

First Parish Cambridge Governing Board Minutes
April 16th, 2024 at 7:00 PM
(Virtual)

Present:

Tod Hibard (acting chair)	Sylvia Wheeler, Past Board Chair
Jane Stabile, Member at Large	Rev. Rob Hardies, Contract Minister 2022-23
Nina Lytton	Carol Lewis. Director of Administration
Patrick Sullivan, Member at Large	Grace Hall, Governance Advisory Committee
Rich Lawson, Clerk	Lindsay Lucke, Treasurer
	Maria Altamore, GAC

Regrets: Cade Murray, Chair

Chalice Lighting & Check in – Rich Lawson

The reading was the poem *Interrelationship*, by Thich Nhat Hanh

The check-in question options:

- How do you cultivate the flower in yourself, so that someone else will be beautiful?
- How do you transform something in yourself, so that someone else will not have to suffer?

Consent Agenda

Nina Lytton moved to accept the consent agenda. Jane Stabile seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Jane Stabile moved to accept the set of new members proposed: Jeremy Frias, Marlene and Scott MacFarlane, Dan Gutierrez, and Iris Fennell. Patrick Sullivan seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously

Jane Stabile also moved to accept the slate of new board members:

- For Chair, for a 1-year term- Tod Hibbard
- For Vice Chair, for a 1-year term – Julie Duncan
- For Treasurer, for a second 2-year term- Lindsay Lucke
- For Member at Large, for a 2-year term- Nina Lytton

Patrick Sullivan seconded the motion. It was also approved unanimously.

Board Priorities

Ministerial Transition

The update on ministry was covered in Rev. Rob's report.
Rev. Rob indicated that we are on track to complete new contract on time.

Membership Program/Team – Rob

The Minister's Report has full details on this agenda item. We have formally added 11 new members so far; a few more may be coming. People have been responding well to the invitations. The congregation now has a total of 155 members.

The new member recognition will be near the beginning of the next service. This will be simple. It is an opportunity for us all to remember our own commitments

The update on RE program is also in the report. The RE team is looking forward to next year. The Nursery is getting near the point where we need to think about needing more space.

Building Update

Sylvia Wheeler started by noting that additional detail is in the Administrator's report. The Building Committee is waiting for Kaplan's report for chimney repairs and restoration. They are hoping for matching funds from the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC). The Building Committee has been told that funding is available, but not how much.

The plaque for the Kirwin's will be mounted in the Narthex. Background information on this was deposited in Google drive.

Carol Lewis added that the CHC application for a Certificate for Appropriateness has been completed. This is a formality to do the planned work since the meeting house is in the Cambridge historical district.

Stewardship Update

Tod Hibbard reported that visiting stewards have been reaching out to get commitments in advance of Celebration Sunday.

Carol Lewis added that as of April 16th, we had received \$287k in pledges from 82 pledge units. She also calculated that if everyone who has not yet pledged does so at the same level as last year, we will reach \$312,700, which is very close to our target.

Over the year we welcomed 14 new pledge units who made a total of \$26k in new pledges. The parishioners who were lost in the last year had previously made a total of \$9,200 in pledges, so the balance is significantly positive.

GA Delegates

The board recognized its responsibility to encourage members of the congregation to step forward and serve as a delegate. This came up both in the GAC and in the Leadership Council.

The General Assembly is only virtual this year, which may make it easier for people to participate. The dates are Thursday, June 20th - 23rd.

We have 4 slots (next year will have one more because of the growth in membership.)

Rev Rob indicated that the major issue this year will be the Article II revision (articles and principles). It is also possible that the situation in Israel and Palestine may be a significant topic, depending on how that evolves between now and then.

Carol Lewis reported that we haven't filled all our slots recently. She will advertise this opportunity in the next weekly update.

Update on Board Retreat

Tod Hibbard provided an update on the Board Retreat, which will be held on Saturday, May 18th starting at 9am. The plan is to finish by 2.

Agenda is planned to be similar to last year:

- Community building
- Review - Cade will talk about progress toward goals
- Planning - Tod will talk about priorities for the new year, including developmental goals; how to measure success

Materials will be sent in advance: Cade's report and the list of developmental goals. Patrick Sullivan suggested that we should ask how we accomplished those things over the past year: Money, membership, attendance have all been going in the right direction. What have we been doing right? Jane Stabile added that the community building exercise is very important.

Rev Rob indicated that the staff is also in the midst of planning for next year, too. Planning is happening at multiple levels.

Preliminary Budget

Carol Lewis reported on the preliminary budget. The Staff did a lot of work to prepare this. The finance committee will present a refined version of the budget at the May Board meeting for a vote.

The majority of changes are in the budget areas for Staff and Programs; Infrastructure has not changed much. This is an aspirational budget that reflects our developmental goals.

The budget includes an Endowment request of 5% rather than the typical 4.5%. There is also a change to the proposed allocation of distribution. In particular, the Staff and Program budget is up \$84k

The line item for “Part-time Pastoral Care Minister” is not really for pastoral care, but for continuity on Sunday. This is because there will be no intern next year.

The line item for “Interim choir director” will be labeled “Music Director”, i.e., Jen Hayman. 20 hours per week

The strategy in this budget is to invest in staff more next year, and less on infrastructure.

In the Capital budget we have \$106k left that can be used for the Chimney. The actual cost of repair should be known soon; It is likely to be a larger number than this surplus, however.

The Finance and Development committee will review this draft budget with Carol at the next meeting. That will lead to the budget that will be presented to the board for approval in May

Adjourn

Following all business the meeting was adjourned.

*Note: Chalice lighting/check-in monthly rotation – Proposed 2023-2024
May: Jane, June: Lindsay. (Sylvia is a substitute as needed)*

Minutes Approved 21 May 2024