

Minutes of a Regular Meeting
of the Vestry
of St. James's Episcopal Church
October 18, 2016

A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on October 18, 2016, pursuant to proper notice of time and place. Vestry members attending were Mrs. Louise Bald, Mr. Willson Craigie, Mrs. Peggy Crowley, Mr. Ralph Cummins, Mrs. Becky DeCamps, Mrs. Carol Ann Fuller, Mr. Matt Harper, Mrs. Kathe Hetzer, Mrs. Erin Jewett, Mr. Dave Johnson, Mrs. Carrie Montague, Mr. Harry Moore, Mr. Connell Mullins, and Mrs. Beth Skidmore. Mr. Jay Jordan, Mr. Tom Porterfield, Mr. Allan Rees, and Mrs. Tina Sherrod were absent. Also attending were the Rev. Dr. Thom Blair, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mrs. Anita Lisk, Mr. Matt Presson, and Mrs. Poconna Thiel. Mrs. Laura McCoy attended as a special guest. Mrs. Crowley served as chair, with Mrs. Lisk serving as secretary.

The meeting opened at 5:00 p.m. with a service of Evening Prayer. The business of the meeting was called to order at 5:25 p.m.

Motions to adopt the agenda and approve the Minutes from the September 20, 2016, regular meeting were made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Mrs. Crowley reminded members of the Vestry to read all documents sent in advance of the meeting so that everyone is prepared and informed when the meeting begins.

SPECIAL GUEST

Mrs. Crowley welcomed Laura McCoy Vice-Chair of the Search Committee. Mrs. McCoy reported that the Search Committee is currently working on the Community Ministry Portfolio, collecting input to complete the narrative portion. As part of this process, Mrs. McCoy asked the Vestry a series of questions and, after noting answers, encouraged members to contact anyone on the Search Committee if they have any other thoughts or impressions they would like to add. The Portfolio will be used by candidates to help them discern their interest in applying for the Rector position.

Mrs. Crowley thanked Mrs. McCoy and the Search Committee for their efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

Designated Loose Plate Offering

In response to the recent devastation in Haiti from Hurricane Matthew, particularly in light of St. James's regular missions in that country, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to designate the loose plate offering on All Saints Sunday to Episcopal Relief and Development for Hurricane Matthew relief efforts in Haiti.

OLD BUSINESS

Chiller

Mr. Harper and Mr. Presson reviewed the “frequently asked questions” regarding the chiller replacement proposals, which was emailed to the Vestry in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Moore reported that he and Mrs. Crowley have met with the Endowment Board regarding financing for this project. The Endowment Board supports this purchase and plans to service a loan or a line of credit for the amount necessary, rather than sell securities to pay for the equipment outright.

Mr. Harper reminded the Vestry that the purchase proposals should remain confidential, as the choice of vendor and the negotiated cost has not yet been finalized.

A motion was made that, subject to the Endowment Board securing acceptable financing, the Vestry approve the purchase and installation of two 80 ton Trane chillers at a cost not to exceed \$415,000 to serve the Sanctuary, Gibson Hall, and the Parish House buildings, with the installation of the equipment to be completed by March 1, 2017. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Stewardship

Ms. Hall distributed a Dashboard report, noting that current pledges are more than halfway to last year’s accomplishments. Ms. Hall reported that a list of the names of everyone who has pledged as of October 20 will be acknowledged at the upcoming Feast of St. James’s. Emails will be sent to those who have previously pledged but have not yet done so for the coming year and there will be also an effort to convert those who contribute to the church only through plate offerings into people who make a pledge.

Ms. Hall announced that Julie Simonton from the Diocese will give a special presentation on Sunday October 23 on the topic of generational giving.

Mr. Johnson said that he appreciated Dr. Blair’s support of the Stewardship campaign in his Sunday announcements. Dr. Blair remarked that he’s impressed with the energy and momentum of the campaign, especially since the Peer-to-Peer approach is new.

Finance

Mr. Moore recognized Mrs. Thiel for her work with the financial statements and said that he appreciates her efforts very much. Mr. Moore distributed the financial reports, commenting that it is good that there is nothing remarkable about them. He explained that some adjustments will be made to the Capital Reserve Fund because of previously approved expenditures and strongly recommended specifically setting aside monies in next year’s budget to replenish the Fund. Mr. Moore doesn’t anticipate having to borrow from the Cash Reserves if planned payments for grants from the Vestry Outreach Fund aren’t distributed until late in the year.

