

First Religious Society Parish Board

Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2021

via Zoom

Present: Juliana Beauvais, Rebecca Brodish, Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Holly Cashman, Micah Donahue, Vernon Ellis, Judy Fayre, Sadie Fountain, Art Henshaw, Tom Himmel, Michelle Kimball, Renee Wolf-Foster

Absent: Maureen Adams, Rich Johnson, Forrest Speck

Guests: Pam Sharrio, Lea Pearson (joined at 7:07 pm)

Opening Reading and Chalice Lighting

Rev. Rebecca Bryan lit the chalice, followed by a reading by Naomi Shihab Nye, the poem titled "Gratitude Pillow", a tribute to Maya Angelou.

Rev. Rebecca invited each board member to share a wish to Judy Fayre (and Gayle) since this is Judy's last meeting) in the form of one word. Words shared included: love, joy, adventure, fearlessness, smooth sailing, exploration, fairwinds, family, continued connection & lots of fun!

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the First Religious Society Parish Board was called to order by Rebecca Brodish, Parish Board Chair, 6:41 pm.

Open Issues/Strategic Thinking

Minister's Update & Questions for the Minister

Rev. Rebecca apologized for the on-going tech issues being experienced. One update is that the Comcast bandwidth has been increased to 600 from 100, which will hopefully make a big difference.

Rev. Rebecca shared that a video will be sent out to acknowledge and celebrate the successful end to the Annual Campaign. She thanks to everyone who made it possible!

Rev. Rebecca shared news from the reopening team that the church will be open for small gatherings. First the sanctuary will be open, then the robing room, and finally the parish hall. The lower meeting house will not be open at this time.

There will be (mostly lay-led) summer worship on Zoom (coordinated by Vern Ellis). September 12 will be the opening of the church year and the in-person reopening of the sanctuary.

Rev. Rebecca shared that so far only 60 or so people have signed up for the annual meeting. 100 members are needed for quorum. The goal is 130 registrations.

Nominations

Micah Donahue presented the slate of nominees for the Governance Committee. Auditor is the one position that they have not been able to fill, despite a lot of effort. A number of different solutions were presented for the vacant auditor position.

General Assembly delegates have also not been identified. There was a discussion of General Assembly delegate responsibilities.

The following motion was made by Judy Fayre and seconded by Juliana Beauvais:

Motion: "I move that the Board act upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee for the election of officers and chairpersons."

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Rev. Rebecca thanked Micah and the Governance Committee for their hard work on the nominations.

Campaign

Juliana Beauvais gave an update on the Annual Campaign. It was a very challenging year, but everyone came together, particularly to close the gap of the last \$50,000. Lark Madden and John Mercer raised the matching pool (\$18,000). There were two campaign leads, and six team captains, as well as Tom Himmel, Diane Carroll, and others who put in significant time and energy. They are planning on trying to document the past practices, milestones, etc. to pass on for next year.

Budget

Tom Himmel reported on the budget. The total of the annual campaign pledges is included in the budget. There are very conservative estimates with regards to income for next year. Tom talked through the elements of both the income (including matching funds boost, PPP, etc.) and the expenses (salaries, UUA dues, furnace work, etc.). We are increasing slightly the contribution to UUA and the draw from the endowment is reduced. There is a very small surplus for the year.

Pam Sharrio, Tom Himmel and Art Henshaw fielded Q&A about the budget, particularly around capital reserves, use of PPP funds, and process of becoming 501c3.

The following motion was made by Vern Ellis and seconded by Rebecca Brodish:

Motion: I move that the Board act upon the Fiscal Year 2022 budget recommended by the Finance Committee.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Annual Meeting

Rebecca Brodish explained that board members would be assigned to make motions and to second motions for the annual meeting. Rebecca invited people to contact her if they do not want to have a “speaking part” at the annual meeting. She will send out a “script” with people that she has volunteered for making motions or seconding.

Rebecca shared the warrants, which were slightly edited from last meeting. Article 7 was added re: restricting the investments of the trustees in manufacturers of guns and controversial weapons. Article 8 was also added re: Bailey fund use for furnace repairs and opening of FRS buildings.

The following motion was made by Michelle Kimball and seconded by Juliana Beauvais:

Motion: I move that the Board endorse the nine Articles presented in the Warrant.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Quorum Contingency Plan

Rebecca Brodish shared that we are close to the number needed. If there is not enough for a quorum, everyone will be encouraged to call and text FRS members they know to get them to join the meeting ASAP.

Sophia Lyons’s Ordination

Rebecca Brodish shared that there is no sign-up for the ordination, which will take place at 3 pm May 23. The ordination committee encourages everyone to attend the ordination.

Reopening Team Update

Rev. Rebecca shared that small group gatherings would be allowed starting June 14. Michelle Kimball has joined the reopening team, as has Pam Sharrio. Rev. Rebecca thanked Judy Fayre for her service on the reopening team. Staff space, needs, and schedules will all need to be considered for reopening. There are six memorial services scheduled for the fall, one every Saturday in September and October with a couple of days off.

Juliana Beauvais suggested that even after reopening it might not be a bad idea to still have some virtual meetings of the Parish Board, particularly in the winter. Rev. Rebecca agreed and noted that some programs may decide to stay all or partly virtual.

Raffle & Stewardship

Vern Ellis shared that the process of making the raffle come alive was a success. He emphasized that Pat Torkildson was very helpful with the legal aspect of setting up the fundraiser. Two weeks into the fundraiser, 150 tickets have been sold. 500 tickets need to be sold to break even. 1,500 need to be sold to make the profit that is budgeted. We need to really push to keep the social media presence up, so Vern encouraged people to share, like, comment, etc. on posts about the raffle. Vern shared that there is a raffle sign going up at church and an email blast going out to the congregation.

June 20 is the deadline for raffle sales. The drawing will take place online – the software selects a winner – prior to the outdoor service that day.

In closing, Vern added that it would be helpful to have a monthly meeting between someone from Finance, Stewardship, Trustees and Pam Sharrio to facilitate better communication among all the financial folks/teams at FRS.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was postponed to the next meeting because the minutes were left out of the packet (but it is Rebecca Brodish's birthday, so no one held it against her).

Process check

Rebecca reminded everyone to do the process check and a link to the form was copied into the chat. She emphasized how helpful it is for everyone to fill it out.

Closing words

Rev. Rebecca Bryan shared closing words of reflection from Rumi, "On a day when the wind is perfect, the sail just needs to open and the world is full of beauty. Today is such a day."

Adjournment

Rebecca Brodish moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm. The motion was seconded and it was approved unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Holly Cashman, Parish Clerk