

First Unitarian Church of Providence

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

May 11, 2022

ATTENDING:

Prudential Committee

Odile Mattiauda, President

Michael Cappelli, Past-President

Joan Richards, President-elect

John Dooley, Treasurer

Rick Richards, Assistant Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison *absent*

Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison

Alison Green, Spiritual Development Liaison

Vacant, Stewardship Liaison

Ex-officio - Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister *absent*

Carson Cole, Youth Representative

Church Staff Attending

Nancy Forsstrom, Director of Operations

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education *via zoom*

Roger Peltier, Assistant Minister for Pastoral Care *absent*

Guests Attending

Lee Rodman

Motion made by email April 21, 2022 (Odile / John):

Move that the Prudential Committee accept the unanimous recommendation of the Interim DRE Search Team and offer the position of Interim Director of Religious Education to Mandy Neff. The offer will be made by members of the team representing the Prudential Committee, fall within approved salary guidelines, and be contingent on Mandy Neff's acceptance of terms and conditions of employment outlined by the Prudential Committee's Director of Personnel. (Motion passed with a vote of 10 in favor; one not voting)

6:45 PM – Gathering

Opening Words (Beth) Beth – Anne Lamott

Covenant Reading -

Call to Order – 6:53 PM

Announcements

Wheelchair access – See list of comments from service on Google drive. This will need to be a much larger project, likely consulting with an architect, taking into consideration need for multiple wheelchair spots, push bars on front doors, better access through front and rear entrance, raising platform, place for choir and acoustical considerations. We will put together a Task Force in the fall.

COVID Team will be meeting on 5/23 – any specific requests send to Odile or other team members.

Mandy Neff has accepted the offer as Interim DRE. Thanks to Alison and DRE search committee.

Mosaic Steering Team (Lee, Louise and Claire)

First U's MOU with Wayside Equity Training included presentation of a series of three "Let's Talk About Race" workshops this spring, followed by two diversity, equity, and inclusion planning sessions during FY 2022-23. The workshops were presented in February, March and April. The first on zoom, second two were hybrid. Over sixty attended the first session; 45 the second and 35 the third. The majority of feedback was positive, including lots of raised awareness and some reporting that they have been able to enter into difficult conversations with more assurance, when they might have kept silent in the past. However, some valid concerns from both participants and Mosaic Steering Team members included some frustrations with style and skill of presenters. Although Wayside was responsive to our constructive feedback after the first two sessions, the Mosaic Team is not confident that there is enough trust throughout the congregation with Wayside for them to be the best fit to facilitate development of a diversity, inclusion and anti-racism action plan with First U. **It is the Mosaic Team's recommendation that we part ways with Wayside and do not continue with the third part of our MOU. Wayside is amenable to releasing First U from that obligation.** However, Mosaic wants to continue various activities through fall, leading to development of a congregational Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism action plan in the spring of 2023. Roger and Liz are in agreement with this plan and are holding weekends in March for that eventuality. We are exploring possibility of UUA regional support in this effort. There was a suggestion to fold Mosaic action plan into a larger strategic planning process with a longer scope – three to five years.

Motion: to accept recommendation of the Mosaic Steering Team (Odile / Joan) Motion accepted unanimously.

Louise also reported that the work of refreshing and updating the minister's parlor (already approved in this year's Mosaic proposal) has regained momentum. Louise has been meeting with representatives from History Committee and Women's alliance as well as Max Pounder.

The plan is to consolidate minister's portraits onto one wall, use photographs of more recent congregants and congregational happenings by Phil Lieberman, a quilt created by RE children, and other artwork to update other walls. This work could likely be completed in the next few months.

Volunteer recognition – See updated list of volunteers to be recognized in the google drive. This will take place during the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 5.

Slate of officers 2022-23

The Nominating Committee offers the following slate of candidates for the annual meeting. Note that two Deacon positions remain open. The Committee, chaired by Katy Killilea with much support from Neil Bartholomew, has worked diligently to achieve this result.