Mrs. Hetzer inquired about the stagnant Honduras Fund and it was explained that those monies were given by a donor for a particular use and the donor should be contacted to discuss their disbursement.

Mr. Moore concluded his report by noting that it is expected for pledge receivables in the final months of the year to match last year, which would allow for a balanced budget for 2016.

COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD REPORTS

Outreach and In-reach

Mr. Mullins distributed a written report prepared by Nancy Warman, Director of Servant Ministries. He mentioned how the successful Servant Sunday projects served both in-reach and outreach objectives.

Mr. Mullins reported that the first half of the grants from the Vestry Outreach Fund have been distributed and the remaining funds will be sent by the end of the year. The Outreach Committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the locations of the different agencies supported by the Outreach Funds and all Vestry members are welcomed to join them.

Missions

Mrs. Fuller distributed a written report, noting that the new Chair of the committee is Dr. Andy Smith, who has great ideas and organization. The report listed the six summer mission activities and highlights from each, including a mission trip to Honduras, Youth Mission trips to Olive, NC and southwestern Virginia, and a week-long mission in the city of Richmond, as well as helping with a patient from the World Pediatric Project and hosting Bishop Griselda from the Diocese of Cuba.

Mrs. Fuller announced upcoming mission trips are scheduled to Santiago, Cuba in late October and to Jacmel, Haiti, in early November.

Call and Welcome

Mrs. Skidmore announced that there will be a newcomer “Meet and Greet” on All Saints Sunday and a party at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Wyatt Beazley on November 20.

Stewards of the Earth

Mr. Harper distributed a written report prepared by Britt Van Deusen, Co-Chair of the Stewards of the Earth Committee. The report noted that the committee continues to work towards a “greener” church identity and improved impact on the environment while emphasizing the spiritual and theological significance of becoming a “green” church. Members of the Committee write a column for the quarterly Chimes to spotlight environmental issues. Mrs. Van Deusen’s report also expressed the Committee’s appreciation of the Vestry’s effort to install a more energy-efficient chiller and encouraged the Vestry to consider greater energy efficiency and a smaller carbon footprint in this and all capital improvements.

Children’s Center

Mrs. Hetzer reported that the Children’s Center Board had met earlier in the day and was informed that several donors to the Center are taking advantage of the NAP tax credits. Mrs. Hetzer reported that the Center’s enrollment is currently at full capacity. In an effort to better identify the Children’s Center, a new banner has been purchased with the intention to display it on the playground fence. Some concerns were expressed regarding city zoning ordinances for signage, but after discussion all agreed that the banner could be displayed unless or until the City requests its removal.

SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT

Mrs. Crowley said that she values and respects the Vestry’s time and reiterated that documents sent in advance should be read before the meeting to help with efficiency.

Mrs. Crowley reminded the Vestry that nominations for the next Vestry class were coming up in December. Dr. Blair temporarily excused Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Harper, and Mr. Moore.

INTERIM RECTOR’S REPORT

Dr. Blair said that one of the issues during a transition between rectors is how to maintain consistency and continuity. During the search that ultimately called Randy Hollerith, the Sr. Warden at the time was elected to an additional year on the Vestry and to continue to serve as Sr. Warden during that time. Dr. Blair proposed that the Vestry consider the same approach to leadership during this search and recommend nominating for one-year terms to the Vestry and to elect to continue their current leadership positions Mrs. Crowley as Sr. Warden, Mr. Harper as Jr. Warden, and Mr. Moore as Finance Chair. All three have agreed to this proposal, if it is the desire of the Vestry. The general consensus of the Vestry was one of gratitude that Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Harper, and Mr. Moore were willing to continue to serve in their positions during this transition period. A motion was made to nominate the current leadership for one-year terms, with three additional nominees on the slate to be elected for the usual three-year terms, and for Mrs. Crowley to continue to serve as Sr. Warden, Mr. Harper to serve as Jr. Warden, and Mr. Moore to serve as Finance Chair for that year. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Harper, and Mr. Moore returned to the meeting and thanked everyone for their confidence and support.

OTHER

Attendance for the month of September was distributed.

Mrs. Crowley asked the Vestry to note upcoming events listed on the reverse of the agenda and encouraged all Vestry members to attend the Feast of St. James’s.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Anita Lisk
Secretary

Approved:

Rev. Dr. Thom Blair
Interim Rector

Peggy Crowley
Senior Warden