

Sunday, March 12, 2023

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Vestry Meeting Minutes

Final – Approved April 16, 2023

Time: Sunday, March 12, 2023, 1:02 p.m. to 2:33 p.m.
Location: In-Person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom
Present: Father Dan Puchalla (Interim Rector), Dave Beil (Warden), Amanda Kim (Warden), Natalie Archie (via Zoom), Jennifer Ash, Richard Benson, Charles Bonilla, Ann Cassidy (via Zoom), Rufus Gonzales, Aaron Johnson, Rick Velon, Mike Trumbold (Treasurer), Michael Waltz (Clerk, via Zoom)
Absent: No one
Guest: Amanda Patrick (via Zoom)

Next Meeting: Sunday, April 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m. – in-person at Church of the Atonement and by remote access.

Dave Beil (Warden) called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Father Puchalla offered a prayer.

Review of February Meeting Minutes: **A motion was made** (Charles Bonilla) **and seconded** (Aaron Johnson) to approve the minutes. With no discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Statement of Financial Position: Mike began by saying that the February financial reports had little out of the ordinary. An increase in the Education Fund was because of the contributions by the Hoover family in memory of Joseph Reidinger. Money in the Vestry Fund, which is collected from Vestry members at each meeting, was used for gifts for retiring Warden Liz Sarnik and retiring Vestry members Steven Britt and Barbara Newman. Market changes left the Endowment Fund with a balance of just under two million dollars.

February Statement of Activity: Income in February included Care For Friends' February and March donations. \$2,500 in Other Fundraising is from ticket sales to Amanda Kim's April 1st concert; additional money was received in March. Four hundred dollars under Hospitality is from the Breaking Bread lunches and \$312 in Outreach is from Souper Bowl Sunday; the latter has been sent to Care for Real. Monthly pledges are below budget by \$17,195 but pledges are over budget by \$6,877 year-to-date. Expenses of \$1,004 for Building Services/Repairs included snow removal, mats, and pest control. Utilities were close to budget. Slightly over \$500 for Adult and Children's Formation was for the ushers' de-escalation training, Sunday School supplies, and adult forums. Personnel expenses were close to budget and total expenses were over budget by just under \$2,000.

A motion was made (Rick Velon) **and seconded** (Richard Benson) to receive the financials. With no further discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

For the past two years the internal audit has been conducted by Ann Cassidy and Michael Waltz. The Finance Guild has suggested that it may be a good practice to rotate members off the audit committee periodically. Ann pointed out that there are procedures for the audit as part of the financial guidelines so having someone new shouldn't be a big issue. During discussion it was agreed not to expand the committee but to look for someone to replace one of the current members this year and rotate the other off next year. Mike will ask the Finance Guild members for suggestions.

Mike noted that he's looking for another bank in part because Old National closed its branch near the church, making it more difficult for counters to make the weekly deposit, but primarily because their systems are difficult

to work with. He asked for suggestions especially for banks with a neighborhood branch. Aaron Johnson recommended that the Finance Guild consider creating guiding principles for selecting financial institutions that align with Atonement's mission.

Reports:

Rector's Report: Father felt things went well last month so his report was forward looking rather than a summary of what took place in February. He explained that resolution 185 passed at the last Diocesan convention asked parish Vestries to develop an anti-racism plan, report on it at the annual meeting, and give a copy to the Bishop. He expects the plan to include some training for parish leadership. Aaron Johnson volunteered to work with him and Father asked for one other member to participate. Father also discussed "Church as Transformation," a program open to all regardless of length of time at Atonement. It will be an opportunity to learn more about who we are, how to ground our spiritual practices as sources of transformation, and how to become ready for God's next chapter in our and Atonement's story. He is looking for up to five members of the Vestry to serve as facilitators for small group sessions. Several members expressed interest but needed to check schedules to be certain they can commit to the five weekly one and one-half hour sessions to be held between May 9th and June 6th and the three weekly training sessions that will precede that.

S4 and B & P: A written report for the joint Sustainable Solutions for Sacred Sites and Buildings and Properties Guild was provided before the meeting but Dave Beil expanded on two points. The committee met with the architect to discuss the ramp options and is now focused on the south option; the architect is refining the proposal. He also reported that there was a sewage backup in the basement of the parish house. The cleanup has been completed but the plumbing will be scoped to determine the cause of the problem and what is needed to correct it.

Outreach: There was no meeting in February but a written report discussed numerous projects the Guild has been working on. Highlights include \$1,050 raised for the Sarah's Circle walk, and \$312 and 97 pounds of canned food during the Souper Bowl drive for Care for Real. Outreach donated \$1,500 to Episcopal Relief and Development's earthquake fundraiser for Syria/Türkiye and encouraged parishioners to make their own contributions.

Block Party: Rufus Gonzales reported that the group has committed to August 26th for the block party. He said there are many good ideas for the event and noted that they hope to get sponsorships for some of the things that will be offered.

Concert Fundraiser: Amanda Kim said the concert at her home on April 1st is sold out but there are still three donated tickets available. Once the concert is over Amanda wants to get additional small fundraising events on the calendar.

Parish Life Guild: The Guild had its first meeting in February and decided to change the name from Congregational Life to Parish Life to emphasize the goal of building relationships through all of Atonement. They are developing a charter to be discussed at the March meeting. The Guild is sponsoring the Breaking Bread lunches and Simple Soup Suppers. They're working on an electronic photo directory for the congregation and expect more information shortly after Easter.

Vestry Vacancy: After Amanda Patrick left the meeting **a motion was made** (Richard Benson) **and seconded** (Aaron Johnson) to go into executive session to discuss candidates for the vacancy. With no discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously. **A motion was made** (Richard Benson) **and seconded** (Ann Cassidy) to leave executive session and resume the regular meeting. With no discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously. **A motion was made** (Charles Bonilla) **and seconded** (Aaron Johnson) to appoint Amanda Patrick to fill the remainder of the term for the vacant position. With no discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

Other Future Business: There was a brief discussion about whether or not Atonement can be involved in activities like promoting legislation on social justice issues without jeopardizing our tax-exempt status. No decisions were made.

Dates for Calendar: ECRA Meeting/Lunch at St. Gertrude's – March 15, noon (RSVP: psullivan@stgertrudechicago.org)
Breaking Bread Lunch – March 21, noon
House Concert Fundraiser – April 1, 6:00 p.m.
Palm Sunday – April 2
Maundy Thursday – April 6, 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday – April 7, 7:00 p.m.
Easter Vigil – April 8, 8:00 p.m.
Easter – April 9
Easter Egg Hunt – April 9, 10:00 a.m.
Next Vestry Meeting – April 16, 1:00 p.m. (changed to accommodate Easter)
Evensong – April 26, 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m. following a prayer by Father Dan.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Waltz
Clerk of the Vestry