

FirstU Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 2024/01/17

Time: 7pm-9pm

Location: Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83573961097?pwd=MnhuVkhJQVg1ZzBpb0V3alhvMmg0UT09>

Attendees: Brent, Mary Ella, Phil, Nancy, Carmen, Amy, Guy, Rev Eric, Michelle, Jen, Chuck Shields (special observer), Jodi McIntosh (RE)

Regrets:

Timekeeper: Carmen

Process Monitor: Amy

Minutes

Item
Early Check-in
1. Consent Agenda: a. Approval of this Agenda b. Approval of Board Minutes 2023/11/15 [Att. 1] c. Board Approval of SGM Minutes 2023/12/03 [Att.2] d. Receive Pledge Campaign Report (Phil) [Att. 3] e. Receive Privacy Officer's Report (Jen) [Att. 4] f. Receive President's Report (Brent) [Note 1] g. Membership Approval for Sharon O'Sullivan [Note 2] h. Membership Approval for Brenda Heming [Note 3] i. Acknowledge Exec Approval 2023/12/13 of Motion: To approve the Ajashki Grocery Reimbursements as per SJAN Budget/plans j. Acknowledge Exec Approval (email Dec 7) of Ajashki's \$22K grant application for City of Ottawa's Emerging Communities Funding [Note 4][Att.5,6] k. Acknowledge Exec Approval (email Dec 28) of \$25K grant application for Ajashki from Hydro One's Energizing Life grant program, and to authorize Jan Andrews or Sharen Bowen to submit the application on FirstU's behalf [Note 5][Att.7,8,9] l. Receive Report from Fall Fair Director [Note 8] Moved by Brent, Seconded by Nancy. Passed

2. Discussion of any items from Consent Agenda

Fall Fair replacement: We will have issues finding Fall Fair replacement for Carol Card in 2024. Need a way to canvas potential members. Solicit members and ascertain desired involvement. Important to involve individuals who have sufficient experience and knowledge to take on roles. Split Chair role with another individual. Need a new chair or at least co-chair asap. Ask Nominating Committee to help find someone for Chair.

[Action Item] Chuck will be point person on this

3.1 Follow-up from Pledge Campaign Report [Phil]

To reappoint Phil Nagy as chair of the 2025 pledge campaign

Moved: Carl, Seconded Amy. Passed

Phil created a report and slides which were sent by email

- Received pledges from the ideal targeted number of donors, sought in this campaign but down 5% in total revenue, mostly due to economic concerns but also with planned building on Campus or other reason for dissatisfaction.

3. Minister's Report [Rev Eric]

- a. Ramp has been added in Worship Hall to allow access to stage, for accessibility reasons
- b. See report for stats on attendance
- c. What are the issues with electronic virtual access and live streaming? We still have issues to address regarding electronic accessibility
- d. Eric and a team of 3 members visited UH to try to rebuild connection with UU.
- e. Some UH members feel abandoned by FirstU in some ways. One FirstU board member attendee at UH was shocked by some of the conversation.
- f. Need for member / staff covenant and awareness of policy. Need to either refresh memory of existing policy and/or update the covenant for current needs. Interactions between staff and members need to follow our already established covenant. See item 6.
- g. Stories told and retold can become gossip and/or here say after several iterations, such as regarding UH access to Campus and Campus Planning
- h. Should we have more FirstU members involved with UH, including at their Board level, as is cited in their original by-laws, and as we used to be in the past?

4. Report on Religious Education Program [Jodi McIntosh]

- RE started week after Thanksgiving

- 6-8 kids in each of 2 separate classrooms each week
 - Younger cohort of children make up bulk of attendees
- What's in store for 2024?:
- Great attendance after New Years. Several new families have been coming and returning. Many families are sporadic in attendance.
 - Jodi regularly advises families of important congregational events, via email
 - Feb 18th – Family multi-gen service
 - Would like to have a weeklong summer children's group with social justice focus. Will be advertised to the broader community
 - Amy as a parent is very happy with RE provision
 - Many children are one off attendees, coming with relatives
 - Ideal occupancy is 8-10 children and 8-10 youth in both groups. 2 staff or volunteers / group is recommended ratio of kids to teachers / volunteers
 - Once/month on a Friday evening there is a youth group that accommodates 7-10 individuals.
 - How do we market the excellent existing RE resources to get more kids involved
 - Jodi is looking for April/May to run a junior high OWL program (using adapted spirit play curriculum)
 - Curriculum being used are typically customized and adapted
 - April: Looking to hold mentorship partnering program kids with long time or eager members

5. Planning to roll out Small-groups Covenants [Note 6]

Our small groups are often popular with congregants with varying views, but also non-congregants. It's important that everyone is welcomed, and that we present ourselves as a covenanting faith. Covenants should be non-onerous and reviewed and rolled out to all groups, even if just briefly, each time a congregational group/team/committee meets. Become inherently welcoming to all new attendees. Existing congregational relational covenants are on our website.

Perhaps a Spire article (due in February).

Perhaps requires some internal guidance/coordination.

8. Our Board Covenant [Note 7]

Speaking of which.... Let's revisit how we as leaders work together as a Board, including at Board meetings.

[Action item] Have Mary Ella and Carmen to review covenant documents provided on their own and provide updates at next board meeting

Need to ensure we have a covenant going forward. Chuck can provide the CUCs covenant as a sample.

6. Ministers Review [Chuck]

Chuck is leading Ministers Review team, which should include the President and **one other Board member**, and a congregant identified by the Minister. **To decide** which other Board member. Chuck and Mary Ella will act as Board Members on the review team, alongside Brent

[Action Item] All Board members are encouraged to provide feedback to Chuck. The review period is for the year ending August 1, 2023.

7. Closing

- m. Feedback from Process monitor – mostly kept on track. Concern regarding amount of information being approved in the consent agenda and reviewed each board meeting.
- n. Closing reading
- o. Adjournment 9:10 PM