

First Parish Cambridge Governing Board Minutes
October 15th, 2024 at 7:00 PM
(Virtual)

Present:

Tod Hibbard Chair	Rev. Rob Hardies, Minister
Julie Duncan, Vice Chair	Carol Lewis - Church Administrator
Jane Stabile, Treasurer	Grace Hall, Governance Advisory Committee
Patrick Sullivan, Member at Large	Nina Lytton, Member at Large
Rich Lawson, Clerk	

Regrets: Cade Murray, Sharon de Vos

Chalice Lighting & Check in – Nina

Nina Lytton read a meditation by Hildegard von Bingen for the chalice lighting.

Consent Agenda

Carol Lewis highlighted how extraordinary the attendance has been month to month compared to last year.

The consent agenda included a proposal to officially add three new members:

- Maeghan Iris
- Mary Van Hoomissen
- Diane Coutu

Patrick Sullivan made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Julie Duncan seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Carol Lewis will inform the new members.

Board Priorities

Rev. Rob Hardies drew attention to elements of his report. One priority is building community, growing membership and deepening connections. This is off to a good start this church year. Soul matters is one component of this. The new young adults group is another; there were 20 young adults at the first meeting that Rev. Sophia organized. Pot luck meals continue to be popular.

In RE, two OWL classes have started. This was an important example of keeping a promise to parents who have been asking for this. Rev. Rob and the Board expressed appreciation for Jennifer Goodman and the RE Council. At the recent Oktoberfest in Harvard Square, the booth that First Parish organized reached over 100 familie. Rev. Rob and the Board expressed thanks to Sylvia Wheeler, Carol Lewis and Jennifer Goodman.

There are also plans emerging for 1:1 meetings with a range of people through the congregation. Grace Hall recently met with the Membership Team and will meet again tomorrow to get a list of names of people to contact, plus people who can do the contacting. The aim is to begin to connect before the end of the calendar year, though some meetings are likely to come after January. We will use the GBIO model, i.e., the primary purpose is to build the fabric of community. The aim is *not* to recruit volunteers to specific tasks, though that could be a happy side benefit.

Building Update

Carol Lewis provided some updates or additions to the items in her report. She indicated that the introductory meeting with Y2Y representatives regarding the lease renewal was the most collaborative, constructive meeting that they have had. She expects that two students will make a short presentation about Y2Y during the service on Sunday, and will then host lunch in the Y2Y space. During this time they will make a pitch for volunteers during this session, including when school is not in session. The Board recognized that this seems to be the most progress we've made in such a short amount of time on Y2Y.

As part of the building repairs, there will be an overnight fire watch after the welding is done, which should be on Monday of next week. The mason will follow the welding within days. The exterior work will be done first; before Dec. The aim is for the whole project to be done this calendar year. They are also still expecting it to be completed within the \$165k that was estimated.

Communications Proposal

Julie Duncan and Carol Lewis have met to brainstorm a list of issues to work on to improve the operational aspects of external and internal communication. They suggest forming a small, temporary team of staff and volunteers to shape the work and take some forward. The changes might involve changes for staff workflow, but should not add work.

They would like to ask Sylvia Wheeler to join Julie, Carol, Mary Ann Carlson, and Jennifer Goodman for this team. Larissa will not be part of the team, but will be consulted on behalf of the greeters. Carol expects to meet with Mary Ann next week and will discuss this.

They currently have a long brainstorming list. This needs to be prioritized so the team can focus on a few high-impact areas to tackle first.

The Board agreed that this should be a staff committee not a board committee. Any strategic pieces need to come to the board. The operational details about *how* to communicate has been delegated to the staff.

Scheduling In-person Board Meeting

The Board agreed to hold their November meeting in person. Y2Y will be invited to this meeting.

There was a brief discussion about possibly moving the day of the week for Board meetings in the future, i.e., when new Board members are being considered.

Adjourn

With all agenda items covered, there was a motion to adjourn just after 8:30pm. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Rich Lawson, Clerk

Approved by the Board on 19 Nov 2024

Note: Chalice lighting/check-in monthly rotation for 2024-2025

November: Jane, December: Sharon, January: Julie, February: Rich, March: Patrick, April: Nina, May: Jane, June: Sharon. (Cade is a substitute as needed)