

Sunday, December 12, 2021

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Vestry Meeting Minutes

Time: Sunday, December 12, 2021, 12:56 p.m. to 2:36 p.m.
Location: In-Person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom
Present: Mother Erika Takacs (Rector), Greg Bradley (Warden), Liz Sarnik (Warden), Natalie Archie, Dave Beil, Richard Benson, Steve Britt, Will Cronenwett (via Zoom), Bill Hancox, Amanda Kim, Barbara Newman, Daniel Polley, Mike Trumbold (Treasurer), Michael Waltz (Clerk)
Absent: No one
Next Meeting: Sunday, January 9, 2022, 1:00 p.m. – in-person.

Greg Bradley (Warden) called the meeting to order at 12:56 p.m. Mother Erika gave an opening prayer.

Check In: The vestry thanked Bill Hancox for the exceptional work he did on the parish-wide survey conducted in October. The results, which were reviewed at the December 4th vestry retreat, revealed that parishioners desire more outreach to increase both community involvement and diversity at Atonement. At the retreat vestry members identified specific things that could be done and the amount of resources needed to accomplish them. Today Mother asked the vestry to think of ways to encourage various guilds to make some of these areas priorities in their 2022 goals. During a discussion of things that make Atonement different from many other churches a **motion was made** (Richard Benson) **and seconded** (Bill Hancox) to have an LGBTQ+ affirming symbol on most of our external communications. The **motion passed unanimously**.

Review of November Vestry Meeting Minutes: A **motion was made** (Greg Bradley) **and seconded** (Barbara Newman) to approve the minutes. The **motion passed unanimously**.

Treasurer's Report:

Statement of Financial Position: Mike Trumbold reported that most changes in accounts were due to interest earned but there were decreases in the Education Fund because of payment for the nursery staff and in the Rector's Discretionary account because of assistance to those in need. The Endowment Fund had a negative market adjustment of \$51,305.89. There was an increase in the Operating Savings account because of a prepaid 2022 pledge but \$10,000 from the account was used to pay bills.

November Financials: There was no outstanding activity for the month and overall expenditures were below budget. Pledges from the plate are up in an amount that offsets the decrease in pledges made through Vanco due to the return of more people to church. We had anticipated being slightly in the red at the end of the month but ended up with positive net revenue of \$22,645.36 due to the large prepaid 2022 pledge.

A **motion was made** (Bill Hancox) **and seconded** (Liz Sarnik) to receive the financials. With no further questions or discussion the **motion passed unanimously**.

Stewardship Update: Mike reported that as of today there were 109 pledging units, including 23 new, for \$281,882.92. The campaign is approximately at the same point that last year's was at this time. Mother will be contacting a few of the regular pledgers who haven't responded so far.

Housing Allowance: By Internal Revenue Tax Codes clergy members are given a housing allowance each year. **A motion was made** (Bill Hancox) **and seconded** (Steve Britt) that for fiscal year 2022 the vestry designates \$4,000 from Mother Erika's annual compensation as a housing allowance. After clarifying that this is done to allow for the tax deductibility of some basic housing expenses and that Mother did not feel the need for an increase from prior years, the **motion passed unanimously**.

Draft 2022 Budget: Mike stressed that the draft budget presented by the Finance Guild is very preliminary and that he encourages those who submit budgets to ask for all they think they will need but to understand that adjustments will be made as the budget is refined. He also noted that some companies providing contract services haven't yet submitted next year's estimates. He explained that salaries are projected to increase by 3.5% based on the Diocese recommendation. There was some discussion about whether there will be a Gala next year or whether a different fundraising effort will need to be undertaken.

Reports:

Outreach: Mother reported that the Guild is looking to increase giving to Chiapas and Refugee One this year. Gifts for Refugee One from parishioners are coming in nicely.

Endowment: Greg Bradley explained that each year the church can take between four and six percent from the Endowment Fund for expenses. The By-Laws specify that money from the Fund can be used for capital improvements, pastoral ministries, seed money for new ministries, one-time projects, and outreach. The amount that will be taken will be determined in January. Mother announced that Jerry Mash will be the new chair of the Endowment Guild.

Rector's Report: Mother expects to receive BauerLatoza's preliminary report of the architectural assessment very soon. She also said we've been selected as one of the Chicago-area parishes to participate in Partners for Sacred Places' Sustainable Solutions for Sacred Sites program. We could be part of a Chicago-area cohort or part of a virtual, national cohort; she has requested that we be part of the Chicago-area group but that decision hasn't been made yet.

Necessary work on the furnace was completed at a cost of \$850, which is what was expected.

The project to determine if ParkMobile can help handle the parking lot is moving forward. It has been clarified that we'll need to pay parking taxes and ParkMobile can collect and remit them for us. Questions were raised about Unrelated Business Income taxes and what impact renting the spaces might have on the tax-exempt status of the lot. We are pursuing clarification on those points.

Mother reminded the members that there is a scheduled cleaning of the church on December 18th and encouraged them to attend.

A motion was made (Barbara Newman) **and seconded** (Daniel Polley) to go into executive session. With no questions or discussion **the motion passed unanimously**. At the end of the session **a motion was made** (Richard Benson) **and seconded** (Natalie Archie) to resume the regular meeting. With no questions or discussion **the motion passed unanimously**.

Action/Decision/Discussion Items:

Nominations Committee: The committee has prepared a preliminary list of parishioners who may be able to serve as new vestry members and representatives to next year's Diocesan Convention. They will be refining that list shortly.

Counters: With three new volunteers to serve as counters Mike Trumbold has started the training process. Counting will be easier beginning next year with the elimination of envelopes for pledges.

Church Survey: Bill Hancox distributed the detailed results of the survey to the vestry prior to the meeting. It was agreed that he would prepare a summary to distribute to parishioners.

Financial Guidelines: Mother said the group preparing financial guidelines has completed its work and expects to present the results to the parish at the annual meeting.

Dates for Calendar: Vestry meeting January 9, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Annual meeting January 30, 2022, following the 10:00 mass

The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m. following a blessing by Mother Erika.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Waltz
Clerk of the Vestry