

Board Meeting Minutes

Our mission is to “Kindle the light within and inspire courage to nurture the web of life and to create a just and compassionate world.”

Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Time: 7 pm - 9 pm

Main Goal: To prepare (budget, etc.) for Fall Congregational Meeting

Attending: Brent Nicolle, Lisa Sharp, Mary Ella Keblusek, Amy Berube, Phil Nagy, Carl Sonnen, David Chernushenko, Caycee Price, Rev Eric Meter, Jen Brennan, Michelle Jackson

1. Call to Order - we have all of the board members in attendance

2. Consent Agenda

2.1 Motion to:

- *Accept Agenda*

- *Approve BOD Minutes for June 15, 2022*

- *Approve BOD Minutes for August 17, 2022*

- *Approve Membership Application of Philippe Duport*

Philippe Duport immigrated with his family from France in 1979. His work was related to studying the effects of nuclear exposure on humans and animals. When Philippe’s wife died last year, his daughter Christine Switzer, a member of our congregation, suggested that he might find community with us. He enjoys attending Sunday services and the Friday Men’s Breakfast group. He understands our principles and intends to make a financial pledge.

- *Approve Appointment of Eric Ranger to Finance Committee*

Eric Ranger, though not currently a FirstU member, was a long-standing member of FirstU and served as a Board Member for several years. He and his wife Lisa Sharp have 7 children and 6 grandchildren. According to the Governance Manual, members of Finance are appointed by the Board for a 3-year term; the Manual does not state that appointees be members of the Congregation.

- *Approve Kindred Grant Application*

Kindred Credit Union (of Kitchener ON) is giving away five \$5,000 grants to help churches address community food security and safe and affordable housing. Submissions by 60-second social-media video or by a written story; all entries are licensed to Kindred for their future use. Only Ontario churches are eligible; deadline is Oct 31.

<https://www.bankingwithpurpose.ca/church-builder-25/>

Jen Brennan forwarded suggestion to Terry Kimmel, who agreed to provide a submission upon board approval.

- *Acknowledge updated Letter of Intent for Master Concept Plan*

There were minor adjustments to the letter of intent to several clauses proposed by Theia (a proposed partner). It was approved by the executive committee and then approved to be board.

- Acknowledge Exec approval of Ajashki applying for funding from Trillium Mutual's ROOTS Community fund

The Ajashki project has prepared an application for \$15K in grant funding from the ROOTS Community Fund, which is sponsored by the Trillium Mutual Insurance Company. The key people who developed the application are Sharen Bowen and Jan Andrews. This is the website for the fund: <https://trilliummutual.com/roots-community-fund/> Sharen has been doing significant relationship-building with the decision-making committee, including 'coaching conversations' in late July with two of the decision makers (Natasha and Tami) to ensure that the Ajashki project was a good fit for their funding goals.

Note that the application focuses on the specific Roots Community Fund priority of 'Mental Wellness'. This was approved by the executive committee.

- Acknowledge Exec approval of PPDDA to Nature Canada

Nature Canada sought support from its program beneficiaries (which include Ajashki) for renewal of Federal funding to support its youth employment program Work to Grow. As a PPDDA request this was approved by the President, the Minister and minimum one other board member (Carl, Phil, Caycee, Lisa), about August 15th. "Our support" involved submitting a web-form and providing our logo to Nature Canada, done August 25th by Brent.

Moved by: David Seconded by: Mary Ella , Passed w Lisa abstain

2.2 Capturing for Minutes:

A motion from Board Orientation June 21:

Approval of the Heat Pump

Motion: to approve the purchase and installation of the heat pump up to \$35000 subject to receipt of a quote. The funds will come from: \$17000 from spiritual home, \$4500 Environmental action group, and the balance of the funds from Maintenance Reserve Fund.

Moved by: Phil, seconded by: David. Carried.

3. Minister's Report [Rev. Eric] appendix 1

4. President's Report [Brent]

- a. The board held its fall retreat on August 24th. One of the actions out of the Retreat was to create a **Congregational Events Planning calendar**, to plan our Internal and External activities. Just created now; ask me for editor access.
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13c-V3Vn8VsN6z9J_qxgZ_dfibDWJ-y0oAkkSEnmmNc/edit#gid=0
- b. Aug 19, Lisa and Brent met with Terry Carter of Carters Law to discuss (Q1) advice on updating charitable status, and (Q2) issues with land-transfers as a charity. Note: CRA allows land-transfer to "qualified donees". Thanks to **Terry** (asking RCGT) and to **Michelle** (asking CRA) and getting a better answer on land-transfers. Very recent legislation (C-19) is making it easier for charities to donate to non-charities with aligned purposes (eg OAHS). RCGT says we can ask CRA for an early ruling on rental income to prevent any threat to our charitable status.

- c. Our Pride Week events (Aug 21-28) a success despite the technical hiccups: Brent learned to be a projectionist for Pride Film Night, which attracted 9 non-congregants. Then we had a great multi-gen showing for the Pride Parade. Lessons were learned on Film broadcast rights; we have various options for future film nights if we choose to do so.
- d. Sept 14: UH hosted an LRT Q&A for its residents and others on campus. Unfortunately, the event was miscommunicated to FirstU and it looked like we were a no-show. Brent taking action on future communications like this with UH.
- e. Sept 15: Terry and Brent continued conversation with Vice+Hunter on Cleary Detour compensation. Kiewit/City is initially offering in-kind compensation (no cash). Negotiations continue.
- f. Sept 15: Terry and I met with Rodney Wilts from Theia re recent Ottawa bylaw change for Parkland Dedication. Rodney recommends filing an appeal with Gowlings.

