

First Parish Cambridge
Governing Board Minutes
August 18, 2020
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

Present: Gloria Korsman, Julia Gallogly, Grace Hall, Tod Hibbard, Jan Puibello, Don Tucker, Gordie Calkins; Rev. Adam Dyer, Carol Lewis, Mandy Neff; Sylvia Wheeler

The meeting opened with chalice lighting and check-in.

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of First Parish Board July 21, 2020
- Report on board COIC discussion of Governance chapter of COIC report
- 8th Principle report for FPC Board August 18, 2020
- Administrator Report, August 2020
- DRE Report August, 2020
- Minister's Report, August 2020
- First Parish Intern midsummer report
- Policy Book update
- Policy Book suggested revisions
- Tuesday Meals, note to board
- Tuesday Meals, letter from board 6/25/2020
- Tuesday Meals, Policy recommendations 8/4/2020
- Tuesday Meals, Board response 8/5/2020
- Response from Tuesday Meals, 8/15/2020

It was noted that the board needs to keep noting what is going on and asking for information. The report from the intern is especially helpful and staff intends to follow up on suggestions. The Consent Agenda was then accepted.

Building Update: (Don, Tod, Rev. Adam, Carol)

- There was a meeting of the Building Team on Sunday afternoon, August 16
- Need to recover enthusiasm and counter negativity
- Communication is key. The congregation does not appreciate the historical value of our 400-year-old history, nor the good will felt toward us by our neighbors in Cambridge
- Need to explain sources of money
 - From the endowment: recent increase in value of endowment is not reflected in how much money we receive. The 13-quarter averaging means that even though we remove some money from the endowment, we will continue to receive disbursements of almost the same size.
 - From our neighbors: The Harvard Square Association, Harvard University and individual developers in the area see First Parish as an important asset in Harvard Square
 - From grants: in order to obtain the appropriate grants, we will need a professional grant writer, who needs to be part of the process
 - Money is always an issue, but approach needs to be “Yes, we can”

- Need to have a bigger vision and realize this is Phase 1 of a multi-phased project, including the interior of the Meetinghouse, the South Wall, and the Parish House interior
 - Can envision an even greater community-based approach to our spaces.
 - Can cement our relationship with Harvard Square. Our location is key.
- Our vision for the congregation and for the building needs to involve looking in and looking out
- Cade's approach is a source of inspiration
- Need approval of Cambridge Historical Commission
 - David Torrey is willing to help; process is likely to take several months.
 - Requesting preliminary hearing for the October meeting will give time to communicate with the congregation first. Need to note that commission agreement is the essential first step
- Next steps:
 - Board needs to take responsibility for the messaging timeline
 - Board will be receiving notes from the August 16 Building Team meeting
 - Next Building Team meeting is Sunday, August 30, at 1 pm. Gloria will provide link for any board members who wish to attend

Angeline Jackson: Request for Congregational Sponsorship

- Angeline joined us for a conversation from 8:00-8:30 pm.
- She is a Jamaican who is starting the first UU community in Jamaica and a LGBTQ activist, currently attending seminary at Meadville-Lombard
- Rev. Adam has known her personally for some time
- The vote for First Parish to sponsor Angeline (motion Jan, second Grace) was approved unanimously.

8th Principle: Report from Karin Lin and Charlene Galarneau

The Racial Equity Team is taking the lead in educating the congregation about the 8th Principle, which started with the August 2 service. The aim is not only to have a congregational vote at the Annual Meeting next June, but also to apply the principle in our First Parish ministries.

Board priorities for the coming year: (Gloria)

- The current process of Vision of Ministry and Open Questions has not been working well and needs to be reevaluated
- Our Vision, our Mission and our Building are three aspects of who we are and need to be considered jointly
- The building has its own team and the board will keep in touch
- Right relations/supporting our minister and staff
 - Carol- There are too many administrative duties (programming, building, financial, website) for the current staff
 - Adam- rested now and planning breaks on a regular basis; relationships among congregants is key and people are responding better now; need more congregational initiative to relieve demands on staff
 - Mandy- Soul Matters and the fixed themes is providing some mental space; still working more than 30 hours a week
- A Strategic Plan needs to be considered also

The board is asked to read the report from the Commission on Institutional Change, *Widening the Circle of Concern*. Focus will be on the introduction and the chapter on Theology. Meeting date to discuss will be determined by a Doodle poll (Grace will send)

At the next board meeting on September 15, Tod Hibbard will have the opening words and the check-in question.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Hall, Clerk

Related documents:

Documents listed in Consent Agenda (see above)
Agenda for August
Angeline Jackson biography

Approved by the First Parish Governing Board on September 15, 2020
Grace Hall, Clerk