

First Parish Cambridge Governing Board Minutes
July 18, 2023 at 7PM
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

Present:

Cade Murray, Chair	Patrick Sullivan, Member at Large
Tod Hibbard, Vice-Chair	Sylvia Wheeler, Past Board Chair
Lindsay Lucke, Treasurer	Jennifer Goodman, DRE
Rich Lawson, Clerk	Carol Lewis, Director of Administration
Jane Stabile, Member at Large	Nina Lytton, Member at Large

Chalice Lighting & Check in

Tod Hibbard provided the Chalice Lighting, by Chinmayananda Saraswati - “Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit”.

The check-in prompt was: “think back to your own experience with RE: How does that experience inform your hopes for RE at FPC?”

Consent Agenda

Tod Hibbard made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda with no changes. Jane Stabile seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Board Priorities

These will be standing agenda items after the consent agenda.

Rebuilding RE Program – Cade/Carol/Jen

- Jennifer Goodman introduced herself during check-in
- Review summer plans for RE
- Assist in restarting RE council

Jennifer Goodman described plans for three segments of the RE program:

1. Nursery room - through pre-school. We need two people here for logistical and legal reasons.
2. Elementary - this group may be a split. We are trying to hire one person here. The curriculum will be partly based on Soul Matters, but not every week. Some big questions will also be explored, e.g., what is our faith? There will also be sessions oriented around holidays and special events, esp. non-Christian holidays like Solstices and Equinoxes.
3. Youth - coming of age; OWL - building toward that in the future. Cade has already begun to get Youth involved in helping with the service; helping with technology. Want them to see the church as their community and a place of safety.

The program will be influenced by who we are able to hire.

Jennifer is planning to do outreach to make the broader community aware of programming that we offer. She plans to have some Saturday events, and to be present at events in Harvard Square.

The theme for this year is gathering. The aim is to help families feel supported and included. Ideally we will be able to provide care before and after services to give parents more time to engage. It will also be important to open up to the larger community, recognizing that community building happens in iterations over time.

Jennifer had three specific requests for support to the Board:

1. Identifying qualified volunteers - she doesn't know many people in our community yet, e.g., who is qualified as an OWL educator.
2. Building the RE Committee - Cade has offered to help, but she is looking for others to help, too, at least to help get things started.
3. Help advertise the open positions in relevant communities (based on the job descriptions on our website).
 - Nina offered to send to contacts at Harvard and BU School of Theology

Cade thanked Jennifer for the thought and planning that has already gone into this.

Membership Program/Team – Cade/Carol

Cade reported the news that the membership team will be co-chaired by Karin Lin and Susan Shepherd. They will work closely with Rev. Rob.

Carol reported that there are events in the calendar already, which is in her report.

Ministerial Transition – Cade

There are three steps that we need to take as part of the transition process:

- Create our congregational record.
- Review and update the schedule to make a decision.
- Continue to communicate to the congregation about development ministry.

Cade recently spoke with Christine Purcell, who leads ministerial transitions for the UUA at a national level. Someone from the regional transitions office will be invited to our next BOARD meeting.

Kristine was very encouraging about our prospects in the process. Potential candidates are aware of our likely direction, so we should have a good pool to draw from. We are ahead of where we need to be at this point in time.

There will be a very busy time during two weeks in March for the matching between congregations and candidates. Our Congregational Profile must be submitted during a 2 month period from 1st of Dec through the end of Jan.

The Congregational Record should only require about 10-15 hours. To prepare that, we have the following steps:

- 1) Form a 3-5 member team, mostly board members, plus 1-2 selected congregants, to lead congregational profile, congregational record, objectives for development
 - a) Tod, Patrick, Jane all volunteered from the Board
 - b) Todd will develop a list of possible parishioners to invite to support the process
- 2) Articulate our developmental goals
- 3) Communicate to the congregation about our developing plans. There are congregational meetings about the transition schedule for 8/13 and 9/17. These meetings will let the congregation know we are moving forward with the Developmental Ministry opportunity.

Anyone with questions for Hillary should send them to Cade, who will compile them in advance of the next board meeting

Building Project Update – Sylvia/Carol

Sylvia indicated that we are in good shape with the work underway. Fortunately, conditions are better than what we had feared. Restoration of the architectural details that were removed from belfry are on track. The face of the clock will be repaired, and it will tell time again. The railing on Church Street will be fixed to improve safety. The project team aims to complete work by end Sept or early Oct.

Carol provided an update on the interior work. The Barn Room floors and Parlor floors were sanded and refinished. The contractor aims to have painting done before homecoming. All offices will be set up by early Aug. They are making progress on RE clean-out. The Front doors were refinished and hanging up now. 2 new banners will be posted soon - noting 10 am start time for worship.

There has been little feedback from the congregation on the earlier start time for services over the summer. A survey is planned soon to solicit more views.

Leadership retreat representation – Cade

Cade sent a note about this in advance. Lindsay will be able to go to the first one, or October Request for others to check schedules; encouraging people to attend

Relationship with Cambridge HEART

As part of our ongoing discussions with Cambridge HEART, they asked again if First Parish could endorse their mission. Some Board members requested additional background information about HEART. It is important to understand how Cambridge Police and people in city government, like councilor Marc McGovern, perceive the organization. That is an important context for supporting our staff, too, since they need to have a positive relationship with Cambridge PD.

Nina noted that UUs are recognized for getting along with people with different views. It is possible that we could help build bridges between the police (and other parts of city government) and HEART.

This will be discussed further at the next board meeting.

Discuss future board meetings (open meetings, in-person, etc.)

There was discussion about the pros and cons of virtual meetings, in-person meetings, and hybrid meetings. We also discussed options to make meetings more accessible to congregants, e.g., after service

The August meeting will be virtual. Cade will circulate a proposal in advance for review to discuss at the next meeting

Chalice lighting/check-in monthly rotation

August: Rich September: Lindsay October: Nina November: Jane December: Patrick
January: Tod February: Rich March: Lindsay April: Nina May: Jane June: Patrick
(Sylvia is a substitute as needed).

Respectfully submitted,
Rich Lawson, Clerk

Approved by the Governing Board on August 15th, 2023
Rich Lawson, Clerk

CONSENT AGENDA

- **Administrator's Report July 2023**
- **Board Minutes June, 2023**

MEETING MATERIALS

- Email request from Cambridge HEART
- transitional_ministry_handbook - Developmental Ministry
- Developmental Ministry Description
- 7-18-2023 Agenda