**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

September 8, 2021

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Odile Mattiauda, President

Michael Cappelli, Past-President

Joan Richards, President-elect

John Dooley, Assistant Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison

Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison *(absent)*

Alison Green, Spiritual Development Liaison

Kate Niles, Stewardship Liaison

Ex-officio - Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister

**Church Staff Attending**

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests**

Lee Rodman

Brian Paradis

Ted Martin

Rick Richards

**Meeting was held remotely via zoom due to COVID-19 Emergency.**

**6:45 PM - Gathering**

**Opening Words – Joan Richards**

**Covenant Reading**

**Call to Order – 7:00 PM**

**Food Pantry Cabinets (Brian and Ted) –** Work has happened over the summer to augment storage space for Food Pantry by building cabinetry in the Haynes room. PruComm approved paying half of cost (up to $2000) toward this in June. Project is now completed and servicing very well. Sam and Carson Cole did the work pro bono, so cost was minimal. Food Pantry is able to cover the whole cost. Greatly appreciate that PruCOmm was willing to support, but Food Pantry will reimburse small amount that was already spent. Thank you card will be sent to Sam and Carson for their labor contribution.

**June Minutes** - Motion to accept minutes of June 9 meeting– (Odile / Alison) Minutes approved with two abstentions by members who were not at June meeting.

**Announcements –** Kristen Ivey Moses stepped down as Treasurer due to family and other obligations. John Dooley agreed to step into Treasurer position. Rick Richards agreed to be assistant. **Motion: (Odile / Edie) To approve John Dooley to be treasurer and Rick Richards to be assistant treasurer.** Motion passed unanimously. Thanks to both John and Rick.

**REPORTS**

**Treasurer’s Report –** **See report** – Our accountant goes through previous year with Walter to assure that all is in order and balancing with bank. Net Asset Report is a snapshot of books at end of August. Allows for closing of books for FY 2021. **Motion: That PruComm acknowledge receipt of FY2021 net asset report as presented by accountant and Treasurer** **(Michael / Odile).** Motion passed unanimously.

We are in good shape with budget. We are ahead in gifts and behind with expenses. Stock balances are doing well. Money received in comparison to pledges are ahead. Walter will be sending out pledge reminders. Bank of a has recommended that PPP loan be forgiven. SBA has 90 days to approve this decision.

**Church Administrator (Nancy) –** Currently concentrating on fully reopening. Pedro and Jamie are cleaning EVERYTHING. Carpets cleaned. Front desk volunteers are coming back Monday. Pedro is ready for Sundays. Some groups are coming back. Wedding inquiries are coming in.

**Minister (Liz) -** Staff had retreat. Roger and Liz working on opening service and Colt State Park event on Sept. 12 and plans for the year. Liz will start working on sabbatical plans and plans for a smooth transition and will have outline for PruComm at October meeting. She will submit written report to PruComm going forward.

**DISCUSSION:**

* **Retreat –** 9/19 (Edie’s house in Warwick; 9/26 (John’s house in South County); and 10/10 (Joan and Rick’s house in Providcnce – all 1:30. Odile is building schedule.
  + Goal to get to know each other. Send Team building ideas to Odile.
  + On 10/10, we will have a discussion of Susan Beaumont book “Inside the Large Congregation” with Cheryl Bartholomew.
  + Information that new members may need.
  + Presentation on structure of ministries, --- and where they need help, contact info for liaisons, guidance for starting new committees, etc.
  + If you have other ideas about other goals for the retreat(s), please send to Odile.
* **Mission Statement (Beth) –** Task force is standing behind mission statement. Would like to see opportunity for a congregational discussion of mission statement on a Sunday after services in person so that more people can have their feelings heard (virtual meetings offered in May were not well-attended), followed by a vote on adopting the mission statement. Suggestions / Discussion: Continued surge of COVID Delta variant may prevent large in-person opportunity to give feedback; Go through committees and Ministries, soul circles, etc. with the same set of questions. Offer lots of opportunities (in-person and/or virtual) to learn about where mission statement came from – that it is a distillation of much conversation and discernment already done. Aim for a vote on mission statement in January.
* **Mosaic Funding Proposal –** Louise, Kate, Claire and Lee reviewed history and current efforts of Mosaic Team -
  + 2018 Revolutionary Love Conference was followed up with discussions in the Fall as to how First U could be better addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
  + Spring 2019 – Looking at Church’s history regarding slavery and abolition as part of 300th Anniversary. Hiring of an intern to help with this was approved by PruComm.
  + Fall 2019 – ad hoc committee was formed and build on feedback from Imagine the Future focus groups – overwhelming desire from congregation for more racial diversity.
  + Mosaic Proposal was shared with PruCom. Shared and discussed with thirteen different members from various constituencies within congregation. Discussed with Willard Lett – Rep for UUA.
  + March 2020, Louise reviewed some diversity trainers – Mosaic Proposal was presented to PruComm in June 2020 (after delay due to COVID). Fall of 2020 PruComm considered proposal.
  + March 2021 steering team was formed and vetted three training companies to provide a training series with follow-up strategic planning. Wayside Equity Trainers were identified as best (and least expensive) choice.
  + When Mosaic Steering team was formed, PruComm identified a special relationship between Mosaic and PruComm because its work is so important to the mission and touches on so much of the life of the congregation.
  + June 2021 PruComm earmarked funds.
  + Summer, 2021 Mosaic Team has begun connecting with groups and committees already working on anti-oppression work within the congregation, looking for ways to partner and connect.
  + Mosaic Team plans for newsletter announcements, possible service highlighting the need and opportunity for learning that the series will offer, etc.

Discussion: Need for diversity training series - Sometimes unintentional microaggressions are turning away people of diverse cultures who do show up at First U – anecdotes and personal stories of this happening. Goal of training series is to help First U members to identify unconscious bias and learn to act in ways that welcome and respect the dignity and gifts of all consistent with our principles and mission.

MosaicTeam membership is currently PruComm heavy now (Three of four are now on PruComm). They need a few new members to join the team. Need Pru Comm ideas in recruiting new members for the team. Opportunity to partner with Mission Statement Task Force, as some of the goals align. Lee and Beth will connect.

In June, 2021 PruComm “earmarked” funds from New Initiatives fund. For a variety of reasons, it turned out that those funds are not currently available. However, some funds in this year’s budget that will go unused are now available. New part time interim music director will not be eligible for UUA pension plan that was budgeted until end of this year and health benefits cost are considerably less than budgeted since he is single and part time. MOU with Wayside comes to $9900 to be spent in three installments. **Motion: To reallocate funds set aside for the pension and other benefits for part time interim music director to fund the first installment for Wayside Equity Training. Odile / Rick).** Motion passed unanimously.

**DRE REPORT (Cathy ) –** Cathy andSpiritual Pathways team have been working all summer in planning for children and youth to be either in person OR online. They have been in close touch with medical members of Bridging team. Advice this week is that , keeping health and safety of children at forefront, we should NOT have unvaccinated youth under twelve in person on site. Youth twelve and over are expected to be vaccinated. Coming of Age and Youth Group would like to use outside spaces when possible. Parents very concerned since children need to be in person all week during school. Under twelves will be online. Resource book will be on website explaining this and protocols for twelve and over coming to campus.

Cathy announced that she plans to retire at end of this church year. Announcement from Cathy, Liz and Odile going out to congregation this evening. After thirty years of service, Cathy will be devoting time to other parts of her life – family, direct activism, self-care, etc. She will stay throughout this difficult year to allow for timely transition. All thanked Cathy for her devoted service.

**Closing Words** – Joan -

**9:26 PM – Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk