

## RIVER BOARD EXPLAINER

May 2023

Hello River church!

We are members of the River's board and we want to explain why our church has a board, what it does, and how people join it.

The board members are Charles Park, Alison Noll, Peter Eavis, Molly Pfaff, Emily Noto, Neysa Yoon-Cho, Anthony Mariani, and Pierre Thomas. You can find more details on us below.

### **Why does the River have a board?**

Many organizations and companies have a body of people that oversees and helps direct the institution. Churches are no exception. Weighty decisions – such as the River's deliberations over the years about where to hold our services – should not be made by one person. A board can provide diverse viewpoints, expertise, and discussions that can lead to sound decisions.

Many churches have a board of some form. Certain denominations have a presbytery of elders and deacons, for instance. The River is also a nonprofit entity, and, under New York state law, it must have a board.

### **What does the board do?**

The board rarely gets involved in the week to week operations of the church. That's the work of the River's staff; they oversee groups, provide pastoral care, and decide what goes into our services.

The board, as an oversight body, aims to ensure that the River and its leaders are pursuing our core strategic goal of creating an affirming community where members can get closer to God and live full lives.

Among its specific duties, the board:

- Offers guidance and support to staff members so they can better do their jobs.
- Hires, appoints, and oversees the staff members of the church, including the most senior pastors, and sets their pay and benefits.
- Oversees how the staff members are performing through performance reviews. It can also remove staff members.
- Helps leaders set the overall strategic direction of the church.
- Weighs in on big spending decisions, like leasing space.
- Regularly reviews the finances of the church and gets involved with setting the budget.
- Involves itself in important legal matters.

- Troubleshoots big problems and provides more hands-on governance when there are major disruptions or shocks (like the pandemic).
- Meets regularly, about **six** times a year

Relatively recent examples of board matters are deciding to rent our current space, and hiring Mike Eller as our Pastor of Worship and Spiritual Formation.

### **Who can join the River's board?**

Under New York law, the River is required to have from seven to 11 board members, and board members must be U.S. citizens and a resident of the state. There must also be more lay members than staff members on the board.

The River requires that board members have no plans to move in the near future. They must have been a member of the church for at least three years, and be a leader in the church in significant ways. They must also be able to work well with other members of the board.

### **How do we recruit and select board members?**

Every year in January, we ask the membership to nominate qualified candidates. If you are nominated, then the board will engage in an assessment. This involves interviews with some members of the current board. Following the interview, if the interview goes well, the entire board will weigh in, and the decision will be made by the entire board.

Since the main responsibilities of the board are related to financial and staffing decisions, leaders with those backgrounds are well suited.

Board members are expected to serve for a minimum of one year, and have to receive the backing of three-fourths of the board to continue serving for another year.

### **How can you contact the board?**

If you'd like to contact the Board for any reason, please email [Alison@rivernyc.org](mailto:Alison@rivernyc.org).

The church will hold an annual "Meet the Board" after a church service. The next one is going to be on July 23rd.

### **More about us:**

**Charles Park** is one of the founders of the church in 2004 and serves as a board member and Lead Pastor.

**Alison Noll** has been a part of the church for over a decade and serves as a board member and Executive Pastor.

**Peter Eavis** has been part of the board for over a decade and led the church in many areas such as prayer team, preaching, and small groups.

**Molly Pfaff** has been part of the board for over a decade and led the church in many areas, especially in the area of family groups.

**Emily Noto** joined the board in 2022 and led the church in setting processes for church-wide communications and decision making as well as leading small groups.

**Neysa Yoon-Cho** joined the board in 2022, having spent many years in nonprofit management and fundraising. She brings her expertise in fundraising to the church.

**Anthony Mariani** joined the board in 2022. He has led our efforts to locate, lease, and construct our current space, saving the church an enormous amount of money. He also leads small groups.

**Pierre Thomas** joined the board in 2023, having spent many years in a management position in a health and human services organization in New York. We look forward to his leadership in improving our human resources management. He also leads small groups.