

2024.05.07 (May) Committee of the Whole (LC) All Hands Meeting Agenda/Minutes

Minutes from previous meetings. [Ministry Meeting Minutes Archive](#)

[Join Zoom Meeting](#); Meeting ID: 825 8167 0394; Passcode: 487224; By phone: 309.205.3325

In attendance: Wendy Miller Olapade, Terri Bracy, Christy Miller, Sue D'Arcy Fuller, Paul Roberts, Ben & Becky, Erin Sennott, Paul Sennott

1. **Recruit Meeting Clerk** - Terri Bracy
2. **Opening Circle and Prayer** - Rev. Wendy - Reading & Reflections
3. **Review Agenda** - ask for additions or any change to priorities (order of agenda); none
4. **Joint Process with Don Remick re the Hillside Partnership**
 - a. Current Team: Andrew Hill, Branwen Cook, Sue D'Arcy, Paul Roberts, Terri Bracy, Liz Douglass, Erin Sennott -
 - i. Andrew discerning his continued connection but agreed to attend the last session while in discernment. Holding in the meantime until he comes to a decision.
 - b. Feedback about the second joint meeting
 - i. Paul - did we get notes from the meeting? Will check with Don
 - ii. Terri - seems like more history than I cared about, but could see the value of going over it. Felt more similarities than differences, found that surprising, because the way we have come together since covid shows us that so not sure why I was surprised, felt others participated, positive experience, did not feel like it moves the conversation forward. Not that we didn't need it, didn't feel like i got to know others better, so that did not progress either. Want more of that.
 - iii. Paul - talk about history established that most were not members for long time, not the heritage of this was my grandfather's church and this is the way we always do things, almost everyone in past decade, showed a freedom cat. Apart from heritage of ownership, also had feeling that hillside in a very different place than Sanctuary about proceeding... Terri agrees.
 - iv. Sue D'Arcy - do you think they are not interested in merging?
 - v. Paul it is not obvious to him that they think we are bringing something to the table and that it would enrich them; Terri agrees.
 - vi. Terri - it feels like they don't have any expectation that they need or want to make any changes. As long as we are on board with being absorbed. It does not yet feel like a partnership.
 - vii. Paul asks Wendy - Where things are from your perspective. Not sure they attribute current conditions to the partnership. Growth of 20 some new people between age of 25-40 who are participating in the life of the church. Engaged in everything that happens. The feedback is that the history session was not

engaging. They want to get to the above the green line questions. It does feel like a power imbalance. We have already agreed to the non-negotiables as defined by Tom before we started. Released members who brought conflict, agreed to a balanced budget, spending no more than 5% of three year average (revenue from endowment), Hillside Brand and Worship model/Tom authority over worship/Sanctuary brand is released. Co-pastorate is combined as discussed previously with portfolio in the previous document with compensation equity. This needs to be negotiated. Note that 5% of our assets (approx 120K) covers WMO compensation.

- viii. Christy - HOA - We should be able to say, that our emphasis is on circle and arts, and justice, so we are bringing this asset, and these are our non-negotiables... ie: maintain these programs and this support relationship with our pastor. We did a lot of hard work to define who we are and what we bring, how we are responding to God's call, but now we aren't leading with that and making that a firm negotiating point. It is what we stand for. We need to be better and express our gifts and strengths
- ix. Terri - important to remember that there are 20 or so new people because of the model that happens now. We are in a Dynamic situation... that needs to be considered and acknowledged in the process.
- x. Erin - feeling pissy due to a bad day; but from the discussion with Don, really appreciated his models using Red, Blue, and Purple markers to distinguish a new joint way of being. I am all for that. If Hillside is only willing to absorb, and doesn't want to become purple... then I am not in support of this.
- xi. Becky - already feels purple! Surprised by this because she feels like we are all already in the ministries!!
- xii. Wendy - They love their church and their pastor and need some time and space to come along. I may not be standing up for Sanctuary because she is afraid of it failing. We need to reset our expectations for how long this will take. And think about alternative paths for now. We could certainly reimagine ourselves doing what we are doing without an official merger.
- xiii. Christy - experience in hiring and interviews: I trust my gut - what are your impressions? Does this person want this? Hillside asking for a separate meeting, hmmm... what does that say? Do they really want this or it is only Tom that is saying yes?
- xiv. Erin - business development hat, separate confidential meeting suggests "concerns" getting an icky vibes; we have been very transparent, identified our skeletons, but that is not mutual.
- xv. Ben - not part of negotiating team, wonders if there is any hesitancy or worry about their mission projects? We aren't threatening (we love) their mission stuff, but we are bringing other engagement things... we have the experience of a community needs assessment beyond the typical borders of a community

church, I don't think we should feel desperate for a merger. It becomes a takeover. We get married because we want to. Can we take another year to hone and edit what we do - reduce spending, and wonder if there is another direction for us to take?

