

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes

Regular Meeting January 12, 2021

Attendees: Mo. Sharon Voelker, Kathy DeCiantis, Dave Eldon, Corinne Fragnoli, Ken Fuhr, Don Ingersoll, Joan Morgan [Zoom], Amy Redmer, Sheryl Schmidt, Miranda Spates [Zoom], Dave Stein, Gretchen Waters and Patrick Wojas, Phil Pierce - Treasurer.

Call to Order and Opening Prayer:

Dave Stein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Pat Wojas led us with two opening prayers.

Parish Housekeeping:

The **consent calendar** included the minutes of the December, 2020 Vestry meeting and the December/yearend Financial Report. **Ken Fuhr moved, seconded by Sheryl Schmidt that the minutes and financial report be accepted. Motion carried without dissent.**

Rector's Report: Mo. Sharon reported that the pandemic has continued to limit in-person visits or services; but noted that we are getting good viewership of the on-line services. She listed the many services that conducted around Christmas, and thanked Phil Pierce for his tireless high quality technical and editing contributions that made it all possible.

Old Business:

Lay Youth Leader: Dave Stein reported that upon further consideration, Evan DeCiantis has decided that rather than jumping into the Youth Leader role, he should ease his way into the program. The major consideration was the demands of his job. Instead, he has volunteered to join the YACYM Committee and begin getting engaged incrementally.

Don Ingersoll mentioned that Evan may wish to take advantage of the Diocesan online offering of the Safe Church training that is required for anyone involved in youth programs. Ken Fuhr added that Vestry members and anyone who works with kids must have the course every 3 years, so new Vestry members and some of us might be due for it too.

Christmas Services Feedback: Mo. Sharon said she has received many favorable comments on the services, and Vestry members agreed that they were excellent. Several said it was nice to see so many choir members, and everyone clapped for Phil Pierce's skillful technical and editing contributions. Phil noted that the Christmas Eve and Christmas services garnered 123 "views;" which is an undercount of how many people actually watched. Many watched as a family which only counted as one "view."

New Business:

Change of bookkeeper from an Employee to a Contract Worker: Phil Pierce reported that Pam had requested the change and the Diocese agreed that doing so was reasonable and allowable. St. Stephen's will benefit from the change by not having to pay employer FICA taxes. The Vestry supported this change.

Financial Matters: Treasurer Phil Pierce walked the Vestry through the 2020 yearend results, the excellent result of our Stewardship program, and alternative 2021 budget proposals. He also presented projections showing how each budget proposal sets us up for moving forward under various assumptions regarding revenue and cost growth over the next 10 years.

Noteworthy among the 2020 results were that we ended the year with an operating surplus of \$42,288, and our pledges for 2021 were up by 19.4% despite the pandemic and limited in-person services and activities. Dave Stein noted that the Diocese was very pleased and surprised by this result and he got a congratulatory note from Bishop Perry.

Regarding the 2021 budget, Phil presented two alternatives: Budget 2021A that assumed Mo. Sharon would be our priest the full year, and Budget 2021B that assumed we had her through June, followed by a full-time priest.

After a detailed discussion of the numbers and assumptions; **Don Ingersoll moved, seconded by Amy Redmer, that budget proposal 2021B be approved. Motion carried without dissent.**

Phil presented 10-year financial projections [showing how we might do using various revenue and expense assumptions]. Discussed concurrently was a 6-year projection of capital [building and grounds] needs [provided by Pat Wojas]; and alternatives for allocating our year-end operating surplus.

After discussing of all of the above, **Sheryl Schmidt moved, seconded by Ken Fuhr, that \$42,288 of our surplus be allocated to the Capital Reserve Restricted Fund, and \$31,073 be allocated to the Mission Development Restricted Fund. Motion passed without dissent.**

Search for a new priest: Dave Stein informed the Vestry that he was contacted by Rev. Ellen Ekevag who has replace Jim Gettel as the Diocesan Ministry Developer. Her duties include helping parishes with clergy searches. She has heard good things about St. Stephen's and is eager to help us aggressively work to fill our spot for a full-time priest. She would like to meet with the Vestry in February, and Dave will work with her to set something up. She mentioned that we should ensure that our website is as appealing as we can make it, and that our parish profile is up to date. Dave Stein, Mo. Sharon and Don Ingersoll are working on the profile revision.]

Annual meeting planning: Since we are unlikely to be able to have an in-person meeting, we discussed the best way to get as many people as possible involved and able to vote. A hybrid meeting will be planned, using streaming, Zoom, phones and

perhaps the Vestry live. Phil mentioned that there is a “Election Runner” application that might be able to help us with voting. Since we will have the streaming equipment set up in the Sanctuary for the worship service, we will plan to run the meeting from there. It will start at noon on January 31. Lots of work will be needed to arrange all this and to get the word out via all possible means, including the phone chain for the non-computer users.

We will skip a Vestry retreat this year as we likely will only have 2 new members who don’t need orientation because they have been on the Vestry recently.

Pay raises? Dave Stein noted that Ami O’Neill and Pam Bonkowski have been doing outstanding jobs as our office administrator and bookkeeper; doing much more than we expected and doing it under trying pandemic conditions. Dave believes they deserve a bump up in pay. He proposes that he and Phil look into what the median salary range is for their job classifications and move them up to that. If approved, Dave and Phil will adjust the 2021 budget we approved earlier to reflect the changes. The Vestry heartily agreed. **Amy Redmer moved, seconded by Corinne Fragnoli, that Ami’s and Pam’s pay rates be moved up to the median range for their job classifications, and that the 2021 budget be adjusted accordingly. Motion passed without dissent.**

Regular meeting date change: To better ensure time to process our monthly financial data prior to our meetings, Dave suggested that we move our regular meeting date to the third Tuesday of each month. No one objected to this change, so we will begin doing so in February.

Dave Stein noted that this will be the last Vestry meeting for Dave Eldon, Corinne Fragnoli, Amy Redmer, Gretchen Waters and Pat Wojas. He thanked them all for their dedicated service and everyone loudly clapped their heartfelt appreciation. Dave Eldon and Patrick promised to continue managing the Building and Grounds. The Vestry breathed a big sigh of relief because they have done an outstanding job for the past few years.

Adjournment

After a closing prayer, Dave Stein adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Ingersoll - Acting Clerk