

First Parish Unitarian Universalist – Canton
Minutes of the Parish Committee
February 12, 2025
7:15 PM on Zoom

In Attendance:

Kitty McGregor, President
Dave Williams, VP-Administration
Larry Cotton, Treasurer
Debbie Radovsky, VP-Member Services
Jonette Nagai, Clerk
Don Seaman, Member-at-Large
Bette Wells, Member-at-Large
Rev. Dr. Michelle Walsh, Minister

2024-25 Parish Committee Guests:

Rev. Dr. Clyde Grubbs

Absent:

Call to Order and Chalice Reading: The meeting was called to order at 7:15PM. Bette lit the chalice and gave the following chalice reading:

The Work of the Congregation
by Chrystal Hogan

We light this chalice to honor our work,
to celebrate our community,
and to bring hope and determination
to our mission in the wider world.

Consent Agenda Items: The minutes as circulated by Michelle prior to the PC meeting were approved.

Membership & Friends Status Review - Rev. Dr. Michelle

The membership Ministry comprised of Debbie Radovsky, Nancy Devine, and Susan Johnson, with assistance from Rev. Dr. Michelle Walsh recently completed a review of the FPUU Constitution and Bylaws and the membership records. Proposed modifications to the bylaws and lists of Inactive and Emeritus/Emerita members were presented to the PC for approval. The modifications to the bylaws consisted of clarifying language around membership requirements and categories and introduced a new category of Past President Emeritus/Emerita. (FPUU Canton is one of a few UU congregations with both a constitution and

bylaws.) Emeritus/Emerita categories are intended to honor individuals for their past contributions; those individuals are not eligible to vote.

The proposed by-law modifications as of 2/12/2025 were unanimously adopted by the PC.

The proposed list of Inactive members was unanimously approved. These individuals will be contacted to confirm this status; they can elect to remain active but must then satisfy the requirements for active membership, which will include meeting with the current minister to process these requirements before seeking to reactivate their membership. (Any inactive member also can choose at a future date to become active again but must follow the procedure to do so laid out in the bylaw modifications, per above.) Note also the clarification in the new bylaw modifications of requests to be absent from membership for a year and the need to submit a letter of explanation, per detail in the bylaw modifications.

The proposed list of Emeritus/Emerita members was unanimously approved, including the adoption of a new category, President Emeritus/Emerita. The individuals on this list will be contacted and offered this honor. They must then accept this offer for the status to be in effect.

This year's Membership and Friends list was submitted to the UUA to complete the FPUU recertification process for this year (inclusive of financial reports from Larry and David Bryant). There are 65 individuals on the list. Three new members are reflected; one more will be signing the book on Sunday, February 16th.

Treasurer's Report – Larry Cotton:

Overall, numbers are in line with expectations. Kitty expressed concern about heating and water bills. Heating appears to be okay, but Larry will follow up to confirm amounts are in line with budget and past years. Dave Williams will follow up on the water bill which has increased by a multiple of 10 although not in absolute terms a large amount. Michelle asked that information on the Dignity Fund to be included as part of the normal reports. Kitty asked about small balance sheet discrepancies which are related to ongoing reconciliation issues; there won't be final resolution until the reconciliation process is finalized. Larry noted that contributions to the monthly FIA causes have been down. A couple of approaches to boost these amounts were discussed including how to capture participation from the choir, such as placing a spare collection box and envelopes near the choir and asking a choir member to pass the box/envelopes prior to the service.

Committee Reports:

Congregational Life and Stewardship Ministry - Dave has finished drafting a letter for the annual pledge drive which he has given to Kitty for her feedback. The drive will officially begin on Sunday March 9th. Don will be running a Saturday work party event on February 15th. Kitty

noted that we need to think about and formalize an approach to address possible events given the current political climate. Diana Levy is running a Welcoming Congregation event on Saturday February 22nd that Michelle encouraged people to attend.

Vision Committee – The next meeting for this committee will be Thursday, February 20th at 10:30am

Stop The Coup March: A demonstration and march is being organized for Friday, February 14th, Valentine’s Day in Boston. UU Mass Action is one of the driving sponsors. Michelle circulated information on this event prior to the PC meeting and asked whether we would consider signing on as a co-sponsor. The PC unanimously voted to do so. In the end, there were over 100 co-sponsors for the event and about 1,000 people showed up to participate in the 0.8 mile march and demonstration, according to the Boston Globe.

Next Meeting of the Parish Committee:

Parish Committee meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:15pm on Zoom. The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 12th.

Closing Words:

Michelle chose a reading from the Beloved Community section (#52 adapted from Martin Luther King) from the book “Lifting Out Voices; Readings in the Living Tradition” by the Unitarian Universalist Association:

A time like this demands great leaders;
Leaders whom the lust of office does not kill;
Leaders whom the spoils of life cannot buy;
Leaders who possess opinions and a will;
Leaders who have honor;
Leaders who will not lie;
Leaders who can stand before a demagogue
And damn . . . treacherous flatteries without winking!
Tall leaders, sun crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and private thinking.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32PM.

Open Follow-up Items from previous meetings:

- Get IRS determination letter for tax exempt status or State recognition. (Kitty)
- Work on planned giving (legacy giving) project. (Kitty, Dave, and Debbie)

- Kitty and Carol Smith to work on rental rate charts and process for one-off rentals
- Dave Bryant, Kitty, and Debbie to work on contract language and policy for long-term rentals.
- Draft policy for handling in-kind donations for approval of PC at next meeting. (Larry)

Minutes prepared, and respectfully submitted, by Jonette Nagai, Parish Committee Clerk