- xvi. Terri - affirm everything I heard, I don't have a problem with them wanting to do more ground work with Don, it is clear we are more ready. But, Christy's gut questions about whether they want this really rings true, sanctuary is leaning in and hillside is not; they are setting up boundaries rather than openings. It isn't up to us to just become what they need; agree to everything. We are not desperate.
 - xvii. Paul - agrees with most everything. Thought it was two churches that had serious challenges, that neither was long term, sustainable as is. Blend strengths and amplify. Not sure what they see as their future.
 - xviii. Christy - like home court advantage - they have home court advantage because of their church model and the sanctuary space. We can think about other opportunities. We came to them cap in hand and they took the home advantage. They do not think they have any need. We have taught them that when we stipulated to all their non negotiables.
 - xix. Erin - the things we bring are so different! Conversation, hearing what others had to bring.
 - xx. Social EQ - creating purple. We think that is so cool.... What would it look like if we could combine. We all know what it feels like to be wanted. Belonging!! We want to belong to the new purple entity. We do not want to become red.
- c. Hillside is Meeting with Don separately.
 - d. Does Sanctuary see the benefit of the same?
 - e. Presume there will be a next joint team meeting to follow
 - f. Set expectations for communication from this process to the wider congregation
 - g. Anything else about this process right now? Team determined to:
 - i. Taking the pressure off, we are going to give Hillside space to figure themselves out, and work to get our own juju back. The doors are open, we will keep working for, looking for alliances and partnerships, work virtually and in public spaces, don't want to accept an offer we don't love and that does not affirm our gifts and graces, we can wait another year and consider what else God wants from us... Hold visioning meeting to talk further about what the Ministry Plan is for this year, and then build a budget and path to release 458 high street, streamline budget, etc. build a plan for another year as Sanctuary alone.
 - ii. Sign of hope, open mic program last Saturday night, young adults sharing. We shared the lamMigration experience. And feedback was really encouraging. learned a lot about people.
 - iii. If not purple, we don't want to be blue - I would rather stay red!

5. About the Moderator Position: Need a leader for the Joint Process team (Tabled).

6. Governance Schedule

- a. Wendy: Vacation 5/24 through July 31.
- b. Action regards the Annual Visioning Meeting ([per bylaws](#), Article IV. Meetings of the Governing Body to take place between March and June)
 - i. See notes above, Wendy will send doodle poll to establish a date for Visioning Meeting (between now and end of May (need two weeks for call to meeting) to develop mission and ministry plan and budget decisions about the next year taking into account the delay in consolidation/institutional merger conversation. Determine how to proceed as Sanctuary in 2024/25.
- c. Action regards Annual Business Meeting
 - i. **Scheduled for June 23rd** at 1:00 - 2:30 pm
 - ii. TBD - [in-person location or online](#) - tbd

7. Business Reports

- a. LC/COM Meeting Minutes:
 - i. [2023.02.07 Meeting Minutes](#)
 - ii. [2024.03.06 Meeting Minutes](#)
 - iii. [2024.04.03 Meeting Minutes](#)
 - iv. Call for Motion Erin & Second Becky to approve the February 07, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. Vote: Approved
 - v. Call for Motion Terri & Second Christy to approve the March 06, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. Vote: Approved
 - vi. Call for Motion Ben & Second Terri to approve the April 03, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting minutes. Vote: Approved
- b. Treasurer's Report
 - i. [2024.05.07 Budget Versus Actuals](#)
 - ii. Final FY 2023 Reconciliation & Audit of Books has been engaged.
 - [Allison Hughan](#); allisonbottomley@yahoo.com; 508.560.0674
- c. Trustees Report - Trustees have proposed some modest changes to our investment strategy; Paul will implement this week.

8. Old Business / Action Items (previously tabled)

- a. Stewardship Campaign(s) - current giving is lower than in previous years
- b. Church Insurance Renewal (pending action - Aaron Olapade)
- c. Parsonage Energy (pending action - Aaron Olapade)

9. New Business

10. Ministry Updates / Reports

- a. Worship & Music Plans
 - i. Seeking Substitutes (May & June)/Replacements (September) for Stephanie and Luke
 - ii. Schedule:
 - 5/12 - Wendy Away
 - Jeremiah: They Will Be My People (11 weeks; 5/19 - 7/28)
 - 5/26 - Wendy Out for Carlos Ordination - Wellesley Village

- 6/02 - Wendy Out Preaching/Presenting - North Andover
 - 6/19 - Youth Sunday
 - 6/30 - 7/28 - Wendy Vacation
 - 8/4, 11 - Tom Vacation
 - 9/8 - Rally Sunday
- b. Arts and Inspiration/Circles - pending programming, planning and partnerships:
- i. Soul Collage - Postponed due to low registration
 - ii. Art & Soul Circle - Medford Arts Collaborative
 - May 17 - [More than Acquaintances](#) with Michael Talbot
 - July TBD - [And Then There Was Light](#) with Bernadette May Dineen
 - iii. Pursue Partnership w/ Library (tbd)
 - iv. Plan for Faith and Film beginning in the fall
 - v. Interest Survey to engage the newer members of combined worshipping community
- c. Socials and Fun - Community Meals:
- i. April 27 - Open Mike Event (20 participants - great experience)
 - ii. 5/5 - Cinco de Mayo Fiesta (Pot lucks are a great joy)
 - iii. 6/16 - Youth Sunday/Father's Day - Dad's Favorite Dish
- d. Food/Micropantry Mission
- i. Remaining funds from ARPA grant - approx 7K, use tbd
 - ii. Micropantry Mission needs some maintenance, leadership, energy, and food)
 - iii. Monthly Meal Making / Deliver to Friday Cafe; Second Thursday/Friday morning
- e. Youth Mission
- i. OWL2023/2024 finished - will reassess for 2024/25
 - ii. [am2pm summer 2023.2024](#) - **We need participants and volunteers! Share this link for more info: <https://sanctuaryucc.org/am2pmsummer/>**
 - Grants/Fundraising updates
 - a. Cummings Grant application submitted 12/23 (notice May 2024); 3-year grant of 33K
 - b. Teen Mental Health/OWL Grant possibilities
 - i. Tufts Community Grant 2024 (3K) **Awarded**
 - ii. Eastern Bank - (10K) **Submitted May 08**
 - c. Medford Community Grant (10K) - **Submitted April 24**