

Minutes of the Monthly Board Meeting via Zoom May 3, 2020

Present: Moderator Fern Culhane (FC); Assistant Moderator Stephen Workman (SW); Treasurer Len Rieser (LR); Secretary Jane Hain (JH); Trustees Leslie Ferron-Smith (LFS), Peter Johnstone (PJ), Anam Owili-Eger (AOE), Bruce Pollack-Johnson (BPJ); Minister McKinley Sims (MS).

Absent: None

Virtual Chalice Lighting: 2:30.

Agenda Items: Listed in order of the agenda but not necessarily the order discussed.

Minutes, Reports and Updates

- 1. April meeting minutes:** BPJ requested that the line, "There will be a Zoom Council meeting next Sunday after church if BPJ can figure out exactly how to do it." be struck from the document. SW moved to accept as amended. Unanimously approved.
- 2. Minister's comments, info and questions for us:**
 - 2.1. The Committee on Ministry (COM) met last week to do their evaluation. Cathy Mc. has offered to help if necessary.
 - 2.2. MS purchased a Chrome Book to help some of our congregation through the process of connecting through Zoom. It's preloaded with Zoom and bookmarks to watch service. It has helped some congregants but not others.
 - 2.3. He's a little bit more involved with POWER, leading prayer vigils and memorial services on Thursdays at noon for those who have died of the virus, especially those incarcerated.
 - 2.4. MS meets regularly with Joanna and she has already been providing programming for the children and parents, so how about "MS will meet with the RE Coordinator to talk about what more (or else) to do with the kids."
 - 2.5. He discussed combining services over the summer and into fall with the clergy group. He test-ran using video for the sermon today so that we could in the future ask for guest ministers to speak during our service.

Report from Building & Grounds concerning shower construction: Mike F. is requesting that the Board approve the construction of the shower on the second floor to be done over the summer since the building is unoccupied. The cost is estimated at \$18,197, the same as earlier in the year. LFS requested that grab bars be installed even though it will not be an ADA shower. We have promised donations totaling \$39,000. LR stated that he was unfamiliar with where the funding is for this project. He was informed that anonymous donors have promised funds. FC and LR expressed their support for just one ADA bath with shower on the first floor. PJ stated his belief that we will probably have trouble with any kind of capital campaign right now. Mike recommends going ahead with the 1st floor ADA plan with a shower.

Decision: PJ moved to approve the construction of the 1st floor plan (with extension cut into the Duo Room); LFS seconded and the vote was taken and approved. No decision was made concerning the access door – whether to have a push paddle included or not.

3. Moderator's comments:

- 3.1. TPUC: money was approved. Voting was done through chat on Zoom with red and green buttons

but those without computers couldn't vote. This process could be used at our Annual Meeting except that all congregants may not be able to access this feature.

3.2. Bells across America – Sunday, May 3 at 7:00pm to acknowledge emergency workers. Numerous members spoke about the importance of the issues connected to our “essential workers” at this time. PJ agreed to come over to the church and ring the bell for 3 minutes.

4. Treasurer's comments and concerns, financial information, budget plans, Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) from the CARES Act:

4.1. Finances for this year are in good shape; almost ahead of where we should normally be. We should not need to borrow the \$14,000 from the bank as earlier planned.

4.2. The pledge stands in excess of \$185,000. It will involve some budget adjustments but we will do fine with that income. We'll adopt a new 9-month budget in the fall.

4.3. There was discussion concerning the salary of the RE Coordinator who is being paid hourly. Because of illness, she has not worked the full amount 15 hours per week. The complication is that Joanna is being paid hourly while other staff is being paid whether they work or not. FC: The policy on this, and personnel in general, needs to be cleaned up and clarified in the future, but it's important to be supportive of flexible hours.

Decision: PJ moved to pay her for 30 hours per pay period (two weeks) through the end of June. Seconded by SW and approved unanimously.

4.4. PPP through the CARES Act: The Finance Committee asked LR to apply for a loan of 2½ times our average monthly payroll/insurance/utilities to be used over a period of 8 weeks. The maximum amount allowed is \$26,600. Len is proposing that he ask for only \$22,000 because we might not be able to spend the full amount in 8 weeks. This loan should be forgiven but there is not guarantee. Payback could be demanded at 1% interest. The UUA has encouraged all churches to apply. LR filled out the application with the bank and it is in a long queue. If ever approved, he might have 48-72 hours to sign the contract. FC questioned whether we are in compliance. LR says he feels we are. SW and PJ were not comfortable with the plan. BPJ questioned whether we could take the money and donate it to some POWER organization in greater need. FC, AOE and LFS stated that they felt we should not take the money on ethical grounds when we don't need it.

Decision: The Board asked LR to try to withdraw the application and asked LR to explain to the Finance Committee that the Board opposes the decision to stay in alignment with our values.

5. Individual board members' comments and concerns, contracts with congregants through the month:

5.1. PJ reported that two of the congregants he communicates with are still struggling with Zoom and other connections.

5.2. FC added that she knows of at least one other. Maybe by the end of June people can get together in small groups with masks to help one another.

