

**FIRST PARISH BROOKLINE  
PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
April 4, 2016**

**PC Members Participating:** Sue Andrews, Michele David, Ben Davis, Steve Davis, Ann Dinsmoor, Ann Gilmore, Stacey Raczek, and James Shillaber. Elena Garofoli, who is recovering from her recent surgery, checked in by phone at the beginning. Also Rev. Rebecca Bryan

**Check-In** How do we access the peace within ourselves?

**Surprise Birthday Festivities**

We surprised Ann Dinsmoor, our Chair, with birthday festivities to honor her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. We celebrated with delicious birthday cake baked by Steve and various liquid libations along with a copy of In The Interim signed and notated by each of us.

**Consent Agenda**

The minutes of the March 7 meeting were **APPROVED**. We voted to **APPROVE** our congregation sponsoring the Rev. Susan Frederick- Gray's candidacy for UUA president. This sponsorship does not carry any endorsement; it enables her to get on the ballot.

**Ministers Report**

Rev. Rebecca and the Transition Team will be hosting a Q&A with the congregation on Sunday, April 17 at 9:45 am.

Rev. Rebecca announced that the focus for Rev. Maria Cristina's ministry will be shifting substantially away from social justice. She will be creating a program for adult faith formation. She will be reaching out to the congregation to help determine the needs and then designing the program, putting together a calendar of small group ministries or workshops and helping design how we will evaluate the program.

**Extension of Interim Ministry**

We discussed extending the interim ministry through June 2018 in order to ensure sufficient time for the congregation to do the work required of the interim process. Normally a congregation would be in transition for one or two years, but since our interim ministry started mid year in January 2016, it was felt that we would need the additional year to go through the entire process and not rush into the search for a senior minister. If our interim ministry were to end in June 2017, we would have to be putting together a search committee right now, which could become fully operational next fall. Rev. Rebecca described the various phases of the interim process as first, a time of remembrance, embracing our past, and grieving and that's what we're in the process of this spring. Next year we would focus on who we are now and begin to envision who we want to become. The final year of the interim process would focus on refining our vision for the future and searching for a new senior minister. Steve suggested that if we want different staffing models we should try them out before a new senior minister comes. Stacy emphasized the need to communicate with the congregation about this interim timeline and process. A motion to extend the interim ministry through June 2018 (2 1/2 years instead of 1 1/2 years) in order to do the work required of the interim process, was made and **APPROVED**.

## **Budget and Staffing for FY2017**

At our annual meeting in May 2015, the congregation voted to raise all of our staff salaries to the midpoint of the UUA fair compensation guidelines for a Midsize II congregation, Geo Index 6. At that time, we had 265 active members. At the end of FY 2015, Karla Baehr and Sonya looked at our membership list and determined that the number of active members had dropped to 221, putting us back into the category of a Midsize I congregation.

We discussed the advisability of maintaining current salaries and staffing levels for FY2017. A motion was made to recommend that we maintain current salaries and staffing levels for our Assistant Minister, Director of Religious Exploration, Director of Music, Section Leaders, Membership Coordinator, and Parish Administrator for FY 2017. This motion was APPROVED. The budget we recommend to the congregation at the upcoming budget hearings on April 24 and May 1 will reflect this recommendation.

Ben suggested we create a digital “dropbox” for PC members which would give us access to all the budget charts and other PC documents we refer to. Rev. Rebecca will follow through on this.

**Song-** Sue led us in a rousing rendition of “In My Heart There Rings a Melody of Love.”

## **Finance Report**

Stacy gave us an update on pledges for current FY 2017. So far, 92 households, (66% of our 140 pledge units from FY2016) have pledged \$304,000, a 6% increase over what they pledged last year. We have 6 new or returning pledge units.

Also, for current fiscal year 2016, our goal was \$420,000 in pledges. Due to additional pledges that have come in during the year, we now have \$430,000 in pledges, which is not the same as \$430,000 collected in pledges, but it is a very positive trend.

Stacy circulated a spreadsheet showing our current fiscal year projected income and expenses alongside a proposed budget for FY2017.

She also shared a Finance Council statement regarding the 2017 budget, which urges the Parish Committee to consider our endowment as a sustainable resource. It indicates that this current year's endowment draw was expected to be 9.3% based upon our increases in sustainable compensation to our staff at our last annual meeting. However, due to Rev. Jim's retirement on December 31<sup>st</sup> and his subsequent 5-month paid sabbatical, along with the cost of hiring a full-time Interim Senior Minister for half a year, our actual endowment draw is projected to be at 11.9%. Recognizing that the endowment exists to help see the congregation through times of transition, the recommendation from the Finance Council is to maintain but not to increase existing staff levels which would result in a projected 10.3% draw for FY2017. However, beginning in the subsequent budget year, FY2018, the congregation will need to take steps to return to a sustainable endowment draw and to replenish the endowment so that future generations of FPB members will have access to this resource. These steps might include increasing revenue, increasing the endowment, and/ or reducing costs.

Last year the theme that emerged from our budget discussion was fair compensation and sustainability of staff. This year we will need to discuss our vision of the ministry and create a timeline and process for determining new staffing models in subsequent fiscal years. Last year, we brought congregants into the budget discussion by sharing with them our dilemma and we should do the same this year and go into it focused on our mission with open minds and hearts.

## **Executive Session**

Rev. Rebecca left the meeting and we took up the issue of asking her to continue as our Interim Minister for an additional year. A motion was made and **APPROVED** to invite her to extend her interim ministry through June 2018.

We also began discussion on the recommendation from Ann D and James that we increase Rev. Rebecca's salary for the new FY2017. We did not reach a conclusion so we will add that to our agenda for our meeting on April 12.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Gilmore, Clerk