**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

December 11, 2019

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Cheryl Bartholomew, President

John Simmonds, Past-President

Michael Cappelli, President-Elect

Roberta Groch, Treasurer

David Fancis, Assistant Treasurer, *absent*

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Caroline Mailloux, Strategic Planning

Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison, *absent*

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison, *absent*

Sam Cole, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison

Dave Spremulli, Spiritual Development Liaison

**Church Staff Attending**

Elizabeth Lerner Maclay, Minister

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests Attending –**

Rick Richards – Commitment Drive

**6:45 Check-in**

**Opening Words (Roberta)**

**Call to Order - Chalice Lighting & Covenant Reading**

**Meditation**

**7:10 Consent Agenda**:

* **November Minutes**
* **Sabbatical Funding: Motion:**  To create a budget line in the annual budget of First Unitarian Church of Providence for sabbatical expenses, and to allocate $7,000 from FY2019 surplus to that line in the FY2020 budget.

Motion to approve above consent agenda passed unanimously. (Dave S/ Roberta)

**COMMITMENT DRIVE MATERIALS – (Rick Richards)**

Rick shared Commitment Drive materials. Rick would like to migrate away from paper for next year. The cost of printing materials is rather high. Rick has hosted several listening groups. February 7th, David Pyle will attend Parish Supper to speak to congregation about the various aspects of his assessment. PruComm will need to talk this up and commit to attend. Rick is also asking PruComm members to have a commitment conversation with at least one person.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

* **Inside the Large Congregation Strategic Engagement Questions**

We reviewed ratings from Strategic Leadership Evaluation.

Strengths – When we articulate and understand goals we follow through. Understanding gets us to funding – Creating policies around important topics /items –Things process and flourish when there is a personal champion – Good board oversight.

Weakness – Formulation of clearer mission – monitoring, adapting and evaluation – communicating to congregation – articulating goals and mission – no roadmap – reactive rather than proactive – idiosyncratic with leadership changing each year. Activity at board retreat in January and a potential new board structure could help with some of these weaknesses.

1. Review mission statement
2. Form identity
3. Translate identity to strategy
4. Articulate goals
5. Align Structure and culture
6. Allocate resources
7. Monitor and adapt

As mission and goals are identified, we may need to say no to things that do not align. As congregation grows, there will be a huge amount of change. As the leadership group, we will need to prepare and support congregation through some of this change.

* **Intern Proposal to Look into First U, the Slave Trade and Abolition Movement**

Proposal was made by the history committee to hire a Brown history intern to research history of slave trade and abolition movement involvement by First U. $750 to do 62 hours worth of research. Brown history professor will help choose the intern. Important for First U to learn our history. Need to acknowledge whatever involvement this church may have had in the slave trade. Importance of taking what we learn and make some connection to larger community. Refer history committee to UUA Commission on Institutional change. GA 2020 coinciding with 400th anniversary of arrival of Mayflower and First U 300th anniversary. GA will focus on connection of denomination with this history. Dave S. made motion that we “hire an intern to look into First U involvement slave trade and abolition movement.” (Caroline seconded). John proposed an amendment to add to that motion “by using $750 from 2019 surplus funds.” Amendment was approved unanimously. The amended motion, “That First U hire an intern to look into First U involvement in slave trade and abolition movement by using $750 from the 2019 surplus funds,” passed unanimously.

* **Funding Sabbaticals**

We are planning for funding sabbaticals as we will have three in a row. We will need to establish a regular line item in the budget to keep sabbatical funds on hand (See motion approved in consent agenda above). We will likely need to budget around $10,000 in this line item annually in order to fund sabbaticals as they arise. Cathy has been working with UUA colleagues and spiritual pathways team to plan for covering her sabbatical. To cover her position with someone good for 20 hours / week / 22 weeks per UUA guidelines would cost $12,320.

Sabbatical planning task force - Greg, Michael, Jean Dolan, and Cheryl - has formed and will be meeting next week to work on developing a sabbatical policy which will include a timeline, conditions and terms, and communication to the congregation around sabbaticals.

