

First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist Policy

Policy Title: Board Meetings

Congregation Effective Date: Oct 2017

Policy Number: 2.2

Revisions: New

Purpose: To establish relations including communication, between the Board and the members of the FPBUU

Board Review: September 2017

Congregations' Acceptance: October 2017

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes the procedures/standards for relations and communications between the Board and the members of the FPBUU Congregation.

The Board will hold open meetings so FPBUU members can share in important decision making. The Board will also communicate Board decisions with the Congregation through a written "Board News" bulletin and online through its web site, weekly, quarterly and annual electronic media. The Board may also enter into an executive session to discuss confidential personnel and legal matters.

PROCEDURES

1. At the beginning of each Board meeting time will be allotted for members of the congregation to come before the Board to make comments or questions.
2. A "Board News" bulletin board shall be placed in a visible spot in the Parish Room or the hallway near the other bulletin boards. The following information may be posted on the bulletin board and / or available on the FPBUU web site:
 - a. Photos, of and contact information for, all Board members along with an invitation for members to contact the Board president with their ideas and concerns.
 - b. A synthesis of the most recent Board meeting will be written up for the weekly Angle and, additionally, posted on the Board bulletin board within 2 weeks of the meeting date.

c. A copy of the upcoming meeting agenda will be posted on the bulletin board the Sunday before the meeting.

d. An invitation to attend Board meetings.

e. Approved minutes will be posted on the web site under the governance tab within 2 weeks after they are approved. Approved board policies that have been reviewed by the congregation will also be posted.

f. Other items deemed appropriate by the Board.

3. When a member or members of the community bring proposals or concerns to the Board that require further study, a written response by the Board will be made to the initiating member(s).

4. The Board may enter into executive session only in accordance with the following procedures:

a. To Enter to Executive Session

i. A Board quorum must be present;

ii. A motion to enter the Executive Session shall state the reason(s) for the session;

iii. The motion shall be made, seconded, and approved by a simple majority vote of those present.

b. The reason(s) stated in the motion shall be the only issue(s) to be discussed during the executive session. If one or more related but separate issue(s) result from the original issue(s), then the Board must vote to discuss the issue(s) by a majority vote to continue the executive session.

c. Board members and others whom the board invites as needed for the purposes of the session shall be the only persons entitled to attend the executive session.

d. No votes or binding decisions will be made in an executive session, unless the nature of the issue is such that it must remain confidential until fully resolved.

e. Minutes of the executive session:

- i. If the session was an informal discussion, the general substance of the session shall be noted and read out in the regular minutes.
 - ii. If the session contributes to a board decision about a difficult or important issue (legal, personnel, etc.) minutes will be taken and marked as “**Confidential**”. The confidential minutes will be kept in a confidential file with access to the Board Trustees and those who the Board designates to have access.
 - iii. In general, any minutes taken are to be shared only with participants in the meeting.
 - iv. Such minutes and any other confidential documents shall be clearly marked as such and maintained by the Board Chair or Executives as applicable.
- f. Minutes of the open Board meeting of which the executive session is a part will reflect:
- i. The details of the motion and vote to enter into the executive session;
 - ii. The time the Board began and ended the executive session;
 - iii. Any report out from the Board president (or acting Board president) of the executive session;
 - iv. Decisions to be made as a result of the executive session discussion shall be formalized in the open Board meeting with a motion that is properly made, seconded, and voted upon.
- g. Executive sessions may be held to manage the following:
- i. Selection of members to fill Board or Committee vacancies;
 - ii. Human resource issues, including evaluations, compensation, and disciplinary issues;
 - iii. Legal issues
 - iv. Any other issues that arise requiring confidential discussion by the Board.
5. Voting by email - Under special circumstances, the Board may be required to vote on a specific issue by email. In such an event, a quorum of Board member responses will be required to arrive at a decision.

GUIDELINES

1. Unless the minister or ministers are required to attend an executive session, the minister or ministers will be excused from executive sessions as a normal matter of course of action.
2. When issues arise that require tasks beyond Board members' available time or special skills or knowledge, the Board will be mindful of the possibility of appealing to the church community for assistance in order to insure the best outcome and as a way of inviting greater numbers of church members to become involved in the operation of the church.
3. The board will seek congregational input when considering Board decisions that would create a major departure from current practices.
4. The Board shall consider holding some meetings during the day to accommodate those who want to attend Board meetings but do not drive at night.
5. Before any vote by the Board, comments and opinions from any congregants present will be solicited.

STANDARDS

“TBD”

DEFINITIONS

1. Executive Sessions are exclusive to Board members but may invite people. The core functions of the executive functions are to assure confidentiality, create a mechanism for board independence and oversight, and enhance relationships among board members. While such sessions seem contrary to the expected openness and transparency of the Board these sessions provide a mechanism to respond to confidential issues.