

First Congregational Church of Woodstock
MINUTES of the first GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Wednesday Feb. 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. (in person)

In attendance: Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, Jim Nowak (Moderator), Bruce Staehle (Assistant Moderator), Suzanne Cimochoowski (Fiscal Business Lay Leader), Charles Bottieri (Facilities Lay Leader), Jennifer Duggan, Tom Duggan (Treasurer), Ginny Moylan, Laura Boies (Clerk)

Welcome and Opening Devotion

- Moderator Jim Nowak opened the meeting at 7:08 pm.
- Rev. Kevin started the meeting by facilitating a sharing exercise for this new group.
- Rev Kevin shared an opening devotion from Psalms of Praise.

Governing Board Role, Questions, Clarifications

- Clarification that the clerk is not a member of the Governing Board, thus does not have a vote.
- The Governing Board's role is expected to evolve. As the new teams get established the GB can set policy and empower the various teams to make their own decisions.
- Upcoming Ministry Fair (this Sunday) will include operational pieces as well as the four defined ministry areas.

Treasurer's Report (Tom D)

- Please see the Treasurer's Report for details.
- The Treasurer's Report will continue to be posted monthly prior to GB meetings the same as it was for Council meetings, and will maintain transparency to the Congregation.
- Suzanne, as leader of finance and Charles as leader of facilities will review the financial reports with Tom to discover issues that especially need GB input.
- The high level report will be reviewed at Governing Board meetings. The report is to include issues that the GB may need to address.
- The GB will consider such things as:
 - Are there any areas of risk?
 - Are expenses too high?
 - Are there policy issues that need to be addressed?

Guiding Principles and Expectations of Team

- We expect to follow the Four Phases of Team Work defined as:
 - Forming: organizing the group.
 - Storming: when conflict arises. (For example: we've agreed to expectations as a group but individuals are still struggling or we're still operating in old ways.)
 - Norming: when things start to settle out and group norms are established.
 - Performing: where the actual work takes place, when we've worked out the process, we've established how we work and communicate, and we understand the boundaries of the team.
- Creating and clarifying explicit agreements as a team helps us get through the "storming" and move to the "norming" and "performing".
- It's understood at this point that we are still establishing our roles and expectations.
- The Ministry Fair this Sunday may help clarify areas of interest within the congregation and in turn clarify the work of the Governing Board. Note that this will be a process that will be

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iterative as we continue to grow.

- Rev. Kevin will organize materials regarding our Guiding Principles and upload to the Google Drive for our review prior to the next meeting. Jen D will add information on our Core Values from the Vision & Values work. **GB members will review/comment/add/edit/modify.**

Internal Communications

- Everyone is encouraged to have an "@firstchurchwoodstock.org" email address. It is not required but will make things easier.
- For emails being sent to the entire group simply send to GoverningBoard@firstchurchwoodstock.org.
 - GB@firstchurchwoodstock.org is used to send messages *from* the Governing Board. Individual members will generally not use this.
- Email accounts such as moderator@firstchurchwoodstock.org and clerk@firstchurchwoodstock.org and documents saved in their drives will be passed to future officers so that these records will be preserved by the church.
- Initially, communications from members of the congregation should be addressed to moderator@firstchurchwoodstock.org. The moderator can then redirect questions/information to the appropriate team or leader. Ultimately we hope communications will go directly to leaders of specific teams that relate to the issue at hand.

Bylaws Review, Prioritize Policies/Areas

- Bruce S shared three documents:
 - the FCCW Governance Model,
 - a Draft of the Governing Board Tasks and Responsibilities,
 - a list of the Responsibilities for the GB during the Interim/Transitional Period. This was created by combining the duties of the Council and the Trustees, plus one from the Deacons.
- **Members will review the list of responsibilities (found in the Google Drive) and suggest priorities, assignments, or where they might be redirected if appropriate, and organize areas of focus. We will discuss at next meeting.**

Communication with Congregation

- Goal of Transparency.
- We will post meeting minutes as we did in the past with Council.
- Plan "Town Hall" type meetings/2nd Hours regularly (perhaps quarterly) to give a brief overview and get feedback in an open forum.
 - First such meeting is planned for April 23rd after the Sunday service.
- Need to create a process for people to deal with any concerns about the church.
 - Any issues/concerns should first be addressed to the team/ministry area that most closely relates to that matter. If it is unclear where the issue should be handled (especially in this initial period) it can be sent to the Moderator who will help determine which ministry area/team should respond. If an issue ultimately needs to be brought to the Governing Board, it may be added to the GB meeting agenda.
- Information for the congregation will be shared through the weekly emails, the Sunday bulletins and the Governing Board page on our website.

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Ministry Area Updates

- See Ministry Areas Update posted by Rev. Kevin in the GB shared drive
- Ministry Fair set for this Sunday
 - Not just for ministry teams but anyone who has opportunities can have a booth.
 - Handout will include a map of the different booths in Harrison Hall.
 - There will be some interactive activities.
- This will help better define the congregants' areas of interest which will help us define our areas of ministry.

Sunday Offering Counting Schedule

- Need to update the Counting Team. Previously, half of the Counting team was made up of Trustees. Currently there are 4 members on the counting team and no leader.
- Sundays are covered through March at this point.
- Add sign up at the Ministry Fair this Sunday.
- Suzanne will draft a schedule.
- The Counting Team will probably fall under the purview of the Finance Lay Leader.

Future Governing Board Meetings

- Meetings will be held monthly on the 2nd Wednesday.
- In-person is preferred over virtual meetings at this time.
- Next meeting will be Mar. 8th @ 7 pm.

Commented [1]: It does fall under the Finance

Commented [2]: Suggest: Publish meeting notes and agenda within 1 week before and after meetings

Meeting Adjourned @ 9:23 pm

Scribe: Laura Boies