* **Overnight Guest Policy**

Nancy has received several requests recently to house overnight guests. We don’t have any policy on this. We need to think about this and we will discuss in the future. Considerations – Purpose of the request and alignment with mission; guidelines for what constitutes yes, no, maybe and who to go to with maybes for a definitive response; financial considerations, etc. More discussion in January.

* **Fundraising Clarification During Commitment Drive**

We have a policy that there should be no fundraising during March so as not to conflict with commitment drive. Last year there was a bit of confusion as to what constitutes a fundraiser. Michael and Nancy will review policy and history of how it came about and come up with definition of fundraising for this purpose. John and Caroline are willing to review these definitions.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

* **Church Administrator (Nancy) –** See written report. Association of UUA Administrators group is meeting in Providence before GA. Lots of requests for meetings / receptions, etc. at the church during GA.
* **DRE (Cathy) –** See written report. Amazingly busy. Cathy is beginning to field issues and questions around GA. Wants to be supportive of congregational efforts on this. GA reservations have opened.
* **Minister (Liz) –** See written report. We will not doing a Sandy Hook vigil this year. Will be participating in Guns to Plowshares event at statehouse in January
* **Treasurer Reports (Roberta) –** We are doing well. More than 50% of pledges paid at this point. Sunday collections a bit under, but other line items making up for this.

**MINITRIES, PERSONNEL, STRATEGIC PLANNING**

* **Personnel (Edie**) – No report
* **Strategic Planning (Caroline) –** Wrapping up data from Imagine the Future sessions with Michael and John. Facilitator Melinda Collins from regional facilitator group will be available to facilitate. Overnight retreat scheduled for January 3-4, LaSallette Retreat Center, Attleboro. About 50 people invited. About 40 registered to date. Time for “fun and connecting”, but also work time on Saturday. Prep materials will be sent out to all registrants. Registration fees to Nancy. Sliding scale.
* **Community Life (Sam) –** See history committee request above. Potlucks are all covered.
* **Social Justice (Greg) –** Listening session planned for January 5. Attended legislative committee meeting. Bob Cox becoming aware of statement of conscience up for vote at GA. Question of who are delegates to GA, etc. this is expanding group.
* **Spiritual Development (David S.) –** all good.
* **Stewardship (Tiffany) –**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS:**

* **Sabbatical Planning Task Force –** See above
* **Leadership Retreat –** See above
* **Special Projects Requests –** due by December 20
* **Stewardship for Us Reminder – Feb. 21 – 23 Congregational Giving Assessment**
* **Kevin Carson Ordination –** On Sunday, December 8, a special meeting of the congregation was held to consider the following motion: *I move that the congregation of the First Unitarian Church of Providence co-sponsor the ordination of Kevin Carson to become a Unitarian Universalist minister.* The proposal passed. Ordination will take place, Saturday, December 21, 3PM at the First Church and Parish in Dedham, MA. Nancy will put an invitation to all in the weekly email. All are urged to attend.
* **Budget Requests Due Date –** Due by January
* **Musicale May 15 Dessert Potluck –** Asking PruComm members to bring dessert

**NEW BUSINESS** –

Question was raised as to whether we have a policy on inspecting bags that come in to church. Greeters and ushers will notice and approach folks who are not recognized and carrying backpack. Need to recruit more “swarmers” should there be an active shooter. PruComm needs a briefing on security measures that are in place.

**9:00 ACTION ITEM REVIEW**

1. **All plan to attend leadership retreat – registration fees in to Nancy.**
2. **All should plan to attend Feb. 7 Potluck with David Pyle and talk up with others.**
3. **Think about considerations for a potential overnight guest policy for future discussion.**
4. **The sabbatical task force will keep Cathy updated and share their work with her as they work on policy around sabbaticals.**
5. **Michael and Nancy review March fundraising policy and history. Define fundraising for this purpose, John and Caroline agreed to review definitions.**
6. **Plan for PruCommm briefing on security measures.**

**Next Meeting/Assignments**

* **Next Meeting: January 15**
* **Opening/Closing Words: (Greg)**

**Closing Words (Roberta)**

**Extinguish Chalice**

**9:06 ADJOURNMENT –** Motion to adjourn **(**Michael / Greg ) carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk