

Minutes for Vestry Meeting on August 30, 2023

Present: Fr. Andy Jones, Rector;
Casey Reiser, Senior Warden;
David Polet, Junior Warden;
Kevin Featherston-Crowe, Treasurer;
John Mullen, Andy Porter¹, Jeff Ocwieja, Dennis Lloyd, JoAnne Lehman

Absent: Julia Stanley, Erin Gasser, Stephanie Elkins

Clerk: Jeff Ocwieja

Agenda Items

Opening Prayer: Given by Fr. Andy

Approval of Agenda: Andy asks if there's room on the agenda to talk about homecoming. Casey states we can talk about it during Senior Warden's report. **JoAnne moves to adopt. John seconds. Unanimously adopted.**

Approval of June Minutes: Remove Katie's name. Kevin was not "presentating," he was "presenting." Should say "no" meeting in July 2023 (not that we did/would meet in July 2023). **David moves to adopt as amended. Casey seconds. Unanimously adopted**

Voices from the Parish: none present

Update and Year to Date Financials: Presentation by Kevin. See attachment in packet. Still a work in progress. We have made substantial progress in the past few months. Discussion of balance sheet. Still not sure why there is a negative number for liabilities, looking into that. Questions what "pancake" supper is about, Andy will look into it.² David wonders if it makes sense to have budget reflect current balance versus prior end of year balance. Kevin still doesn't have access to Quickbooks, so can't always control how it is displayed. Discussion of income statement. More work in progress here. There are several items that aren't where they belong, e.g., the "other operating income" items. David asks if we can identify where things should go and attribute them to an actual budget line, Kevin clarifies that he and Chuck have been working to do that by "coding" things correctly. Kevin also asks Fr. Andy if various people are not being paid because we are short on salary year to date, Fr. Andy says that he thinks that people are getting paid so this is probably an error. Kevin surmises that payroll might be inaccurate. Fr. Andy asks about the "family ministry" but not "youth" ministry, Kevin points out the correct separate item. John asks what the parenthesis means, Kevin says that it means a negative number. Andy asks how confident Kevin is that the numbers are correct, Kevin clarifies that he isn't the book-keeper so he has to trust the numbers coming in. All the book-keeping is done by Dylan. David clarifies that we get audited every year. Fr. Andy clarifies that we used to not get audited every year, but now it is yearly, and these current numbers will be audited some time in Spring 2024.

David proposes that we don't formally vote on the budget given current discrepancies. Andy recommends that we reach out to confirm that people are being paid. Dennis thinks we should call a vote and decline report because it has too many errors so treasurer knows to fix for future presentation. **Jeff moves to vote on whether we should vote as to whether we should vote to adopt the report today. David seconds.** Fr. Andy asks if makes sense to "light a fire" under Chuck, Kevin doesn't think that would help because Chuck works on it incrementally. Consensus that we can register our frustration at ongoing issues with the

¹ Unless otherwise noted, "Andy" refers to Andy Porter. "Fr. Andy" refers to Andy Jones.

² Fr. Andy originally volunteers to look into this. Andy steps up, belays Fr. Andy's attempt to do that job because he has enough to do already, says that that is w/in his jurisdiction

budget. Kevin notes that it has become a bit of a personal burden on Kevin given his time investment. David suggests that the finance committee should put something together formally. Casey observes that we need to be very concrete about our expectations with Chuck. Consensus that reports appear to be being generated but individual items aren't being flagged/identified. **Jeff amends previous motion to table discussion regarding adoption of report and direct finance committee to reach out to Chuck regarding frustration and discrepancies in budget. David seconds. Unanimously adopted.**

Entry into Executive Session. As a result of that session, Vestry **unanimously adopted resolution that Dylan should receive a \$2/hour raise** in recognition of his stellar efforts thus far.

Vestry Liaison Implementation: Presentation by Casey. Reports in packet for tonight's meeting and also provided in advance of today's meeting. Casey solicits general impressions from phone calls. John shares some insights, e.g., having hospital visits. People seemed generally receptive to the concept of a liaison, were enthusiastic. JoAnne shares that people w/ whom she spoke said this was a good idea. Casey asks if we need a template for future reports. Casey also asks if it seems helpful to have a middleperson rather than people having to go directly to Fr. Andy. Fr. Andy states that this new plan hasn't been around long enough to tell. Casey states that the plan is for us to be able to direct congregants to liaisons rather than having to funnel them directly to Fr. Andy. Andy says that we should publish the names of the liaisons and leaders of groups. Casey doesn't think that would be ready by homecoming. Andy says that we used to have a "yellowpages," could just update that info. It is in an MS Word document. Fr. Andy will send it to Andy and Casey so they can update the document, hopeful that it might be ready by homecoming. Next time we do this is in October/November 2023, consensus that first effort to do so went well. Casey will think about what the expectations for follow-ups are.

