

Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral

Minutes, Regular Meeting of the Vestry

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Members Present: The Very Rev. Dr. Andrew C. Keyse, *Dean*; The Rev. Canon Ryan Wiksell, *Associate*; Candy McDowell, *Senior Warden*; Richard Morse, *Junior Warden*; Phaedra Fahnstock, *Clerk*; Ron Michka, Pat Decker, Sharon Cheers, Ken Stewart, Bill Colvin, Kay Woolley, Amy Cornwell, Nick Smith

Members Absent: Jeff Johnson

Others Present: David Barker, *Treasurer*; Steve Moore, *Chancellor*

The meeting was held via Zoom teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Dean Andy in prayer.

1. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Phaedra Fahnstock presented the amended minutes from the previous Regular Vestry meeting on October 23, 2021. Candy McDowell moved to accept the amended minutes and it was seconded by Ken Stewart. The motion passed unanimously without further discussion.

2. Dean's Report

We had the Hymn Sing this past Sunday afternoon. We had about 40 people show up and got through all but 4 of the hymns that were submitted.

Thanksgiving Service is coming up at 10am on Thanksgiving Day. It will also be livestreamed. The office will be closed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

The first week of December will be busy.

- The Nativity Puppets are scheduled for December 3rd, 4th, and 5th,
- The evening of the 5th is the service of Lessons and Carols,
- The 6th will be the seating of our new Bishop during the Feast of St. Nicholas. Time will be determined but it's in the evening.

Consistent with the Cathedral's music ministry, as outreach to the greater community, and as an outward and visible sign that we are returning, rekindling, and rejoicing together; the Executive Committee recommends and I, Candy McDowell, move that \$7,250.00 be allocated to compensate the musicians for the 2021 Nativity Puppet production. Funds to come from the Vestry Discretionary Fund. It was seconded by Sharon Cheers. Following discussion, the motion passed.

Sharon shared that as a member of Nativity Puppets, she would like to share her gratitude for the support. This was most gracious of the Cathedral to support Nativity Puppets in their first year independent of Paul Mesner.

Richard expressed that this is a great way to reach out to the community and bring in people that aren't even members of the church. Sharon confirmed that typically about 90% of the audience are not members of the Cathedral. All equipment associated with the production to include the puppets, scripts, and intellectual property are owned by Nativity Puppets.

Dean Andy reminded the group that we will be doing another round of Vestry calls, likely during the first week of December. There will be a script to help with the conversations and it will include a plug for the photo directory.

3. Associate's Report

Clare and Can. Ryan are looking into moving the Youth space. Candy was looking at using the Youth room for the Pre-kindergarten program so we will be relocating Youth activities to the Café. Updates we'd like to do at this time would be attractive for the next ten or more years. More to come on that.

Coffee with the Canon is available so that people can schedule themselves a coffee date with Can. Ryan. He has met with two couples so far and have a couple more couples on the schedule. They're interested in Confirmation and Reception.

4. Financial Report

August and September had a bit of a dip in pledges but we're back on the trend line again now. Expenses are starting to come back to the budget line, which is expected. We were understaffed earlier in the year but are operating at full employment now. Everything on the Income side is ahead of budget and the Expenses are below budget. Overall, we're in great financial shape.

Candy McDowell moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Richard Morse seconded it, and it passed without further discussion.

The Audit is recommended for approval by the Vestry. The Finance Committee has approved it. Candy mentioned that the "Incomplete Employee Files" notation is something that's being taken care of.

Candy McDowell moved to accept the 2020 Audit as presented. Ken Stewart seconded it, and it passed without further discussion.

Next year's budget, the one Julie sent out earlier this week, covers pledges of \$456,511. The budget also includes Plate Offerings, Bequests and Recurring Bequests, Streetcar Assessment, User Fees, Endowment to Operating, Interfund Transfers, Community and Social Ministry, the Larger Church, Salary and Related, Lay Salary and Related, an increase in section leaders' stipend, Clergy Support, Administration and General, Property, Utilities, Education, Music and Instrumentalists, and Parish Life. This brings us to \$1,851,000. Income and expenses match, indicating a balanced budget.

Richard asked if the Finance Committee has an opinion on whether we should take the endowment this year. Dave said that the Finance Committee doesn't have an opinion, but his opinion is that it's not needed. Dean Andy suggested that we can decide that during the December Vestry meeting. Candy wondered if it would be reasonable to ask the Finance Committee to give us a list of pros and cons so that the Vestry has their guidance. The Finance Committee isn't scheduled to meet again until January. Can. Ryan wanted to know what the percentage of the draw is, and Dave stated that it's 5% based on a three-year rolling average. Next year, the amount will go up some due to the rolling average. Can. Ryan wondered if we might consider reducing the percentage rather than skipping a month. The monthly draw is between \$56,000 and \$60,000. Richard suggests spending the PPP windfall on something that would benefit the community. The endowment covers about 70% of the budget. Even with the windfall, we're still reliant heavily upon the endowment. Ron suggested that if we used the endowment toward capital expenses or outreach, that would reduce the amount of the assessment of the operating budget. The stipend increase for soloists is to help raise our pay to be more competitive. The

budget does include funds for strategic planning work to start in January. Dean Andy is starting to work on putting that committee together.

