

Sunday, September 12, 2021

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Vestry Meeting Minutes

Time: Sunday, September 12, 2021, 1:01 to 2:27 p.m.
Location: In-Person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom
Present: Mother Erika Takacs (Rector), Greg Bradley (Warden, via Zoom), Natalie Archie, Dave Beil, Richard Benson, Steve Britt, Will Cronenwett (via Zoom), Bill Hancox (via Zoom), Amanda Kim, Barbara Newman, Daniel Polley, Mike Trumbold (Treasurer), Michael Waltz (Clerk).
Absent: Liz Sarnik (Warden)
Next Meeting: Sunday, October 10, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – in-person.

Greg Bradley (Warden) called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Mother Erika gave an opening prayer.

Check In: Greg asked attendees to give a brief update about how they are doing and what has been occupying them recently.

Review of August Vestry Meeting Minutes: A **motion was made** (Barbara Newman) **and seconded** (Steve Britt) to approve the minutes. With no questions or discussion the **motion passed unanimously**.

Treasurer’s Report:

Statement of Financial Position: Mike Trumbold reported that the Endowment Fund was down because of a market adjustment of almost \$30,000. There were excess funds in the Operating account so \$10,000 was transferred to the Operating Savings account.

August Financials: Generally revenue for the month was on budget. Weekly offerings were over budget by \$5,714 mainly because of collections at in-person services. Other miscellaneous receipts included \$1,600 for the picnic table in the north garden and a \$48 donation through AmazonSmile. Expenditures were on target for the most part, but Mike noted that the Rector’s cell phone was over budget because several months’ bills were paid in August, and Worship/Altar Guild was over budget because of a necessary relacquering and polishing of a processional cross.

A motion was made (Will Cronenwett) **and seconded** (Natalie Archie) to receive the financials. After some discussion about parking lot income and procedures and pension expenses the **motion passed unanimously**.

Outreach: Prior to the meeting the vestry received a report of the month’s activities including monetary contributions to Care for Real, the San Benito food pantry, and Episcopal Relief & Development for the Haiti earthquake appeal. Among other activities were a donated meal for Sarah’s Circle and the Back(pack) to School project.

Rector’s Report: Mother Erika discussed a report submitted by Charlie Segal on the condition of the church organ. Charlie has formed a committee of knowledgeable parishioners to assess the condition of the organ and determine what can be repaired and what needs to be replaced. The committee has decided to hire a consultant to do the evaluation; funds to pay for this expense will come from a donation by an individual. After the evaluation is completed the committee will report to the vestry on the condition and recommendations for repairs or replacement.

The Stewardship Guild is planning a campaign for October, called "Food for the Journey," to help parishioners see how pledging helps with things like outreach and our plans for the church going forward. This year's campaign will take place over five Sundays culminating in Commitment Sunday, October 31st. Brief presentations will be made at Sunday masses to provide information to the congregation about the work Atonement is doing. The campaign is earlier this year to help those with budget responsibilities plan better for next year.

Mother reported that Buildings and Property will be meeting on September 14th with BauerLatoza Studio to talk about the timing of the evaluation of our buildings and steps to be taken to go forward with repairs and possible additional uses. The money for the evaluation is coming from last year's drawdown from the Endowment Fund. Mother also mentioned that there have been some repairs made to the church air conditioning and roof. The water heater for the rectory also needs to be replaced.

The group working on developing financial guidelines for Atonement met on September 11th to begin writing procedures for financial transactions. This work will make it easier for anyone assuming responsibility for financial matters in the future because they'll have a guide for the way things should be done.

Partners for Sacred Places contacted Mother Erika suggesting that we apply for a program they have called Bricks and Mortals, and she has done so. If we are selected we will be working with other congregations to determine the best use for our facilities and to plan for the future. Bricks and Mortals is funded by the Lilly Foundation and there would be no cost to Atonement.

Mother discussed issues related to the parking lot and said that she will be looking for a new attendant and talking to the towing company about improving its service. There are numerous issues with the use of the lot and she will be setting up a group to find ways to make it work better for us while enabling neighbors to rent parking when we're not using it.

Action/Decision/Discussion Items:

Sunday School Report: Amanda Kim reported that the first day of Sunday School was a great success. There were 13 attendees ranging in age from first to sixth grade. She will be doing a week-by-week evaluation of the program and may separate it into two classes if additional children participate.

Small Groups: Prior to the meeting Bill Hancox gave the vestry a final report on the meetings held in July and August. He, Mother, and the wardens to use the information gathered to develop a parish-wide survey. That survey will be more quantitative and will go deeper on some issues, like community outreach, raised in the small groups. It will include classification questions to help identify different groups within the congregation. The target for the survey is early October; anyone 16 and older will be encouraged to complete it. During discussion the fact that some small group participants didn't feel they had enough information about vestry meetings and activities. **A motion was made** (Barbara Newman) **and seconded** (Amanda Kim) to include a reminder about vestry meetings in the eblast sent each Thursday before the meeting. After discussion about links to materials to be included and the timing of preparing those materials the **motion passed unanimously**.

Outreach: Mother explained that the meeting planned for September 19th following the 11:00 mass is intended to allow members of the Outreach Guild to talk about how to structure the Guild going forward and explore what kinds of programs we should be doing; it will be a starting point for revitalizing outreach. The meeting is open to the parish and she hopes that additional people will step forward to assume leadership roles.

Open House Chicago: Tim Miller has volunteered to organize our participation in the Chicago Architecture Center October 16-17 program when the church will be among numerous buildings open to the public. It was suggested that we make available a printed copy of the music program because there has been interest in it in the past and it may encourage some visitors to return for services. Volunteers to assist Tim are still welcome.

Gala: Greg Bradley reported that we had approximately 130 attendees at the September 10th event but we sold enough tickets to meet the minimum required by the facility. Most of the items for the silent auction were sold but those remaining will be made available for sale during coffee hours after mass. Greg thanked those who organized and worked on the Gala and announced the winners of the raffle were Adam Kennedy (1st prize), Ann Cassidy (2nd prize), and Tracey Soucy (3rd prize).

Mother announced the The Rev. E. Suzanne Wille has been called to be the rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Ravenswood. Atonement's October 20th Evensong will be used to welcome her. A reception will be held following the service.

Dates for Calendar: Vestry meeting October 10, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m. following a blessing by Mother Erika.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Waltz
Clerk of the Vestry