

**First Unitarian Church of Providence**  
Prudential Committee Meeting Notes  
March 13, 2019

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**ATTENDING**

**Prudential Committee**

John Simmonds, President  
*Jay Glasson, Past-President (absent)*  
Cheryl Bartholomew, President-Elect  
*David House, Treasurer (absent)*  
*Roberta Groch, Assistant Treasurer (absent)*  
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk  
Caroline Mailloux, Strategic Planning  
Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison (*arrived at 8:00PM*)  
Kate Bowden, Personnel Liaison  
Sam Cole, Community Life Liaison  
Nancy Weiss Fried, Social Justice Liaison  
Cynthia Roberts, Spiritual Development Liaison  
Carson Cole, Youth Observer

**Church Staff Attending**

Elizabeth Lerner Maclay, Minister  
Cathy Seggel, DRE  
Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests attending**

Ralph Mero

**OPENING**

6:45 PM - Check In

- Opening Words (Caroline)
- Call to Order – Chalice Lighting and Covenant Reading
- Welcome Guests & Observers

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Meeting Minutes – February
- President's Advisory Committee
- Affinity Group Facilitator Training Expenses

Kate moved to approve Consent Agenda– Cheryl 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried unanimously.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Minister (Liz) –**  
See written report. Liz proposed an idea for leadership (PruComm and committee chairs) to get together in the spring to plan the following church year calendar. This might help avoid scheduling conflicts and have all concerned together to negotiate if there are. It

would provide an opportunity to have greater connection between committees, programs, etc. as well as plan well in advance.

- **DRE (Cathy)**  
See written report. March 31 youth from Muslim and Jewish Community are coming to work with our youth on a project related to Community Food Share Pantry.
- **Church Administrator (Nancy)**  
See written report. We passed Fire Department / Water Company inspection. We have been working on safety and security booklet and plans. Our insurance company has recently asked if we had such plans. So we are ahead of the game.
- **Treasurer (David/Roberta)**  
David sent his synopsis: “Although total expenses are in line with projections, building operations and repair costs are exceeding original projections. These increased costs are offset by unexpected decreased insurance premiums and the lack of staff health deductible reimbursement needs. Church pledge contributions and Meeting House rentals are exceeding projections for this time of year. Barring further unexpected building expenses and continued vigilance in keeping additional expense requests at a minimum, the church should end the year with a slight surplus.”

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Fundraising Approval**  
All fundraising activities need to come to PruComm for approval so PruComm can be aware of activity and manage any conflicts. Liaisons are asked to remind committee chairs about this.
- **Commitment Drive Leader**  
Cynthia Rosengard and Joe Fisler will step down as commitment drive leaders as of June. Rick Richards will lead the commitment drive next church year. Both Cynthia and Joe will stay on as committee members.
- **Parking Lot/Lighting**  
Lighting work will start in early April. Railing bids will go out soon.
- **Organ repair/replacement**  
Leathers on organ have begun to wear out. We will need to consider an organ replacement or repair soon – a major expense.
- **Loaves & Fishes Mission**  
Loves and Fishes group will purchase a storage cabinet to be placed in the parish hall closet.
- **Ask the PruComm –Claire/Caroline – 14 April**  
PruComm minutes are posted on bulletin board and website once approved. Ask the PruComm Posters for table are kept in resource room.
- **Variety Show (send out flyer)**  
Will take place March 23 – talent from First U (including Liz). PruComm asked to attend and bring finger food for refreshments.

#### **MINISTRIES, PERSONNEL, STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- **Personnel (Kate)**  
Kate has been working with David Pyle’s second phase work with us. She will be meeting with personnel and Liz and Nancy F. In the past we were encouraged not to have Jaime work overtime, since more than 40 hours per week requires time and a half – budgetary impact. We may need to revisit this and budget appropriately.

- **Strategic Planning (Caroline)** – See below
- **Community Life (Sam)**  
History committee is anticipating 300th anniversary with a bit of trepidation. Calendaring will be important for that group as well as others. Transylvania group moving forward toward trip. Two more parish suppers are scheduled for spring.
- **Social Justice (Nancy)**  
John Patel would like to claim the agenda for two Parish Suppers next year (calendar). Girl Effect is looking for new ways to raise money.
- **Spiritual Development (Cynthia)**  
Cynthia wonders about the ministries liaison structure effectiveness. Some roles of liaisons feel more appropriate for administrative role. We should likely consider this as we think about shifting to a better governance structure for a larger church.
- **Stewardship (Tiffany)**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS** (Board discussions):

- **Board Discussion: Volunteer Recognition Nominations**  
Once a year we recognize volunteers. Those present discussed some names to consider. All PruComm members are urged to send in further written nominations using materials in Board packet by April 6. We will vote at the April meeting.
- **Board Discussion: David Pyle & UUA**  
David P. is planning to get final staff recommendations to us by this Friday. There will be recommended staff / volunteer / governance changes. We will need help with determining right model for First U. David will be recommending UUA New England Region assign a dedicated, experienced person to First U given our large church size status. We will need to engage the congregation in conversations on key issues related to this shift to a larger congregation. There is availability of a “peer group facilitator” within NE Region. Fee for this service is \$50 / onsite hour. Cheryl made motion that we request New England Regional peer group facilitator to work with First U to facilitate congregational conversations. Cost to be included in 2020 budget. Tiffany seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- **Board Discussion: Sound System Funding**  
The assessment for sound system was included in materials. Kudos to Neil and Team for facilitating this work. Thanks to Buff Chase for funding the assessment. Estimate has come in at close to \$50,000. The work would be an all-inclusive package. It is not possible to do work in stages. After installation, we will need volunteer(s) trained in soundboard to be actively available for all church services as well as events. Some thoughts for raising the funds: Have members sponsor a challenge donation. Approach Athenaeum regarding contributing to sound system. Same with Brown. Hold a focused fundraiser with theme of looking toward future – technology.
- **Board Discussion: Strategic Planning (Caroline)**  
As we are ready to celebrate 300 anniversary and also moving to a “large, flagship” congregation we need to be taking stock – looking back, looking forward. We need to look for ways of telling our story. We first need internal alignment (leadership buy-in) for external story telling. Then chance for congregation as whole to express what it currently values and what it wants to achieve - Create mission and vision – review “Harvest the vision” materials. Strategic plan needs to be time bound (3-5- years) and actually implemented. Congregational conversations through fall could be venue to

accomplish this. Strategies for best times and ways to get people involved. Include youth! Hold up list of accomplishments for congregation this spring.

- **Board Discussion: Pastor's Fund (Cheryl, Jay, Liz, Roberta)** – Agenda for April

- **Board Discussion: Sunday plate suggestion**

During a gathering of past presidents, there was a recommendation for targeted collection plate for internal needs in addition to Special Sunday collection. (The example from another congregation was for paying down the mortgage). There was a wide range of opinions regarding this suggestion. We need to have congregational buy-in. Revisit at April meeting.

- **Board Discussion: Plaque for Past Presidents and Pillars (Jay)** – Agenda for April

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- None

Next Meeting:

- **Date:** 10 April 2019
- **Time:** 6:45 PM
- **Opening/Closing Words:** (Kate)

Closing Words (Caroline)

9:04 **ADJOURNMENT** Kate, Tiffany

**SUBMITTED** by CLERK

Claire Rosenbaum