

Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral
Minutes, Regular Meeting of the Vestry
Thursday, August 27, 2020

Members Present: The Very Rev. Dr. Andrew C. Keyse, Dean; Paula Henderson Connors, Senior Warden; Richard Morse, Junior Warden; Jonathan Sternberg, Clerk; Sharon Cheers; Bill Colvin; Phaedra Fahnestock; Jeff Johnson; Ron Michka; Nick Smith; Ken Stewart; Ryan Thomas

Others present: Steve Moore, Chancellor; David Telep, Treasurer.

Not present: Amy Cornwell.

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Dean Andy in prayer.

1. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Dean Andy presented the minutes from the previous Vestry meeting on July 23, 2020. Ryan Thomas offered a correction to a typo. Ryan Thomas moved to accept the minutes as corrected, Sharon Cheers seconded, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

2. Dean's Report

Dean Andy welcome Phaedra Fahnestock to her first Vestry meeting as a successor to Kristen Ellis Johnson.

Dean Andy discussed having performed a walkthrough of the Cathedral on July 28 in anticipation of reopening so as to familiarize themselves with how it would be when reopening to indoor services as well as outdoor services. He said he wasn't ready to start indoor services, but would like to start outdoor services beginning September 6 at 5:00 p.m., with livestream services continuing at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings. So, there'd be a 10:15 a.m. livestreamed service, plus a 5:00 p.m. outdoor service on the lawn. He outlined the anticipated procedure for this. Vestry members asked questions about how this would work. He said he was targeting October as the start date for proper indoor services.

Dean Andy invited the budget contingency planning committees to update us on their progress. Several of them did so, in advance of their reports to come.

Dean Andy updated the Vestry on completing the third round of parish phone calls. He reminded everyone participating to fill out their forms. Several Vestry members spoke of her positive experience having made the calls.

Dean Andy sent around a document outlining our plan for reopening, which will be updated as needed. There were new guidelines from the City running through July 5 now allowing us to be at 50% capacity, rather than 10%, which would alleviate our need to add extra services or require reservations. That would mean 350 people would be allowed in for services, which is more than our average Sunday attendance. Regardless, the diocesan requirement of 14 days of declining cases trumps all of this, and we remain stuck until that occurs, and it hasn't yet occurred. But once it does, we still would have to decide whether we want people to sign a registry sheet so there's a record of who is there.

Dean Andy explained that Alexandra Connors had approached him about becoming a Director of Christian Formation in addition to being Youth Director. He explained what this would entail and said he would find it helpful. He directed her to create a job description, which she did, and he approved. It puts a person in charge of overseeing scheduling and fulfilling the program for Christian formation, from nursery all the way to adult studies, just as a way to make sure everything running is running. He was impressed with what she put together, and was looking to allow her to do what she had proposed. This did not mean we would not fulfill Julie Brogno's position, but that this was a different, new position. Vestry members asked questions about this. Dean Andy made clear this would not entail more of a financial commitment, such as benefits. The Vestry asked that the Dean not move on this until we see the recommendations of the Budget Contingency groups.

Dean Andy had reached out to the Cathedrals in New Orleans and Shreveport to express our prayers and support for any help with anything we could regarding the hurricane. He had heard back from the Dean in New Orleans, but had not heard back yet from the Dean in Shreveport. Several Vestry members asked about how we could contribute through Episcopal groups.

3. Financial Report

David Telep, Treasurer, presented the financial report.

For our CARES/PPP money, we're concentrating on a 24-week period now because the law had changed, meaning that we likely can recover forgiveness for the entire \$166,000 amount we had received. We are keeping close tabs with UMB and Richard Wolf, but we're waiting on word on exactly how forgiveness would work.

We're beginning our yearly audit, which should take the better part of a month, and Richard is busy with that.

For the year-to-date numbers, plate is keeping track with budget. Gifts/bequests are \$14,000 below budget, but our total revenues versus budget are only slightly below budget. On expenses, they're above budget due to savings in building, salary, education, and parish life costs, due to not doing anything in person. Cumulatively, we're \$162,000 below budget, a lot of which is thanks to the PPP loan. Cash on hand is also higher than we'd expect to be, \$452,000. All very positive, unexpected factors for our budget for 2020. We won't run the deficit we'd originally planned on. Again, this isn't due to giving, it's due to being shut down and having received PPP money.

But because we can't rely on this for 2021, Richard Wolf and David already have begun a "straw man" budgeting process for the next year. Some of this will rely on what the budget contingency committees figure out. But as we're taking on those, we're figuring out what to do for next year budget-wise.

David discussed the endowment distributions also not being as bad for 2021 as we expected, because the market had come back from how it was.

4. Stewardship Report

Steve Moore, Chancellor, reported on ongoing stewardship. He commended Dean Andy on his stewardship sermon.

Steve said the plan was to send out a mailing with pledge cards, for a total of three mailings. He hoped to receive statements either recorded or written from various factions of the Cathedral family in support. He then planned for phone calls from the Vestry and others to make sure pledging was followed up with. He also said the plan was for a stewardship prayer to be put in with our usual service, beginning this coming Sunday, which Dean Andy shared.

5. Junior Warden's Report

Richard Morse, Junior Warden, presented his report. He discussed some bids and finances for buildings and grounds updates, including the chiller being replaced. He discussed concerns of parishioners that had been reported to him.

6. Senior Warden's Report

Paula Henderson Connors, Senior Warden, presented her report. She discussed how reaching out to parishioners had gone. She also discussed forming a nomination committee for forthcoming Vestry nominations. She, Jonathan Sternberg, Ron Michka, and Ryan Thomas would be part of the same class, and her plan was any who decided to roll off would be part of the nominating committee. She suggested the Vestry reach out to others to see who was interested.

7. Vestry Liaison Reports

Ron Michka presented a report on community engagement, saying they had continued with their Tuesday conversations programs, and discussing how that had been going. He discussed desiring to engage with others, especially during this period. He also discussed the Barney Allis Plaza redevelopment, which would change things in our neighborhood downtown.

Sharon Cheers presented a report on safety. She explained that the we had been engaging with people coming to the property, tweaking cameras, and it seemed to be going well safety-wise. She said many people were concerned with the election and asked for prayers for the election, especially considering we're a polling place. She said we were a host to the August primary election, and it went well.

Ken Stewart updated the Vestry on Communications. October 4 is the Blessing of the Animals, and planned to host a "notarize your mail-in ballot" with himself and someone else who was a notary.

Ryan Thomas updated the Vestry on the Social Justice Committee. They were planning on a prayer and healing service outside the Cathedral September 5, though that was pretty fast.

Dean Andy gave an Outreach report from Terri Curran. We donated over 1,800 school supplies to Crittenden's Children's Center. We presented a backpack and hygiene supply to an immigrant being deported. She called for diaper donations for a forthcoming diaper drive. Phaedra Fahnestock agreed to be the Outreach liaison in the future.

8. Old and new business

Our sign that was missing explaining the online services is now back up. Those who have come on Wednesdays really enjoyed coming into the space and having time there, and were very appreciative of it.

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Vestry will be Thursday, September 24, 2020.