5. Vice-President's Report [Mary Ella]

Mary Ella mentioned some refinements to Board Announcements.

6. COVID Task Force Report [Amy]

Continuing on with the current guidelines put in place in June.

- 75% capacity of spaces, masking in service, singing with masks will continue
- The task force feels like we are currently at the stage of mitigating risk, but that things need to continue normally but as safely as possible.
- Rev Eric's installation October 23rd, to go ahead. Will be an online event to reduce numbers in sanctuary and to allow for fuller participation, and potentially having an RSVP and limit numbers if illness rates are too high. Reception to be decided closer to the date.

Fall fair proposal highlights:

- limit numbers of people in the building by having controlled access
- Have things that have been in smaller rooms (like jewelery) in a large room to reduce crowding. Some rooms would be split up. There would be on trying on of clothing. Silent auction items would be more curated and spread out.
- Focus on higher cost items, christmas items, gift giving etc (silent auction, jewelry, gift shop, timeless treasures clothing, books, childrens, music, linens etc)
- Other areas to be on hiatus for the moment like large items, appliances, electronics etc
- Food be take out only

As a committee, we felt that this was likely sustainable given current covid numbers. We feel that from a safety perspective these ideas would likely lead to a safer event.

7. Social Justice Action Network (SJAN) Report [Lisa]

- Climate Strike March and Rally - Sept 23rd
- EAG is starting a small sub group to focus on emergency preparedness
- Rev Eric confirmed that SJAN is still permitted to make a 3 minute announcement to promote its upcoming events the second Sunday of each month

- TRAG supporting the Sept 25th Sunday service for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Justin Marchand Guest Speaker
- Ajashki and JEAG planning Harvest Sunday Service, Oct 9th - including launch of Chew on This! Campaign followed by ceremony and light refreshments. Rally re: Food Security - Oct 17th
- we continue to receive refugee sponsorship requests; Eva and Kathy will co-lead the Refugee Group and vet requests (Refugee sub-group to be under Justice Equity Action Group)
- 35 people marched with First U for Pride March including 10 children/youth; some new people attended the Pride film night
- Widening the Circle - October 4th - Leadership Council Event - all members invited to anti-racism training.
- Mental Health Support and Action Group - will have a table at WOW Festival - Sept 16th 11-4 at City Hall. (WOW = working on wellness)
- Mental Health First Aid course starting Sept 29th (two Saturdays)
- SJAN - discussion of workplans for 2023 - to focus on Strategic Plan, Green Sanctuary, working with community partners

8. Finance

8.1 Motion on Budget Approval

Moved that: the Board approve the proposed 2023 operations budget and that the board seek congregational approval at the Fall Congregational Meeting.

Please note that the financial documents are available on our website with our board minutes. \$228 K operational deficit, \$146 K deficit after planned transfers from legacy fund.

Moved by: Phil, Seconded by: Carl, Carried

9. Fall Congregational Meeting details

9.1 Logistics: When and How

WHEN: Sun Nov 27th

HOW: In-person, with a live stream option. Zoom if there is a lockdown.

9.2 Nominating Committee

It was requested for board members to start thinking about new members. On behalf of the Congregation, the Board seeks two additions to the Nominating Committee to replace Sharmila Khare and Joe Connor.

-Proposed person of Phyllis ... any other suggestions please send to Brent.

9.3 Whether to have a separate update on Campus Development

Proposed having a town hall to explain the outcome of the charette, with a separate town hall for Unitarian House. Having it in conjunction with the FCM seems unlikely.

10. Closing

Feedback from Process Monitor [TBD]

Closing Reading [Phil]

Adjournment

Appendix 1

Minister's Report to the Board of Directors of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

September 2022

Well, the congregation's program year has begun, and it promises to be more than a full one.

First, last Sunday we began welcoming younger children back into worship hall, and beginning our worship services with singing together rather than listening to a prelude. In my experience, this way of things brings a bit more energy into the room.

Speaking of music, I trust you know that our music director, Jennifer Berntson, is pregnant. She and her husband Shawn are expecting their second child in January. Jenn's maternity leave will begin on December 12. Dierdre Kellerman has agreed to provide her musical talents for Christmas Eve, and more detailed plans are being worked out. I expect Jenn's leave to last twelve months, and that her return will coincide with Christmas season of 2023. With the exception that she has agreed to come back and lead choral music for the CUC Symposium in May 2022.

Looking not so far into the future, the congregation will formally install me as its lead minister on Sunday afternoon, October 23. Email invitations for those in our community will be arriving soon. I'll be talking more about the ceremony during my sermon on Sept 18. Specifically, I'll be inviting folks to let me know what they'd like to have included in the covenant the congregation and I make to one another during the ceremony. If you are not going to be able to make it, I'm happy to send you both my remarks and two sample scripts from which we're taking inspiration.

Also, last Sunday I let the congregation know that Rev. Ellen Bell is in hospital. After being admitted on Sept 2nd, she remains at Queensway Carleton under observation for memory issues. I've visited with Ellen there twice in the last two weeks, and plan on seeing her again soon. Still, I know she'd appreciate other visitors as well. One thing she has made clear is that she feels it is time to step back from her pastoral duties to First U. I've begun talking with Alexandra Devine, Maryan O'Hagan and others to flush out how we can best meet the pastoral needs of the congregation in the weeks and months to come.

Lastly, my thanks to Maury Prevost, Lisa Sharp and others for beginning the work of organizing for the CUC Symposium.

With Cleary Avenue soon to be diverted and a campus master plan in development, this is a heady time. Disruption and anxiety await, but so do expectation and promise. Let's help one another remember that.

In shared faith,
Rev. Eric Meter