Ron asked about Mission Forward and suggested that our budget should reflect those things. Candy said that some of the Mission Forward initiatives could be considered special projects which we wouldn't want to come from operating funds. Ron's concern is that we won't grow the parish (volunteers and in the pews) if we don't use these excess funds to do something different. He's concerned with the process as far as how the ideas get generated and executed. Bill agreed and furthered that we need professional help with marketing and since we have the money, we should ask an advertising firm what it would take to get us some help. Dean Andy shared that there are funds in the budget to help us with the strategic plan. That Strategic Plan will address the types of suggestions for things that we need to do to which Ron is referring. The consultant with whom we have engaged for the strategic plan has a PhD in non-profit administration. Nick offered to volunteer for anything in advertising. Can. Ryan said that his work history is in graphic design prior to seminary, and he would be happy to play a role in this process.

Ron asked about COLA, wondering which employees are covered by that. Dave said that it's applicable to all salaried employees. Amy wondered if new employees are eligible for the COLA increase and Dean Andy confirmed that yes, it's all salaried employees. Labor shortages and wage inflation was discussed. Ron suggested that we should evaluate the impact of COLA.

Dean Andy said that we can sit on the budget for a month and think about it and vote on it in December or we can vote on it tonight. Kay shared that we need to live within our means and not rely so heavily on the endowment. Kay asked the same question that Can. Ryan posed earlier, which is to reduce the percentage of the draw across the board rather than skipping a payout. Dean Andy said that we can accept the budget tonight, skip the December draw, and then later reduce the percentage of the draw. Nick suggested that maybe we need to make a communication to the parish when we do skip a draw. The decision was made to think through the budget over the next month. Dave will talk to Richard about providing an analysis of the various options. Ron reminded the group that the budget will need to be adjusted to reflect whatever changes are agreed upon regarding the endowment.

5. Stewardship Report

We have 76 pledges for \$235,00 compared to last year's 77 pledges for \$245,000. The average pledge this year is \$3,100, on par with last year. This year we had 9 new pledges versus 3 last year. Jeff Johnson and Richard Morse wrote testimonials that were very helpful. Richard's is coming out this week. Richard suggested that it's standard practice for everyone on the Vestry to make a pledge. Clergy, staff, and ancillary staff have all made their pledges. The blessing of the pledges will be during Advent 2 on Sunday, December 5th.

6. Junior Warden's Report

Richard has nothing new in Buildings and Grounds. Still looking at the possibility of getting a digital sign and looking at the playground but not much beyond that.

7. Senior Warden's Report

When Candy was writing the Call for Nominations article, she was reminded of the things we're supposed to do by Canon Law and the need for that to be included as part of the Strategic Plan. As an example, the different committees we have should all have at least two members of the Vestry to be compliant. This year there will be four openings on the Vestry including the Clerk and Jr. Warden. If anyone would like to be considered for Jr.

Warden or Clerk, please let Candy know. The Jr. Warden serves on the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Buildings and Grounds Committee, and the Budget Committee. The Senior Warden, Jr. Warden, and Clerk all are authorized check signers. In this past year, the Jr. Warden was invited to participate in the Dean's Annual Review. The Clerk is on the Executive Committee, signs checks, serves as the custodian of lots of things, and takes the meeting minutes. Candy asked that the group talk up the Vestry and encourage people to consider running for the Vestry.

Not a whole lot new on the Pre-K project other than that we will be looking to become a satellite of Operation Breakthrough as opposed to a stand-alone school. This will be helpful in getting accreditation. Whitney Hosty, Senior Philanthropic Advisory at Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, and board member of St. Paul's School indicated that we would be able to find support from the foundation and from St. Paul's. One of our biggest challenges for this school is finding a teacher and a para given the current labor market. There is a dearth of early childhood educators indicating that we will have to be competitive in our pay and get the search started early.

8. Vestry Liaison Reports (to be sent via email)

Sharon, Cheers, *Safety*

Ron Michka, *Community Engagement*

Amy Cornwell, *Children's Formation*

Children's Formation is working on a Christmas Pageant program for the Christmas Eve 5pm service.

Phaedra Fahnestock, *Outreach*

Terri is not in a place to be able to report currently.

Ken Stewart, *Communications*

Nick Smith, *Young Adult*

Old Business

New Business

Ken shared that tomorrow at 2:30pm we will be putting up the Christmas decorations in the bookstore and could always use a hand.

Richard Morse asked if there were any current/contemporary photos for the Grace and Holy Trinity website to better represent the parish and more inclusive of the community. If so, please share those with the Communications Committee.

The December meeting would normally be scheduled for December 23rd, but we can reschedule it for a different day in December. Dean Andy will send out an email to schedule the date.

Richard Morse moved to adjourn. It was seconded by Bill Colvin and passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m. in prayer. The next regular meeting of the Vestry will be determined via follow up emails.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phaedra Fahnestock, Vestry Clerk