

First Parish Cambridge
Governing Board Minutes
January 19, 2021
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

Present: Gloria Korsman, Julia Gallogly, Grace Hall, Tod Hibbard, Cade Murray, 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 the 12/15/2020 meeting
- Report of the 12/29/2020 board meeting to discuss COIC
- Administrator January 2021
- DLFD Monthly Report January 2021
- Minister's Report January 2021
- Building Project Updates 1/14/2021
- UUA Benefit Recommendations
- Balance Sheet 12_31_2020
- P&L 12_30_2020
- P&L Analysis 12_30_2020

There was a brief discussion of a portion of the Minister's Report related to the timing of his sabbatical, planning required including the budgetary impact, and consideration of this topic with respect to other staff. Additional discussion should be included in the February and March agendas. The Consent Agenda was accepted.

Grace Nono:

Grace Nono joined us from the Philippines. She has impressive credentials and focuses her work on decolonization and radical collaboration, especially involving indigenous elders. After the brief interview, there was a motion to sponsor Grace Nono as she pursues UU ministry. The motion (Julia moved, Jan seconded) passed unanimously.

8th Principle:

As Beloved Conversations alums meet on January 24 to prepare to help spread the word about the 8th principle, the board was asked to send two members to share ideas the board has learned from *Widening the Circle of Concern* over the past six months. Julia and Grace agreed to go.

Boston Ujima Project: (Tod Hibbard)

Ujima means collective work and responsibility. The Ujima Project was founded and is led by members of the Black community in Boston to help Black-owned small businesses. The board agreed that it was appropriate for First Parish to be one of the UU congregations sponsoring informational meetings under the auspices of UU Mass Action. The virtual meetings will be February 7, concerning Wealth Inequality, and February 21, about Investment and Volunteer Opportunities. The aim is to encourage UUs to work with and invest in the Ujima Project.

Stewardship/Budget Drive: (Cade)

The board discussed using terms other than 'pledge' that may be clearer to newcomers who may not previously have been in churches. Possible alternatives are "financial contribution" or "monthly subscription". Rev. Adam will use one of the Sunday morning discussions to present the idea. The youth group may have ideas. Mandy can share ideas from the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

There is currently no Stewardship Team in place. Don, Tod and Gloria will work with Cade on setting up the process.

Emergency Shelter update: (Rev. Adam)

We cannot provide overnight shelter in the Meetinghouse because of a lack of showers and a fire alarm system that is not up to code for overnight stays. Possible uses include a daytime drop-in center or a vaccination locale, but no decision has been made.

Building Consensus around Interior Renovations: (Rev. Adam)

Pew removal has advantages:

- Flexibility in seating is particularly relevant as the congregation returns gradually with social distancing
- Flexibility may also enhance our worship experience
- Increased appeal to rental groups could significantly increase the use of the space and therefore our income
- Religious groups that could use our space need different orientations than are possible now

However, there is strong emotional attachment to the pews:

- Essential to let all voices be heard
- Communication should include sending out a survey and having meetings

Other items to note:

- These pews were not part of the original configuration of the Meetinghouse.
- It is possible we could get grants to help with this work (unlike for most interior renovations)
- The boxes could remain
- Both Music and Religious Education Teams are in favor

On Tuesday, February 2, from 7-8 pm, the board will have a final discussion of *Widening the Circle of Concern*, after having read “Final Thoughts” and the appendices. We will discuss ways to implement COIC’s recommendations (see pp. 177-187) at First Parish in Cambridge. At the next regular board meeting on February 16, 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 January 19, 2021
Grace Nono Links
Grace Nono Narrative
Grace Nono Resume
RET Board Report January 2021
Ujima Info Sheet

Approved by the First Parish Governing Board on February 16, 2021
Grace Hall, Clerk