

Parish Committee Minutes
First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington
August 23, 2022
Online meeting - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Attending: Sara Galantowicz, Anne Quaadgras, Celia Wcislo, Joanna Pushee, Marie Meteer, Jeff Keffer, Al Tosti, Carolyn Hodges, Rev. Marta Flanagan, Rev. Erica Richmond

Call to Order (Sara)

Check in (all in attendance)

Reading and Chalice Lighting (Sara)

Financial Report and dashboard (Carolyn)

- First Parish member Lydia Thayer in her will bequeathed \$15,000 designated for “general purposes” - Discussion followed: Trustees’ general fund, or general operating budget/fund.) Jeffery Keffer: from time on Trustees, any bequest to go to the Trustees and the endowment, not to the Operating Account (practice vs expectation). Discussion. Consensus.
- The Property Committee’s work on the flooring in the meeting house began today 8/23: changing the process for funding in that Trustees provide funds each quarter (rather than funds requested at completion). To date ¼ of what was committed has been transferred; A note that Parish house roof work was completed after July 1, so will follow the new policy
- Carolyn presented the latest financial dashboard: as of July 31, current year pledges are above budget amount but include authorized surplus for the budget (separate line item to offset expenses). Two important things: Mariposa completed and paid in full; no deposit paid up front, so none is due. New tenant Arlington Children’s House’s deposit was \$16,380, they already paid July and August rent.
- The 22-23 budget was developed before Mariposa announced their closure. New tenant rent received for July and Aug was lower than budgeted, due to the lack of students. This will increase starting Sept onwards, but there will be a small decrease on the income side relative to what was budgeted.
- Eric Segal helped follow up on outstanding pledges – the Parish Committee expressed their gratitude.

(Vote 1, Discussion) Consent agenda: Minutes, Financials, lead Minister’s Report

I MOVE THAT WE ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA. (Celia) Jeff seconded. 8 in favor; none opposed.

Address our need for an audit. (Sara)

- Straightforward processes for high level audit are being put together. The search last year for an external professional did not yield any proposals. Carolyn said she was contacting a firm and asking for a control review, which would be less expensive than a certified audit. The budget has \$8,000 set aside for this with another \$2,000 available; none of which has been spent yet.

Updates: 25 minutes

- New tenant (Sara)

Mariposa closed at the end of June. They signed a release terminating their lease. AIM - Adventures in Montessori signed a lease effective July 1 and will be operating as Arlington Children's House <https://arlingtonchildrenshouse.org> They are scheduled to open Sept 6, are currently hiring teachers and have Executive Director; Temporary signage will be seen soon. We are very excited that this will come to fruition with minimal disruption. First Parish would like to celebrate their tenancy; members suggested posting on the FP Connection Board as well as routine communication meeting with the new tenant.

 - The new tenant worked closely with Ellen Robie and Tina Schultz on space sharing and communication has been good; Sara Hidalgo's role has been instrumental. AIM also shared a list of needed repairs based on their inspection (see below list)
- Property update - repairs large and small
 - The Property Committee hired a contractor fixed broken tiles in the Pierce Room and replace the stained carpet in the tenant's office. Asbestos was discovered in both locations. Gratitude to Sara Hidalgo who has been working with contractors on asbestos removal and remediation. Although these are not rooms where children will be, the work is still time sensitive, given the planned opening date. Rev Erica noted that the abatement work could be completed as early as Friday.
 - The new roof on the Parish House; thanks to David Dryfeus, windows repaired on parish house as well. The Property Committee has .busy working on the punch list from new tenant; tenant on own cost has painted several rooms, including the Baily Room. Other work includes replacing light bulbs, automatic detectors and a dumpster brought in for trash left behind. First Parish paid a deposit on a new dishwasher in the kitchen - parts not available; no functioning dish washer yet.
- Sexton staffing (Sara) – The new sexton started 2 weeks ago: Jose (JO-say) Ferraz. Sara Hidalgo is training Jose in preparation to start the program year. His schedule will be Sun through Thurs (8 am to 2 pm), and include cleaning, helping set up the tenant after RE. 8am to 1 or 2pm.
- Hybrid worship/tech team (Anne)

This summer, we spent a good bit of time simplifying the on-line service to require fewer tech team members. In spring the service had five or six volunteers, we can now do it now occasionally two but usually three including one camera operator. The Tech Team simplified the experience, in terms of slides and what info is given; focus is on camera operator whose job it is to follow the action and Zoom host follows the camera; still do

breakout and chat; when available, social time. During the summer there were 50 people/screens most Sundays and zero complaints. There are notes in a Google document and text and templates for future needs regarding how-to's for online worship.

- **Artapalooza (tabled to later in the discussion)**
- Marie Meteer- First Parish is coordinating a fundraising walk with the ArCs cluster to support ArCs work with asylum seekers. Date - Oct 2

Par Com Fall retreat Sun Sept. 18 - 10 min. (Sara)

The focus will be on strategic planning, and potentially membership growth.

