

First Religious Society Parish Board

Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2021

via Zoom

Present: Maureen Adams, Juliana Beauvais, Rebecca Brodish, Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Holly Cashman, Vernon Ellis, Minnie Flannagan (incoming), Tom Himmel, Rich Johnson, Michelle Kimball, Lucy Litwin, Annie Maurer (incoming), Forrest Speck, Jim Supple (incoming), Renee Wolf-Foster

Absent: Tina Benik (incoming), Kathy Desilets (incoming), Micah Donahue, Judy Fayre, Sadie Fountain

Guest: John Mercer

Call to Order

Rebecca Brodish called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm after a social gathering starting at 6:30 pm for new and returning board members.

Chalice Lighting/Opening Words

Opening words from Rev. Rebecca was drawing on our Earth-based tradition – a new moon meditation. Rev. Rebecca lit the chalice.

Open Issues/Strategic Thinking

Minister's Update Rev. Rebecca

- Rev. Rebecca updated on the search committee which will include Barbara Garnis and Jim Supple.
- Michelle asked about Rev. Rebecca's schedule change. UUA ministers get 4 weeks of study time and 4 weeks of vacation per year. She will take a week off each in November, February, and April and then two weeks each in June, July, and August.
- Shifting of everything detail-oriented to Diane Carroll, whose office will be moving back to the nursery area; the front office will have a rotating staffing with members of the staff and volunteers.
- Cynthia Walsh will be shifting into more focus on Stewardship.
- Tom Himmel shared that he has picked back up the Financial duties since Pam Sharrio left. He is interested in securing coverage from Board Members with ad hoc requests while Rev. Rebecca is away – sounding board while he is here and someone to step in when he is out of town. He'll accept volunteers now or people can email him. Many people expressed a willingness to help out!

Board Retreat: August 28th

Holly Cashman encouraged everyone to attend.

Finance Update

Tom Himmel updated PB members on the capital campaign.

There is an operating cash deficit issue that the Board should be aware of. There is no recommendation yet, but the Finance Committee is working on coming up with a solution to propose to the board.

There is a “not insignificant” deficit in the fulfilling of pledges with only two weeks left of the fiscal year, including some who have made no payments this year.

Tom answered questions about the Finance update, including whether the primary source/cause of the operating cash situation has been identified, whether the outstanding amount of the pledges is roughly 1/12 of the total amount of pledges (guessing people might have a system where they pay monthly).

Raffle & Stewardship

Vern Ellis updated that the raffle has met the minimum amount needed. It is unlikely that we will hit the high number or 2,500.

They are looking into a Legacy Circle – how to make FRS part of estate planning, reaching out to the campaign captains, and exploring alternative revenues. Alternative revenues include renting out the church for weddings; some discussion of coordinating with Mission Oak.

Vern explained that there ideally would be better communication between Stewardship, Finance, Treasurer, and Business Manager.

Values, Mission, Ends Update

John Mercer presented an update from the Core team, with five areas or categories for goal-setting: diversity, intergenerational growth, justice, history, and stewardship.

Rev. Rebecca reminded everyone that the Core team includes John Mercer, Forrest Speck, Renee Wolf-Foster, Michelle Kimball, Tina Benik, and Rev. Rebecca Bryan.

Rev. Rebecca shared that the staff is already living into these VME, even as we are identifying the goals. For example, they are asking as things come up is this intergenerational? is this inclusive? does this reflect our VME?

Rebecca Brodish congratulated the VME Core team on their work and invited people to ask any questions they may have.

Jim Supple suggested that making sure to keep these goals visible would be a great idea.

Forest Speck shared that they suggested groups to take on each of the goal categories.

Annual Meeting/Bylaw updates

Rebecca Brodish shared that since the annual meeting on May 23rd, there was a listening session.

Rebecca also talked about how these events made clear the need for a covenant, which FRS does not have.

Rebecca Brodish, Holly Cashman and Rev. Rebecca responded to comments and questions, such as how we plan to move forward with the proposal. Regional UUA staff may need to be brought in to facilitate some of the covenant work, and the covenant is something that the congregation would be involved in crafting and vote on.

Rebecca Brodish shared some “lessons learned” about what occurred, particularly around best practices around introducing bylaws changes.

Board members shared questions and comments around the question of what a covenant would be for and what purpose it might serve beyond just this issue.

Consent Agenda

- Parish Board Minutes April 14, 2021 1
- Parish Board Minutes March 10, 2021
- Finance Committee Minutes April 22, 2021
- Finance Committee Minutes May 6, 2021
- Community Human Services - Shared
- Collection for 2021/22
- Parish Board Minutes May 12, 2021
- Finance Committee Minutes June 3, 2021

The following motion was made by Maureen Adams and seconded by Tom Himmel:

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

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Process Check

Rebecca Brodish shared the process check process with new members and put a link in the chat to the Google Form.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.