Minutes

Vestry Meeting

December 4, 2016

12:10pm-2:00pm

Adult Forum: members of the vestry participated with the congregation in an adult forum on Spirituality from 11:30am until noon.

Pastor Terri called the meeting all to order at 12:25pm with an opening prayer. In attendance were:

 Margaret Green, Matt Quam, Daniel Pawa, Diana Brehob, Thomas Trimble, Carolyn Blackmore, Selia Danes, Chris Burkhalter, Mitch Yudasz, Terri Pilarski

 Visitors: Lynn Bennett, Lori Phillips, Matt Sallman, Erin Biggs, Rosine Kubwimana

Following the opening prayer the meeting was turned over to Matt Sallman, Treasurer and chair of the Finance Commission, who led a conversation on the early state of the vision forecast for the 2017 budget and the current state of the parish budget deficit.

Matt shared letters that were developed by the Finance Commission to go out to parishioners regarding current pledges. One letter is intended to thank those who are up to date. The second letter encourages those who are behind to catch up.

Matt reported the deficit continues with an additional $2000 behind for October.

Finance meets Dec 22 to go over November numbers and will have a better understanding of the deficit, although income has been up in November.

A question was asked about prepaid pledges, if someone pledges for 2017 and prepays in 2016 we need to make sure we don’t double count it.

Discussion ensued on deficit as of 10/31/2016. Expenses nothing other than Misc. Admin significantly over. Property isn’t anticipating spending their full budget. Will get better numbers to Matt.

Vision Forecast 2017: Matt reviewed with the Vestry the numbers turned in so far are in. A few groups still need to turn in numbers. No income listed yet, those numbers will be filled in by Finance over the next month.

A discussion took place regarding the line item for “Misc outreach” for which only small amounts have been used in previous years. Food pantry requested to have the amount of money that has previously been attributed to Misc. Outreach. Previous vestries have wanted to have that money there with the desire to promote outreach work. Vestry members stated that if we are going to keep money in Misc Outreach (in addition to the Food Pantry), let’s be more mission driven and think of ways to spend the Misc. Outreach.

A conversation ensued regarding where should the 150th Anniversary line item go in the budget – its own line item or wrap into Parish Events. Discussion that it should be under umbrella of Parish Life, and its own line item in there. This line item would only stay for one year. Call it Anniversary Celebration so that it can be used in future years. Motion by Carolyn to make a line item under Parish Events called Anniversary Celebration for $4200 for the 150th anniversary. Second by Margaret. Discussion whether it should be part of Parish Events as it is an event for the parish. Discussion on what all is included in the $4200. Matt Sallman emailed a breakdown of what is included in the $4200 to the Vestry during the meeting. Original discussion was that this would be self-funded, but later determined that it should be in the budget and funded. There was a discussion regarding whether people should have to pay to come celebrate themselves. A friendly amendment was made by Thomas to take out all references to money in the motion. Margaret called the question on the amendment, 7 in favor, 1 opposed. Amendment passed. Motion called to a vote, 6 in favor, 2 abstaining.

Matt Quam had to leave at 12:45 to take a child home.

150th Committee members attended the meeting seeking Vestry input on their budget so they know if they can move forward with planning. In particular the question was whether they had funds to hire a caterer now. Vestry fully supports moving forward with planning. The budget will come later. Chris thanked them for coming and asked if there is anything else they need from us today. Deposits needed can be made and will be allocated appropriately once budget has been accepted. Suggestion of selling tickets, even for as little as $5 to give a better idea of how many will be at the celebration and to have some commitment to attend. Lynn and Lori left meeting at 1pm, satisfied that they had what they needed to proceed.

Clergy medical insurance will go down due to son’s graduation from college and his job with benefits, thus enabling the Rector, in June, to move from a family plan to a plus one insurance plan.

Question brought up about microphones. Will have to buy another clergy microphone this year. Falls under worship. This is asked for in worship Expense budget, reason for $300 increase.

Vestry Activities keep the same, is used primarily for Convention. Also this year for the Vestry retreat the last week in February.

Matt Quam returned. 1:05.

Endowment Fund proposal: Thomas presented the proposed update to the Endowment Fund, which was developed by Kevin Green and recommended to the Vestry by the Finance Commission. Thomas and Matt Sallman provided background on the fund and current policy is.