5.3. LFS reiterated that some congregants are really feeling lonely.

5.4. LFS stated that the actual land line instructions proved to be inaccurate when she tested them. AOE suggested mailing out step-by-step instructions that could be taught over the phone and/or phoning them to walk through.

5.5. Some congregants are wondering why they weren't contacted by board members. It was suggested that each board member phone 10 people once each month (to cover the entire directory) to keep in touch. SW and LFS suggested that the names be rotated so that phone calls would be initiated by different board members over time.

MS requested that emails be sent to him about who was phoned.

Tasks and Decisions:

1. **Housing allowance adjustment:** We need to approve the amount of \$2450/month as the Minister's allowance. An error was made in December that needs to be corrected. BPJ moved and SW seconded.
Decision: unanimously approved.
2. **Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) Evaluation for McKinley:** There are seven topics. FC asked that each board member email her his/her first 3 choices to fill out in order of preference.
Decision: Each board member will complete one initial evaluation. There will then be another meeting (May 17) so each evaluation may be amended before LFS combines the parts into one document to be emailed before July 1.
3. **Annual Meeting content and procedures, slate, audit committee:** To comply with the by-laws, we must have an annual meeting in June of each year.
 - 3.1. A sub-committee comprised of SW and BPJ has agreed to come up with some process of how to include all members and friends, and assure that all our members can vote if voting is necessary. There is a belief that up to 300 can meet using Zoom but the problem is that those using a phone would not be able to vote. People will have to learn how to vote using Zoom before the meeting.
 - 3.2. Possible agenda items: LR questioned whether the voting items could be moved to the fall along with the budget meeting.
 - 3.2.1. Vote on the slate of board members
 - 3.2.2. Vote on any new members of the nominating committee
 - 3.2.3. There will be an announcement about the new audit committee but not a vote. The Board selects the Audit committee.
 - 3.2.4. Celebrate the Minister's Letter of Agreement signing
 - 3.2.5. Announce the decision to move the budget meeting to the fall
 - 3.3. Slate of board member changes for 2020-2021:
Moderator: FC
Assistant Moderator: BPJ
Treasurer: Nicole B.
Secretary: JH
Trustees: SW, AOE, LFS, PJ
 - 3.4. Nominating Committee: Shirley G. may be leaving. PJ hasn't spoken to her recently. Ron S. and Maryellen N. are expected to stay on.
 - 3.5. Moderator and Secretary continue their terms for one more year, while Treasurer and Assistant Moderator are cycling out. BPJ will run for Asst. Moderator, SW will run for a straight Trustee position. LR is leaving and Nicole B. is running for Treasurer. Only one of the three remaining trustees will conclude a term but has agreed to run for an additional term. I believe Ron has it correctly in his latest announcement sent out by email. The other two trustees will have their terms end with the Board Secretary and Moderator, June 2021.
4. **Letter of Agreement Signature "Ceremony":** No action taken.
5. **Finance Committee Operating Policy Statement:** The policy was emailed to board members who were asked to read it and report any concerns to FC and LR.

Big Picture

1. **200th Birthday Celebration in a COVID-19 world:** Perhaps we could invite guest ministers to lead a service using the internet. The Tulsa Minister and his congregation are especially attractive candidates. Perhaps people can be thinking about creative ways to use the internet to celebrate.
2. **CARES money – should we accept?** This was covered in paragraph 4.4.

Tasks:

1. **PJ** will ring the church bell for 3 minutes at 7:00pm on May 3.
2. **All board members:** read and report any suggestions/objections to points of the Finance policy.
3. **All board members:** will email FC their top 3 preferences on the Ministerial Assessment form. Each member will fill out one section for a meeting to be held later in the month.
LFS will combine these sections into one document to be emailed by July 1.
4. **All board members:** will try to phone 10 congregants a month just to communicate.
FC will assign groups and rotation.

Amendment: *This was not stated in the meeting but FC asked that this task change be added.*

We have two actions going, both involve contacting the church community. There is the prototype of a Caring Committee which is working with MS and Annabel to regularly cycle through calling everyone to just check in. In addition the Board Members are asked to contact folks in a much shorter list, with each board member contacting 2 or 3 folks on the "Sgt. Pepper" (Lonely Hearts Club) list at least once a week. So for example Sgt. Pepper person #1 gets a phone call from LFS and Pj, they also call Sgt. Pepper person #2 and #3. AOE and FC call Sgt. Pepper people # 4, 5, and 6 while SW and LR call Sgt. Pepper people # 7, 8, and 9.

5. **LR** will pay the RE Coordinator for 30 hours each pay period until the end of June.
6. **LR** will attempt to withdraw the PPP application.
7. **BPJ** and **SW:** will act as a sub-committee to come up with a process so all members and friends can attend and vote at the Annual Meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:00.

Next Meeting: TBD. *This was stated as TBD since there was an additional meeting May 17. The date was not determined at this meeting.*

Next Regular Meeting: June 7, at 2:00pm