

Board Meeting Minutes - November 17th 2021

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."

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

Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Minister's report

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to:

- Approve previous meeting minutes for October meeting.
- Accept Agenda for this meeting.
- Approve membership of Mary Bamford

Mary moved to Chelsea in 2020 and found out about the congregation online. She identifies with the values of Unitarianism and welcomes the opportunity to be part of a community where she can grow spiritually and feels she can speak up. She is currently participating in one of the Braiding Sweet Grass chalice groups. She has already pledged.

Moved by: Lisa Seconded by: Amy Carried

3. MINISTER'S REPORT

Appendix 1

4. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Guy provided a summary and answered questions, the governance manual is available upon request.

Motion: to accept the updated Governance Manual and revised Organizational Chart

Moved by: Brent Seconded by: Andrew Carried

5. COVID TASK FORCE- Nov 4th

COVID Task Force recommendations:

1) Increase capacities (from 25%) to 50% for Worship Hall, Fellowship Hall, and generally for all room bookings/rentals. Ontario allows capacities at 100% for screened, vaccinated, masked spaces but FirstU is being more cautious. Attendees can self-govern their space between others; arms-length is recommended; 6-foot ribbons will remain available if desired.

2) In-person Indoor Fellowship after Sunday Service. Congregants may chat with each other Indoors after service, including in Fellowship Hall. Note: no beverages or snacks will be provided/permited. We are hoping this will only be for about a half-hour after service.

3) Permissions for Small groups to allow indoor eating (eg Friday Men's Breakfast). As with all events, participants will be vaccinated, recorded for contact-tracing, and masked when not eating. Participants must be seated and spaced 6 feet apart while eating. Room bookings will be buffered to allow aerosols to disperse afterward. We will be monitoring and adjusting guidance going forward.

4) Concert/rites bookings will need to include vaccination screening. FirstU will provide staff or volunteers to handle vaccination screening at the door, and provide a surcharge accordingly.

5) Small impromptu audiences for choir recordings are permitted. Audiences must still be screened and significantly distanced from the singers (who would appreciate an audience). This is an extra activity for the choir director so audiences will be very limited.

Motion: to accept the recommendations of the COVID Task Force from Nov 4th.

Moved by: Brent Seconded by: Amy Carried

2. Status and next steps for reopening: The task force needs to ensure sufficient time is given to the board to approve task force recommendations before they are implemented.

6. UPCOMING ACTION ITEMS

A. Planning next steps for Eighth Principle

The CUC has a vote coming up that will hold a vote to implement an eighth principle that will address systematic racism. First U will then need to hold a vote to approve the use of the eighth principle in our own congregation. We will also need to also hold or make changes to the following:

- Hold Town Hall / Education series in 2022?
- Revise Bylaws at next AGM
- Update in-sanctuary signage and website

B. Strategic Plan Task Force

What does Board need to work on (when/how)?

- G2.O4. Expand membership
- G2.O5 Increase young adult participation
- G4.O15 Pursue vision of campus development
- G4.O17 Pursue affordable housing project
- G5.O18 Solidify finances
- G5.O19 Keep staff supported and motivated

Motion to accept the strategic plan as presented to be voted on at the fall congregational meeting.

Moved by: Lisa Seconded by: Caycee Carried

7. CAMPUS PLANNING REPORT

1. Feasibility Study update: board members are invited to a preview with CAHDCO on December 2nd at 7pm.

2. Unitarian House rent negotiation: there is a small group who will be negotiating an increase in the length of the lease and to have UH begin paying rent.

8. FALL CONGREGATION MEETING

Last minute preparation, board members are asked to check their email over the next few days for their part in the meeting.

Note: We will have some “dry-run” questions for the congregation at the Fall Congregational Meeting to practice voting, and we can use this information for gathering useful information.

eg: “Would you come to an in-person Annual General Meeting in the Spring?”

9. Information Items

A. The Executive Committee met Wednesday November 10th to discuss a few things, including:

1. Sunday service start time is currently 10 am on a temporary basis to be revisited in January. Signage and website information is hopefully but not necessarily consistent, so please be accommodating to newcomers who may not be familiar with the temporary schedule.
 2. We discussed and decided against charging an overhead fee on third-party fundraising.
 3. Recent significant donation was requested to be re-given as stocks not cash.
- Approved

B. Upcoming meetings:

1. Fall Congregational Meeting: Sun Nov 21, 2:30pm-4:30pm
2. CUC 8th Principle Special Meeting: Sat Nov 27, 12pm-2:30pm
3. Cahdco Feasibility Study Preview (CPC+Board): Thu Dec 2 7pm
4. CUC Startup Workshop with Linda Thomson: Sat Dec 4th, 10-12pm
5. Next regular Board Meeting: Wed Jan 19, 2022 7pm.
(There is no regular board meeting in December.)

C. Upcoming board announcements roster:

Nov 21	David
Nov 28	Lisa
Dec 5	Phil
Dec 12	Amy
Dec 19	Andrew
Dec 26	Brent
Jan 2	Caycee

11. CLOSING Adjournment

Appendix 1

Minister’s Report to the Board of Directors of the
First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa
November 2021

This may be less of a narrative report than usual. For those of you who may not know, my wife Ann called me out of the tail end of the Board Exec meeting last week to ask me to take her to the Emergency Department. Long story short, it looks like she passed a gallstone. In the process her liver took a hit, but after five days in the hospital, seems to be slowly restoring itself now. We'll know more at a follow up visit in a week and a half.

While Ann is generally private about her health, we've both been touched by the support shown us by members of FirstU. Thank you all.

Moving on, in the next few days I'll be reaching out to several community members to serve on an advisory team for me. Years ago the denomination recommended Committees on Ministry of three or so members to work closely with the lead minister in providing support and discernment. Especially as I adjust to Canadian customs, this group will be of great value to my ministry with you.

Neo and I are working on two possible workshops for RE volunteers and parents of children in our program. The first is on neurodiversity and the second on parenting in general.

The work of the Covid-19 Task Force continues as requests for in-person activities increase.

I am looking forward to my first Annual Meeting with you this Sunday. I've been more than impressed with all the work Michelle and Phil, with support from others, have been doing on the budget. This is never an exact science. A budget is a plan. And they have prepared a detailed plan for us. I hope you'll join me in showing them our gratitude for all their hard work.

Again, Rev. Linda Thomson from the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) will join us for a StartUp workshop on Saturday, December 4 from 10am to 12pm via Zoom. I hope you will be able to participate. The workshop is designed to clarify, if not fine tune, how we are accountable to one another and for what.

All the best,

Rev. Eric Meter