

First Religious Society Parish Board

Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2020

via Zoom

Present: Maureen Adams, Juliana Beauvais, Rebecca Brodish, Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Holly Cashman, Vernon Ellis, Judy Fayre, Sadie Fountain, Tom Himmel, Rich Johnson, Michelle Kimball, Forrest Speck

Absent: Micah Donahue, Renee Wolf-Foster

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the First Religious Society Parish Board was called to order by Rebecca Brodish, Parish Board Chair, at 6:49 pm on December 9, 2020.

Rebecca moved to call the meeting to order, Tom Himmel seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Rebecca suggested bringing New Business up from the end of the agenda until special guest Mark Ewert joins.

Opening Reading and Chalice Lighting

Rev. Rebecca Bryan lit the chalice, followed by a poem from contemporary Nigerian-American poet Enuma Okoro titled "Advent".

New Business

Request from Climate Action Project (CAP) re: engaging in a free, information finding effort about solar power before the roof replacement decision is made in the next five-year period. They are looking for an endorsement for the board for embarking on this information gathering effort. Juliana Beauvais suggested that CAP looks into community solar. Judy Fayre expressed excitement for this; they have done solar at their house, and found it can be a money maker for electricity and hot water. Also, the last church they were members of went solar and had success. It was pointed out that there might be a difference between residential and non-residential solar, and that there might be incentives enjoyed in the past that are being phased out. Maureen Adams asked about whether there would be ramifications to the agreement signed for funding for the steeple project that required that no changes be made to the historic building. Tom Himmel asked about a timeline; Rebecca Brodish answered that the only timeline indicated in the request was related to the 5-year roof replacement timeline.

Judy Fayre moved; Rich Johnson seconded.

Motion: "I move that the Parish Board endorse the efforts of CAP to engage in an information finding process about solar power for the church with the understanding that there will be no financial cost to the church."

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Open Issues/Strategic Thinking

Stewardship

Mark Ewert joined the meeting a couple of minutes before 7 pm. After introductions, Mark led a presentation on stewardship including:

- building a definition of what stewardship means to us at FRS,
- view of stewardship within UU (how we are different),
- why UU donors give,
- how covid-19 is impacting stewardship,
- example of UU church in Nashua, NH,
- role of leaders in stewardship.

A Q&A followed the presentation

Staffing

Rebecca Brodish welcomed Leslie Lawrence from the HR subcommittee and turned the floor over to Rev. Rebecca Bryan to lead that staffing topic.

Rev. Rebecca thanked Rebecca, Judy Fayre, Tom Himmel and Leslie Lawrence for all the time they have put in over the last month. (Tom has stepped in as interim CFO.)

Rebecca Brodish shared the org chart and asked members to also look at job descriptions.

Two main questions were discussed:

- (1) approval and endorsement of the board to retain a multimedia specialist
- (2) prospective ministerial intern – do we want to be a teaching congregation? (this is a financial commitment of \$10,000/yr.)

Leslie Lawrence gave an update on the search process for the Director of Finance & Operations as well as the Multimedia Specialist. They are in the process of putting together search committees and writing the job descriptions. Search committee for the multimedia specialist will be: Hugh Martinez, Justin Mancini, Cynthia Walsh, George Arellano, and an individual from the Firehouse Center. Q&A followed.

There was a discussion of the ministerial intern position.

Maureen Adams moved, Sadie Fountain seconded:

Motion: “I move that the Board to give Rev Rebecca the authority to offer the UUA recommended stipend to a potential ministerial intern candidate.”

Vote: Passed unanimously

Rebecca Brodish moved, Rich Johnson seconded:

Motion: "I move that the Board endorse the hiring of a contract Multi-Media Specialist."

Vote: Passed unanimously

New Business

Rebecca Brodish talked about the 1915 Swasey Fund for poor orphan children and the need to make a decision about creating a team to look into the Swasey distribution accounts.

The following motion was made Judy and seconded Rich:

Motion: "I move that the Board endorse the formation of a team to look into the Swasey distribution accounts and process and make recommendations on any necessary changes or updates."

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

- Parish Board Minutes: November 11, 2020 1
- Finance Committee Minutes: November 12, 2020
- Finance Committee Minutes: December 3, 2020
- JAM Update: December 3, 2020
- Community Human Services Minutes: November 15, 2020

The following motion was made Rebecca Brodish and seconded Judy:

Motion: "I move that all items on the Consent Agenda be approved."

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

The following motion was made by Rebecca Brodish and seconded by Rich at 9:17 pm.

Motion: "I move that we go into executive session."

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

The executive session ended at 9:18 pm.

Closing words

Rev. Rebecca Bryan shared closing words of reflection, wishing everyone a wonderful holiday whatever and however we are celebrating this month.

Judy reminded everyone to do the process check and emphasized how helpful it is that everyone to fill it out.

Adjournment

Rebecca Brodish adjourned the meeting at 9:19 pm.

Minutes submitted by Holly Cashman, Parish Clerk