- Hillary Salmons - President-Elect
- Jay Glasson - Right Relations Committee (to be elected to a second 3-year term)
- Dana Borrelli-Murray - Human Relations Liaison to the Prudential Committee
- Rev. Peter Laarman - Coordinator of Strategic Planning (stepping into the position while Beth Armstrong takes a staff position for the 2022-2023 church year)
- John Dooley - Treasurer (continuing)
- Rick Richards - Assistant Treasurer (continuing)
- Claire Rosenbaum - Clerk (continuing)
- Andy Wilby - Stewardship Liaison (to complete the last two years of a vacated 3-year term)
- Lisa Voutes - Social Justice Liaison
- Rev. Charles Blustein Ortman - Deacons
- Amy Grant - Deacons
- Richard Boober - Nominating Committee
- Grace Doyle Dalyan - Nominating Committee
- Michael Currier - Nominating Committee

All nominees have been apprised of their responsibilities related to their roles, including the PruComm retreat dates – July 22-23, at church.

Erica Baron, UUA consultant – Erica has reached out to PruComm members and also met with the Executive Committee. (See notes on Google Drive) She will be working with the full PruComm over the next year. Purpose is to clarify roles between staff and PruComm, looking toward best practice for large congregations.

Treasurer Report – We are 83% through the church year with expenses at 73% and non-endowment income at 90%. Question was raised about where does any surplus go? Long term, John's recommendation would be that it go to new initiatives fund, but that would take a change to the by-laws which currently state that any unencumbered surpluses go to building fund. We are not considering any by-laws change this year since so many things are in flux. Some surplus this year is related to PPP (COVID) money.

DRE Report (Cathy) - Working on celebrations and honoring volunteers and planning for next year. Had one conversation with interim DRE answering any questions she has.

Social Justice (Greg)– Four applications for five slots for community collections next year. That would be fine since often new things come up during the church year. Dee Lovecky and Peter Laarman are reviewing applications and will make recommendations. Social Justice will also be working on updated content for the webpage over the summer.

Community Life (Louise) – Recognizing the yearning for return to joyful community life, Louise has explored the possibility for hosting a fun, social gathering with Paul Williams Band. He could be available evening of Friday, June 3. His fee is \$300 fee. Plan would be to include some food if possible. Will need to know about any updated COVID guideli.

Buildings and Grounds update (Rick)

Rick is working with aTask Force on a comprehensive campus maintenance plan. They are reviewing three different plans that have been developed over the years. Once these are compiled into one current plan will be presented to contractors for estimates which will then inform PruComm on projected building maintenance costs.

Commitment drive update

In the 2021/22 church year, we had 345 pledgers and \$485,333. To date in this year's commitment drive, we have 228 pledgers \$423,000. 117 pledgers and \$60,331 short. Of people who have not year pledged, 15 pledged more than \$1000 last year. 92 pledged less than \$1000. Seems like we will come in within a few percentage points of last year. Commitment drive goal is \$500,000, the same as it has been for the last few years. Average pledge has increased from \$1400 - \$1900.

Finance Committee –

Chair is stepping down. PruComm is supposed to name chair. A name has come up to invite to join finance committee. The committee is excited about this name. Committee needs to take on roles beyond monitoring investment funds, such as involvement with the commitment drive, budget development and review, etc.

Budget

Budget committee met last month and will meet again tomorrow. They started out with including various budget requests. But new information has come in with commitment drive. Music Director position will not need retirement and healthcare. Also Interim DRE needs for health insurance and retirement are firm now. Some income estimates for building rentals and Sunday plate have been raised (based on current income trends). Tomorrow's meeting will make adjustments based on new realities. UUA is recommending a 5% COLA increase for staff. Need to also consider possibility of writing grants to supplement income, now that we have 501(c)3 status.

Closing Words (Beth) – Anne Lamott

Next meeting: Meeting on the Budget - May 25, 6:45PM

Other important upcoming dates:

May 23, COVID Team Meeting

TBA – Congregational budget meetings

June 1, 6PM: Executive Committee

June 5, 11:45: Annual Meeting (Auditorium) and Cathy’s Retirement Celebration

June 8, 6:45: Prudential Committee

June 12: Colt State Park Celebrations

July 22 (evening) – 23: 2022 PruComm Retreat

Chalice Extinguishing

Adjourn – 8:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk