

PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING (Virtual)
February 21, 2024

Present: Lois Aldrich, Jim Bonnar, Stephen Larrett, Jeff Giddings, Marc MacQueen, Viola Fairweather, Rev. Peter Connolly

Guests: Kelly Lownds, Susan Hotchkiss

Meeting called to order by Jim Bonnar at 6:36 p.m.

Opening Words: Rev. Peter Connolly read the church's Mission Statement.

Go Around

Consent Agenda:

Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the 1/17/24 PC meeting were approved.

Reports:

Treasurer: Marc MacQueen informed the PC that he is having knee surgery on March 15 and may need help with some of the Treasurer duties for a few weeks. Jeff Giddings offered to work with Marc on this. Discussion of budget (see Discussion Agenda below).

Minister's Report: Rev. Peter Connolly distributed his report which PC approved.

Social Justice Report: The meeting minutes from the Social Justice Team (SJT) were forwarded to the PC for review. The SJT is asking for an update on signage, which had previously been a concern when the SJT was looking to set up a Peace Pole in the church yard. The SJT is seeking approval to work with the Middleboro Rotary Club to have a Peace Pole installed in the front yard. Discussion regarding whether or not the PC supports having a Peace Pole in the church yard, where it would be located, what it would look like, and what value having a Peace Pole brings to the church. The PC asked that the SJT provide a proposal to the PC that would respond to these concerns. Public Relations will also be consulted. Lois Aldrich will relay this request to the SJT at their next meeting.

Signage issue would typically be addressed by Public Relations (PR) and Building & Grounds. However, the lead of the B & G Committee has had health concerns and is not available to coordinate. The main issue has been the lack of visibility of the brown sign on the front lawn, especially at night. Solar lights can address this. Stephen Larrett said he has found a product with a single solar collector that can do the job. The PC approved the \$80 for Stephen to purchase the lighting as well as lumber to set it up. Stephen will work with Jim Bonnar, Alan Melchior, and PR to install the lighting.

RE: Kelly Lownds emailed her report to the PC. No issues reported.

Discussion Agenda:

Budget: The 2024-25 Budget submitted by Marc MacQueen and Jeff Giddings was reviewed and approved. Annual expenditures projected to be \$218,965. This amount

includes 3% raise for staff, \$15,000 for major repairs (long term), and an increase of \$5,000 to the minister salary package. Minister salary for July is not included in the budget. Pledge goal as stated in budget is \approx \$187,000, an increase of 11% from this year's pledge goal.

Mailboxes: Susan Hotchkiss informed the PC that some people have been asking about their church mailboxes, which were dismantled during renovations. We have been moving away from mailboxes, especially because most communications are done via email. However, there may be some people who could use mailboxes due to the nature of their work with the church (for example, Treasurer, PC President, Committee Chairs, etc.). Susan proposes using the double door closet on the Nickerson Ave. side with a container that would hold 12 mailboxes. Jim Bonnar offered to build a mailbox structure that would take less space. Who gets a mailbox would need to be determined. Treasurer will continue to get his mail in the Office Administrator's office, which is locked after hours.

Policies and Procedures:

Rental of Church Facilities Policy; Rental Fee Schedule: Rev. Peter asked the PC to approve the two policies, which incorporate comments previously made by the PC. The PC approved the revised policies.

Alcohol Use Policy: Stephen completed revisions to this policy, which were discussed and approved by the PC.

Parish Committee/Governance (Folder #2): Vi Fairweather provided a summary of her review of policies and procedures related to Parish Committee/Governance. As there are many policies listed in Folder #2, including some that do not exist but may need to be developed, Rev. Peter suggested that, for now, the PC review policies that are currently in place and need revisions. Vi agreed to put together policies that meet these criteria for review and discussion at the next in-person PC meeting (March 20).

One of the policies that will need to be addressed is related to the church's newsletter. The newsletter is currently made available to the congregation via *UU Updates* as well as being posted on the Church's website. In addition, the Office Administrator, Valarie Ortelt, prints hard copies of the newsletter and mails it to a handful of congregants. Given that Val's workload has increased considerably, the PC agreed to consider no longer mailing hard copies of the newsletter. The PC agreed to seek further input from the congregation on this matter in the near future.

Minister's Agenda:

Organizational Chart: The PC agreed to review the Organizational Chart at our next in-person PC meeting (March 20). Rev. Peter will email the most recent draft of the Organizational Chart to PC members prior to the meeting. All agreed it is important to have the chart finalized before a new minister is aboard.

Pledge Drive: Pledge goal for 2024-25 will be \approx \$187,000. Pledge team, including Stewards, is scheduled to meet Sunday at 12:15 in Parish Hall to prepare for the drive, which kicks off on March 3.

Governance Meeting: The next Governance meeting is scheduled for March 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Jim will contact Dan Hotchkiss to see if he is available to attend the meeting to assist us in determining which policies mentioned in the appendix of his book would be most important for our church to develop and implement.

Going-Away Party for Rev. Peter: Vi Fairweather proposed that the congregation have a going-away party for Rev. Peter on Sunday, June 23, to say goodbye and to thank him for shepherding us during this interim period. The party would take the place of Sunday worship. The PC unanimously approved this proposal.

Next PC Meeting: March 20, 2024 in-person

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by *Lois Aldrich*, Parish Clerk