FRS UU – Board Minutes – Special Meeting, May 6, 2026

Present: **Bob Higgins, Tom Himmel, Jim Supple, Leslie Lawrence, Lori Clark, Andy Lobb, Liss Larson, Julie Menin, Jeff Bard, Renee Wolf Foster, Rebekah Stafford, Kathy Desilets**; members of the Capital Campaign Committee (Barbara Garnis, Doug Latham, Vern Ellis, Ed Budelmann, Lark Madden)

Call to Order – Bob called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Opening – Bob shared a reading about the values that sustain us in difficult times: hope, faith, love, and forgiveness.

Capital Campaign Report Lark Madden, chair of the committee, reviewed the campaign's status and emphasized that it supports the mission, values, and future of FRS. Key updates since the last report include:

- Outreach to prospective donors indicates that, while some major donors may contribute, the campaign is unlikely to reach its current $3.5 million goal.
- The National Campaign could become a strong funding partner. We are applying for a $20,000 planning grant. Because all National Fund grants require matching funds, fundraising must begin now.

Based on the information currently available, the team proposes a new approach:

- Divide the campaign into two phases.
- Phase 1 will focus on the first floor and has a fundraising goal of $150,000. Evaluating and improving major systems, the building envelope, and the commercial kitchen will help preserve the building's historic character while creating opportunities for rental income.
- The Capital Campaign Committee will lead fundraising, oversee design approval with congregational input, and report regularly to the Parish Board.

To move forward, the board and congregation must approve the revised approach and fundraising goal and authorize a line of credit from the Endowment or balance sheet funds. These funds would be repaid over time.

Phase 2 will focus on the second floor. Anyone with questions should contact the Campaign Committee or Bob.

Parish Hall Water – Bob and Ed reported on a new plan to bring water to Parish Hall for fire suppression and other needs. It is possible to run a pipe from the Meeting House to Parish Hall. The cost will be mostly covered by the city grant. This plan will be enough to allow continuation of our insurance. A board member asked if the Facilities Team will come to Finance committee regarding spending. Current estimate is that the cost will be $78,000, which will be covered by the CSA grant so that no funds will be needed from FRS. Ed also believes there are other grant possibilities.

> **Action:** Define an emergency plan in case of flooding in Parish Hall.
> **Motion:** Jim moved that the board task the facilities team to develop an emergency plan in case of flooding of the Parish Hall that will allow us to meet the requirements of our insurance company. Andy seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Update –

- May 31 will be Rev. Rebecca's last day, with a party to celebrate her time with us on June 2nd.
- Rev. Laurel's last day will be June 5. She will lead the Pride Service and will help with transfer of tasks she has been doing.
- We have some costs for unused vacation, medical leave and Rev. Rebecca's sabbatical which have been included in the budget. A set-aside account will be applied to the sabbatical.

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Annual Meeting – Bob reported that the June 7 Annual Meeting will take place during an abbreviated service. In preparation for the meeting, a congregational conversation will be held after the May 24 service, and another is planned for a weekday at 6:00 PM. Both meetings will be hybrid and will focus on Annual Meeting business. Because items may be controversial, these conversations are intended to provide time for discussion in advance.

Interim Minister Search – Tom/Bob reported that five candidates have expressed interest in our church. All congratulate the search team on their work to date.

UUA reminded us that trust is essential to the process. We have turned over the task of identifying candidates will be a good fit for FRS to the Search Team and they need our trust. Candidate names must remain strictly confidential and be known only to the search team, which will determine whether there are viable candidates. Tom told us that all the candidates have prior interim minister experience.

The team will decide whom to interview and give UUA a prioritized list of candidates. The ministers who are seeking interim placements will also give UUA a prioritized list of their choices of churches. UUA will review all materials and do their best to match congregations based on the joint rankings. UUA will hopefully come back to us with a match (Not every church gets a match.) If we accept the candidate, we can move on to negotiations. interview and making an offer.

Budget and Staffing for 2026-2027 - Jim Reports

- The Finance Committee feels strongly that we need a Business Manager to oversee spending and establish budgetary controls that do not exist now. We need to look at what is overspent, consider what to do about the Capital Campaign.
- Background – The Finance Committee projects that we will end the year with an operating loss of between $35,000 and $40,000. The loss for

this fiscal year must be taken into consideration along with any further deficits. Jim presented and reviewed three budget options. All include a Business Manager. The differences reflect changes to the Director of Youth and Children's Ministry (DYCM) hours, the Business Manager's start date, and whether the church can be reclassified from Level D to Level C. Being a level C church would reduce costs for staff and could include a freeze on staff salaries to bring them closer to Level C. Business Manager could be hired at Level C.

- All options would result in operating deficits in fiscal year 2026-2027, with the version with a salary increase for DCYM resulting in the highest deficit. The Finance Committee recommended a budget without a DCYM salary increase. No vote was taken on the option to change church classification.
- We have not yet reached our Annual Campaign goal and will need to vote on the budget in May so that it can be presented to the congregations at the Annual Meeting for approval.

Action: Adjournment
Motion: Tom moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM and the motion was approved by general consent.