

## **First Religious Society Parish Board**

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2021

via Zoom

Present: Maureen Adams, Juliana Beauvais, Rebecca Brodish, Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Holly Cashman, Micah Donahue, Vernon Ellis, Judy Fayre, Tom Himmel, Rich Johnson, Michelle Kimball, Forrest Speck, Renee Wolf-Foster

Absent: Sadie Fountain

### **Call to Order**

The monthly meeting of the First Religious Society Parish Board was called to order by Rebecca Brodish, Parish Board Chair, at 7:01 pm on January 13, 2021.

### **Opening Reading and Chalice Lighting**

Rev. Rebecca Bryan lit the chalice, followed by a reading from The Ashtavakra Gita.

### **New Business**

#### Minister's Report

Rev. Rebecca asked the Parish Board if they had any questions about the minister's report. Several issues were discussed, including a possible retreat on Mission, Vision & Ends (strategic objectives), excitement about the upcoming annual campaign, the new "Spirit Matters" radio show, and the Governance Committee's interest in receiving nominations. Rev. Rebecca shared that May 23 will be Sophia Lyons' ordination, most likely in the afternoon.

#### Update from the FRS Anti-Racism Group

Vern Ellis shared that the core group has been meeting every other week, while each of the three groups ("within", "among", & "beyond") is forging ahead doing the work that needs to be done to create change. "Among" is assessing programs to suggest to the Board and planning a service for March 14. They will be coming back to the Board and the congregation about a commitment to becoming an anti-racist congregation.

#### Update from the Reopening Team

Judy Fayre shared that the team is meeting twice a month. Most recently they had discussion around protection of staff – increasing protection up another level due to current situation. Rev. Rebecca shared that there are several memorial services on hold until the time that in-person gatherings are possible.

#### Annual Campaign Update

Forrest Speck explained that the two chairs of the annual campaign are working while he and John Mercer providing them advice. They have been scheduling meetings weekly, although some hiccups have occurred that impacted the meetings. Giving Sundays will be 28 Feb, 7 & 14

March. The order of service is being created and the planning is coalescing around the phrase “the importance of looking forward”. There will be a video to promote the campaign and notices for the Steeple. There is an urgent need to recruit the stewards; there is hope that new people will get involved. Training will be needed. A Q&A followed Forrest’s report, including discussion about how the campaign might work differently this year due to covid-19 and whether people might be able to indicate that their pledge should automatically renew for future years. All members of the Board were encouraged to volunteer as stewards

#### Update from the Finance Committee

Tom Himmel explained that some of the numbers in the submitted report are now obsolete because of some updates that were subsequently added. He shared the good news that contributions were up in December and that income is running ahead of expenses. Tom also shared that the roof repairs were finished in January. They ran about \$5,400. Justin has raised question about the ceiling and floor of choir room now that the leak has been fixed (paint peeling and chipping; maybe small holes). Tom explained that FRS did not qualify for the new round of PPP funding that is available. A Q&A followed Tom’s report.

#### Update on Swasey Orphan Fund Recommendations

Rebecca Brodish updated the on-going work on the Swasey fund, explaining some next steps that the Board should take, including adding Rich Johnson (Treasurer) as the signer on the TD Bank account and a letter from the Board thanking individuals who had been involved overseeing the fund. Several more steps are needed to finish updating the fund, but Rebecca Brodish suggested coming back to these steps in the next meeting.

The following motion was made by Juliana Beauvais and seconded by Tom Himmel:

**Motion:** “I move that the Board approve to close the Calvert account as soon as possible and execute the transfer of all proceeds to the Swasey Orphan Fund TD Bank checking account. To accomplish this, Rich Johnson, Finance Treasurer, is to be added as a signer of the Calvert account. A letter from the Parish Board directing that he be added is required. Rich can provide details as to what is required. The Swasey Orphan Fund checking account would become the only holding account used for distributed funds available for award to beneficiaries.”

**Vote:** The motion passed unanimously

#### **Open Issues/Strategic Thinking**

##### Update on Salary Recommendations from Human Resources Subcommittee

Holly Cashman, co-chair of the Human Resources Subcommittee (HRS), reported on the HRS recommendations about FRS staff salary increases. Three options were presented, with the minimum being a 3.2% cost of living adjustment (COLA) and the strongest proposal being a COLA, raising of all FRS staff salaries to the midpoint of the salary range recommended by the UUA, and raising the minister’s salary in year 2 of a three-year plan. Leslie Lawrence, HRS co-

chair, shared additional context/argument. A Q&A followed the HRS report, including discussion of the salary currently offered for the Director of Finance and Operations position.

The following motion was made by Judy Fayre and seconded by Rich Johnson:

**Motion:** “I move that the Board endorse the salary recommendations from the HRS of increasing those below Midpoint to Midpoint, provide Year 2 of 3 year salary increase to Minister and provide all others with 3.2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).”

**Vote:** The motion passed unanimously

The following motion was made by Rebecca Brodish and seconded by Tom Himmel:

**Motion:** “I move that the Board approve the current Director of Finance and Operations salary level of \$60,000 for this fiscal year.”

**Vote:** The motion passed unanimously

### Staffing

Leslie Lawrence (HRS co-chair) gave an update on the two on-going searches (multimedia, DFO). It is hoped that there will be good news in a couple of weeks on both searches. George Araneo from the Firehouse Center is on the multimedia position search committee.

The following motion was made by Rebecca Brodish and seconded Rich Johnson at 8.58 pm.

**Motion:** “I move that we go into executive session.”

**Vote:** The motion passed unanimously.

The executive session ended at 9:31 pm.

### **Consent Agenda**

- Parish Board Minutes: December 9, 2020
- Finance Committee Minutes: January 7, 2021
- Program Council Minutes: December
- FRS Habitat for the Humanity Report – January
- Chalice Circle Steering Committee – January

The following motion was made by Rebecca Brodish and seconded by Judy Fayre:

**Motion:** “I move that all items on the Consent Agenda be approved.”

**Vote:** The motion passed unanimously.

### Closing words

Rev. Rebecca Bryan shared closing words of reflection.

Judy Fayre 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 9.33 pm.

*Minutes submitted by Holly Cashman, Parish Clerk*