

First Parish in Brookline Parish Board

Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2018

Attendees: Michele David, Laura Hatfield, David Demerjian, Charles Sandmel, Gene Thompson-Grove (phone), James Shillaber (phone), Ben Davis (phone), Rev Rebecca Bryan (phone), David Cave (phone)

We began with a chalice reading from *Awakening Together: The Spiritual Practice of Inclusivity and Community*.

We checked in with a word or two about how our spirits are.

Charles volunteered to be the timekeeper for the meeting.

We unanimously approved the minutes of the February Board meeting.

Ben presented an update on the Finance Committee, following their Feb 26 meeting, which was attended by 16 people, including Canvass, Building and Grounds, and Rev Rebecca, who presented on a possible capital campaign. Like last year, a church-wide March 11 meeting will be hosted jointly by Canvass, Finance, and the Board to discuss the pledge campaign and budget. The simple message will be where we've been and where we're going. **Laura** cannot attend, so she will share the link to the app with Ben. Key attendees are Clare/Melinda (Canvass), Ben (Finance), and Michele and Charles (Board). Michele thanked Ben for his testimonial in the service on March 4. Ben highlighted specific budget requests including \$5-10k from the Safety Taskforce for survey about the parking lot, re-keying, medical supplies, and trainings; \$3.2k from Keith for A/V staffing; \$4k for a commercial kitchen (basically just refrigerator) and \$10k for pre-school renovations from the Building Use team; \$3k from RE for playground upgrades, classroom storage, a photo, and nursery staffing; and \$10k from Racial Justice Action and the Board for another year of DEEP. All told, \$40.4k is requested for new ideas and programs, which if we budgeted for all of them, would eliminate more than half of the budget cuts made last year. Rev Rebecca noted that the UUA recommends a 4% recommended salary increase, and this is currently **not** included in the budget. This would apply to all staff except for ministers to bring our salaries back into alignment with the Mid-size congregations. Note: this is ~\$6.4k on our 4 non-minister staff positions (CRE, Parish administrator, custodian, and music director).

Rev Rebecca shared the confidential Minister's Report.

A few congregants have expressed concern that Boateng is not getting paid at the full-time level. James clarified that he is scheduled for 32 hours a week, eligible for full-time benefits, and is accounting for and being paid for all hours worked. That is, he is guaranteed 32 hours and paid for actuals, including overtime. Rev Rebecca also noted that when Boateng works for outside rentals, those groups pay him directly.

The board discussed changing the culture of cleaning up after ourselves following coffee hour, as part of a community spirit of collaboration and volunteerism. We clarified that this would **not** reduce Boateng's paid hours and would be done in consultation with him.

Ellie Boynton visited to discuss a proposed onboarding process for the new minister, including soliciting feedback on a form to be distributed to committee chairs. The onboarding task force will comprise members from a few key groups, as nominated by those teams (e.g., deacons, transition team, etc).

Michele will communicate the need for, composition of, and role of this time-limited team and emphasize that everyone in the church is involved in welcoming the new minister. **Gene** raised the issue of workload for committee chairs and suggested that the upcoming Program Council meeting is a good forum to scope out what teams and committees want to communicate to the new minister and will discuss this with **Alice**.

The Board agreed to postpone a vote on the personnel policy updates until everyone has read the proposal carefully.

Michele discussed the desire to move away from a 4-year term for chairs (to accommodate a 2-year tenure as chair) by electing a person to serve one year as chair-elect in the second year of their 3-year cycle. Gene and Dave Demerjian are eligible next year (Charles has already agreed to serve as Treasurer) and Gene agreed to be chair-elect for 2018-19.

Several board members strongly favor an open call for nominations to the Board to inform the work of the Nominating Committee. **Michele** will talk to Alice about this and invite the Nominating Committee to an upcoming board meeting.

Gene will contact Darnisa Amante about extending our contract with DEEP to a second year and scheduling a session with the Transition Team, the Board, and Racial Justice Action Committee to discuss Rev Maria Cristina's tenure and departure. **Gene** will schedule with Darnisa and Rev Eric. **James** will communicate to Ann Gilmore that board wants to involve Rev Maria Cristina and **James** and **Michele** will collaborate on reaching out to Maria Cristina.

We checked out by sharing what went well and areas for improvement:

Pluses: Phone worked well, thanks to James for the conference line, timing of the agenda worked well, there was a good flow to the agenda and deep discussion, despite a crowded agenda.

Deltas: Still it was hard to hear, perhaps we should use Zoom, more time to review large documents (e.g., the personnel policy).