contributing this fee onto next year's pledge cards.
- L) The group discussed the membership of the Finance Committee for FY19. Patty, as the Standing Committee representative, was ending due to ending her term on the SC. Both Gib and Fred are in Year 4 of their three-years terms and want others to replace them. Michelle thanked them all for their service. We need to

	place announcements in <i>FP Weekly</i> and <i>Meeting House News</i> to garner additional candidates for Finance Committee membership.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rudi to follow-up with Scheid & Co on their proposal. ● Fred to work with Michelle on obtaining info on total social action funding at FP. ● Fifi will explore enhanced WiFi in the Sanctuary. ● Rudi to research e-giving options for FP, particularly for Sunday mornings. ● Michelle will discuss the date and timing of the 6/3/18, 11:30 am, budget preview presentation to the congregation with the Forum and Doug. ● Gib will update last year's budget preview presentation. ● Fifi will continue work on drafting FY19 budget, including SAC alternatives. ● Fifi will update the language regarding 2.75% credit card fee donations in Vanco, FP's online pledge payment processing site. ● (Next year) Fifi will add language about the 2.75% credit card fee to the pledge cards. ● Michelle will tell the Standing Committee about Verizon's decision not to pursue a cell antenna in FP's steeple. Fifi will tell Howard. ● Michelle to place announcements for candidates for Finance Committee membership. ● Fifi to work with Doug to get more detail on the differences between the steeple regarding quotes, and to find out when the steeple was last regilded.
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tuesday, May 8, 8:00-9:30 am

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Fortier