Bylaws Update: Presentation by Casey. First draft of bylaws revision in packet. There are a lot of formatting issues because the original document wasn't an MS Word document, but we're still working on it. Previously called a "constitution," but it's actually just "bylaws." There was also a lot of duplicative language. Attorney used default language from canons when there was duplicative language. Draft makes clearer the majority needed for pass a resolution (nothing in our current version).

Discussion of rules re approving "resolutions" versus "motions" via email. Technically no authority right now for doing motions via email because our meetings have to be open to the parish. Attorney suggests that we should get rid of voting via email for motions, given transparency issues. Attorney suggests that we utilize *docusign* for discussions via email, and then that would be incorporated into the next meeting's agenda. Discussion of distinction between motions versus resolutions (motions are probably ok to vote on via email, but resolutions are not given transparency concerns). JoAnne asks if it makes a difference what the effect will be, e.g., if it's urgent. Casey clarifies that there doesn't appear to be a difference in how it is treated, although currently it has to be unanimous if via email. Andy asks if we can do Zoom instead if it's a time sensitive issue. Casey clarifies that that wouldn't work because we still need to give adequate notice to the parish. Casey acknowledges that it is rare that we need to vote on stuff between formal meetings, but it does occur occasionally. Fr. Andy shares that there was previously a consensus that we wouldn't vote on anything that we previously did not discuss at a formal meeting. David asks if we plan on adopting the quorum requirement (i.e. 50+1%) suggested by Attorney, consensus that yes we will adopt that requirement.

Dennis questions whether we're being too legalistic about a problem that has never actually happened before. David states that a strong church constitution is for when there *might* be a problem in the future, to make sure our bases are covered if there's ever an issue. Casey shares that she has had similar discussion with the Attorney, and Attorney has repeatedly cautioned her about confusion re voting via email, etc., i.e. real issues that could occur. David recommends that we table this conversation, think it over, and plan on chatting about it in greater detail at the next meeting (consensus that we should **budget at least 30 minutes** for next meeting). Casey clarifies that vestry would need to approve the changes to the bylaws, and then it would be submitted to the parish.

Newell House Report: Presentation by David. Consensus that the space itself is valuable as an asset, but the building itself should be razed. Working on putting together a demolition proposal before end of the year but need to have an idea as to what will occupy the space after it is demolished because that will affect the proposal. I.e., depending on the plan moving forward, *how* the razing occurs might be different. There will be a “visioning” committee to discuss this in putting a plan together. Casey clarifies that technically we have not formally approved the razing of the building, just that there has been a consensus that that is the direction in which we are heading, and that formal decision will likely be in Spring 2024. David observes that based on listening sessions, many of the attendees believe that razing makes sense that that we should tell congregants that we are definitely moving toward that solution. David thinks that we can release the communication committee from further sessions as they have fulfilled their duties. Andy suggests we have a motion to charge committee for visioning and for preparing bids/proposals.

David moves for a resolution extending thanks to communications. Andy seconds. Unanimously adopted.

David moves to accept recommendations of communications committee and establish and charge a new committee to implement the recommendations of that aforementioned committee. Casey seconds. Unanimously adopted.

Reports:

Nominating Committee: see attached. Brief presentation by Casey. We have the bare minimum of prospective candidates for all open positions.

Rector’s Report: see attached

Senior Warden’s Report: Presentation by Casey. Discussion of ways to build community and importance of interpersonal relationships. Flower and Altar Guild have been getting together every 6 weeks or so just to gather and have fun. Andy spoke to Elizabeth Kelly to take over art displayed in parish hall, she is going to organize receptions for artists whose works are on display. Casey and others are going to also do “know your artist” events to showcase talents of congregants. Also going to organize a game night.³ Very pleased that community gatherings have occurred organically. Fr. Andy does observe that per bylaws, we cannot serve alcohol unless vestry pre-approves and there’s an equally attractive non-alcoholic option (re “know your artist” events). Foyers is also starting up again. Fr. Andy observes that people want opportunities for care and support and the more we support that, the greater chance people will stay and become engaged. Casey observes that a lot of people have told her that they “go to church” because of times when congregants have been w/ them during tough times and have shown that they care.

Andy points out that homecoming is approaching (09/10). There will be food and signup sheets. Should reach out to lay leaders and encourage them to attend.

Re coffee hour, Casey says that we previously agreed to do a coffee hour on 09/17 in recognition of altar guild. Important that people attend given their dedication and time spend doing what they do. Vestry should host it (i.e., hopefully vestry members will bring food). Casey will send out an email.

Junior Warden’s Report: see attached

Closing Prayer

³ David expresses excited incredulity at the prospect of a game night.