Currently we have the Bergeron Fund for $157,000. We only get the use of the income from this fund. In order to have access to the principal we had to go to the trustee to make changes to the terms of the fund. Trustee was in agreement with going forward but to protect himself his attorneys recommended a court proceeding to make it official. Trustee passed away as we were preparing to petition the courts.

We also have an Endowment Fund. As of now we can only use the interest. Changes can only be made by vestry presentation to parish with approval at an annual meeting. The proposed revision and restatement was for the original of this Endowment Fund. Revision was approved by finance on 12/1/2016. This revision opens the use of the principal to the vestry. Decision was made by finance to fully open the principal rather than making restrictions as we don’t have a full picture of finances moving forward. The hope of the Finance Commission is that the Vestry will approve it as is and then the parish will also approve as is. Downside is that members of the congregation may feel that they no longer need to pledge.

Motion made by Margaret to accept the Endowment Fund policy as is. Second by Carolyn.

Discussion followed. If changes aren’t made and we don’t open up the funds and we close, any funds in the endowment will then go to the diocese. Money has been in the Endowment since 1966. The motive of the Endowment Fund is to keep the church going for as long as possible.

There is a carryover of a $7400 deficit from 2015 that needs to be reconciled along with the projected deficit for 2016.

The vestry discussed potential parish concerns about pushback from parish. Would be worthwhile to have a discussion with person from last year’s Annual Meeting who voiced a concern about using our Endowment Funds, which up to that point we had not used.

A discussion took place regarding how the Vestry envisions this working. Will the Vestry decide to put an amount into the budget from the Endowment Fund? Money is allocated: $42000 in Ford Interest Advantage (accessed at any time), $152000 in Diocesan fund (accessed quarterly), $15000 is in Opportunity Resource fund and will come up for renewal, possibly in 2017 (five year investment).

The policy will be made available to the parish on Monday, December 12, and the Finance Commission will have a discussion on the policy revision at the budget/finance meeting on 1/22/2016.

Discussion of changes to Article VI that Vestry can make changes without going to the parish once this new policy is adopted. By opening up the use of the principal any changes won’t need to go back to the Annual Meeting.

The changes to this policy are only actually buying us time, maybe a few years. There needs to be a discussion in the future of how to move forward with fixing the structural deficit.

Vestry encourages Finance to keep looking into Bergeron Fund.

Margaret called the question. 8 in favor. Carolyn thanked Kevin for the work done on the policy, along with the Finance Commission.

Discussion on need to be actively pursuing areas that are meaningful to the mission. These areas need to have a Vestry person involved. Parish needs to own these areas.

1:40 Break

1:50 Return to meeting

Matt Q. proposed that we move the phones/internet from Office Admin line of the budget to the Property line item of the budget.

Discussion on whether or not it should be moved. Motion made by Selia to move Telephone budget from office to property budget. Seconded by Margaret. Friendly amendment by Diana to change name to Telephone and Internet. Amendment 7 yes, 1 no.

Why does it need to move? Property cannot make changes right now. Discussion on why Matt can’t work with office on changes. Vestry would like a report on ability to save money on this line item. Property will need to work with office to ensure quality service and lower rates. Voting 5 approve 2 opposed 1 abstain

Discussion on when to have talk about Capital Campaign. Should a special meeting be called? Would putting it off until we have done more financial planning be beneficial? Should the meeting include Stewardship, Finance, and Property? Make Capital Campaign the first item on the agenda for the 1/8/2017 meeting and invite Stewardship, Finance and Property. Need to send information to those groups about what we are looking into. Will find a webinar by Episcopal Church Foundation on Capital Campaign.

It was determined that the nominating committee for new vestry member will look into finding Convention Delegates.

Meeting on 1/8/2017 will begin with an hour long conversation on Capital Campaign with leaders from relevant Commission invited to attend. Second half of the Jan. 8 meeting will be the January Vestry meeting to plan the annual meeting. A January 21 meeting of the Vestry will be held to approve the budget.

Old business: Discussion on the New Jim Crow Carolyn recommends program on PBS about race conversation/social injustice. <http://www.dptv.org/programs/black-america-mlk-and-still-i-rise/>

2:33 Motion to adjourn made by Thomas