Environmental Stewardship Assessment [Bill Gardiner and Sandra (Sandy) Frawley] CAWG - Climate Action Working Group of FP

Visiting and presenting to ParCom (note: not all ParCom members received the document referred to but it is available on the shared drive)

Context (Sandy)

- Climate change is real and happening now. There is growing recognition across the world to achieve certain goals by 2050 as evidenced by the Climate Convention in Glasgow last year. In the US, both nationally and locally, legislation has been signed and sends a clear signal to nations, companies, organizations, and people. In 2021, a net zero plan for Arlington was adopted.
- Last February, the Parish Committee approved a \$500 dollar assessment.. The assessment is inclusive of energy management and efficiency, heating/cooling to move to net zero; methods include data from billing, personal inspections. Sara Hildago and Property committee, represented by John Galantowicz had a 2 ½ hour meeting, which resulted in a 55-page report that will be shared with the received Parish Committee.

How we can streamline our thinking about the report (Bill)

A couple of categories: 1 Operating Projects / recommendations in the report and 2. Capital Projects (special fundraising for heating/cooling to bring to net zero)

- Operating Projects: ways we can upgrade insulations, weather stripping, make the building tighter and more energy efficient within the parameters of current operating budget
- Capital Projects: Current gas burners, recommended to put in heat pump capacity instead for example. Another option (not in report) the use of ground source heating (dig hole in ground). Jason Russell House had this done recently. Looking at options.

Members will also notice a recommendation to install more solar panels, which could provide energy for a heat pump.

- Aug 30th meeting w/ Property committee and CAWG: talk about how to fit w/ priorities and how to sequence into the plan.
- Ran into some real challenges: data on gas and electric bills, not a clear understanding on how solar panels operating. Also First Parish was not charged for water use during COVID. Tracking needed; work with staff members to help implementation. Will be bringing a graph in the future to CAWG and Property about empowering a group to do such work. Considering engaging with a mechanical engineer to examine using heat pumps.

Brief Discussion

- Setting up a working group in conjunction with a five-year plan strategy (above proposals fall into finding a group and understanding the financial commitment)
- Include someone from Property Committee and someone from CAWG
- The Parish Committee will be discussing planning at the retreat Sept. 18th
- First Parish member David Landskov oversaw a study regarding drilling of wells for heat pumps which was determined not to be a good fit due to the property being situated on a ledge.
- Concern about air exchange and circulation in the sanctuary. Bill said they will look for that report.
- All are invited to join CAWG on Oct. 23 forum directed towards latest legislation; panel members include Lori Kenshaft. The group will announce that the report has been received and hope to schedule something in the future after meeting with Property Committee where First Parish might go in the future.
- The Parish Committee expressed appreciation for the group's time and how demonstrating the ability to make changes at First Parish would inspire every parishioner to be able to take back learnings to their homes.

Ingathering Sun 9/11 (Rev. Marta and Rev. Erica) and Summer Services debrief (Rev. Marta)

- Rev. Marta provided a Summer Services debrief in which she outlined how the services were well-received. There were a few cases of lay leader no-shows (due to illness) and the Worship Associates really rose to the challenge both times; Rev. Marta stepped in over Memorial Day weekend as well.
- Rev Marta referenced her Lead Minister's Report: average Sunday attendance was around 80 during the summer; prior to COVID it was around 60. The first COVID summer it was around 100. This year was our first hybrid Summer Services. Two thirds of attendees attended virtually, and a minority of people were in the sanctuary (around 25 people). Summer services were strong.
- Active adult programming included potlucks, discussion groups, and so on.

Ingathering (Rev Erica)

- Sunday, September 11th will be the kickoff of the new church program year. Marta will be preaching.

- Artapalooza is happening after the service. It will be an intergenerational festival for all with soul music, food, and collage. The themes will include what it means to be a beloved community, what it means to be a justice focused and “together” community.
- The water communion on the 11th is still under development. (Discussion)
 - The ministers are considering drawing on the lay led service about water that Lilia C. did this summer: the idea of not where the water is from, but how it comes to us and what it gets used for. Focus on values and deeper meanings of the waters.
- Staff retreat day Sept 1st

Additional updates (Carolyn / Rev. Erica)

- The status of an additional staff office hire: Rather than hire another staff member, Sara H is looking to extend Rob Beatty’s hours. He is amenable. Currently, he works on the Sunday teaser, ebuletin, order of service, and more.
- Town Day is the 17th of Sept. and Pie Palace is looking for volunteers.

Motion to adjourn (Jeff). Seconded (Celia). Unanimously adopted. 8:54 PM.

MOTIONS:

I move that we adopt the consent agenda. - Celia; Jeff seconded.