

Sunday, December 11, 2022

Episcopal Church of the Atonement Vestry Meeting Minutes

Time: Sunday, December 11, 2022, 1:10 p.m. to 2:34 p.m.
Location: In-Person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom
Present: Father Dan Puchalla (Interim Rector), Liz Sarnik (Warden), Dave Beil (Warden), Natalie Archie (via Zoom), Jennifer Ash, Steve Britt, Ann Cassidy, Rufus Gonzales, Amanda Kim, Barbara Newman, Rick Velon, Mike Trumbold (Treasurer), Michael Waltz (Clerk)
Absent: Richard Benson

Next Meeting: Sunday, January 8, 2022, 1:00 p.m. – in-person at Church of the Atonement and via Zoom.

Liz Sarnik (Warden) called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. followed by a prayer by Father Puchalla.

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

Treasurer's Report:

Statement of Financial Position: Mike Trumbold explained that the Capital and Columbarium CDs had matured and were transferred to new CDs at much better rates at Morgan Stanley. The money from the Columbarium CD was combined with the Columbarium Money Market and \$2,482 from the Operating Account to make a new \$40,000 CD. The Endowment Fund had a positive market adjustment of \$108,370 plus interest of \$675.

November Statement of Activity: Revenue from ParkMobile is steady and weekly offerings continue to be slightly over budget. Building revenue was down because of changes to some tenants. All Souls income was one-third of budget and there was no income from the Thanksgiving service. Building maintenance for the Church and parish house included a new timer for outside lighting, repairs to the north gate and fence, winterizing the parking lot drains, and Roto-Rooter for the flooded basement. Adult Catechesis was for forum speakers and new furniture was purchased for the Sunday school rooms. The Legacy Society spent \$493 for the annual All Souls reception and Stewardship expenses of \$904 were for mailing campaign materials. Furniture was also purchased for the office in November. Personnel costs continue over budget because of a mid-year increase in one salary and the addition of one person, the latter of which will be offset by the planned withdrawal from the Endowment Fund. Net revenue had a deficit for the month caused mostly by timing issues.

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

After a discussion explaining that federal tax law allows clergy to designate a portion of their salary as housing for tax purposes and that such a designation has no financial impact on the parish **a motion was made** (Amanda Kim) **and seconded** (Steve Britt) that for fiscal year 2023 the Vestry designates \$40,000 from Father Dan's annual compensation as a housing allowance. With no further discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

Special Projects: As promised last month prior to the meeting Mike provided the Vestry with detailed reports about the expenses for building repairs/maintenance and technology upgrades.

Stewardship Update: Mike provided a chart of where the stewardship campaign is now compared to several prior years. So far we're lagging behind, with approximately \$279,000 from 98 pledgers. He mentioned that some people will pledge after the first of the year.

2023 Budget: Mike sent the Vestry the Finance Guild's "ideal" budget for 2023 before the meeting. He stressed that 80% of the budget depends on pledges and it is important to increase those numbers. Mike also noted that it will be very important to have one or more fundraisers in 2023 to generate money in addition to pledges. He explained that many of our expenses, such as utilities and pensions, are things we don't control. The choir has asked for an increase to allow for two more calls and some soloists during the summer, but they are planning for the same number of members and the same rate per call. The suggested budget also includes the Diocese's recommended cost of living increase and money for Search Committee expenses but nothing for expenses related to the new Rector. After some discussion it was agreed that the January meeting, when we'll have a better sense of pledges, will be primarily about the budget. Before then members are asked to think about ways to generate additional income to close the gap between pledges and expenses.

Reports:

Rector's Report: In the available time after his pastoral and administrative duties Father Dan has been focusing on community building. He completed Advent reflections meetings and held a trip to the Lincoln Park Zoo Lights for the group of parishioners in their twenties and thirties. He also met with Richard Benson to discuss other community life ideas

Outreach: The Vestry received a written report of the Outreach Guild's recent activities. The RefugeeOne drive is underway. Those working on Care for Real hope to have a donation drive after the New Year. Atonement's participation in Care For Friends is growing and a children and family volunteer day is planned for late December. There was discussion about possibly changing the day meals are provided to Sarah's Circle to allow more people to get involved. Sarah's Circle and RefugeeOne still need someone to lead those efforts. The Guild organized the red ribbons hung on the fences as well as a World Aids Day liturgy and anointing of the sick at the December 1st mass. It is hoped to do more community outreach for this event next year. The Guild also agreed to a new way of doing remaining year-end donations, with larger amounts distributed to Chiapas, Care For Friends, and Sarah's Circle, and the balance divided among others we've donated to in the past.

Buildings and Property Guild/ S-4: Dave Beil shared the minutes from the December meeting. The Guild will be assessing repairs for the rectory building including the vacant second floor. An estimate for the expansion of the Columbarium is being developed. Dave and Richard will meet with someone to explore setting up a solar project to see if Atonement could generate enough solar to supply the building and sell some surplus to the city. The Guild is ready to move forward with exploring plans to restore or replace the ramp to the church, as discussed at the last meeting. **A motion was made** (Dave Beil) **and seconded** (Rufus Gonzales) to allocate \$4,550 for the design of two options for the potential ramp project. With no further discussion or questions **the motion passed** unanimously.

Action/Discussion Items

Vestry School: The Evanston and North Chicago Deaneries sponsor a Vestry School at North Park University. Scheduled for next February, it's a full-day session for new members and an afternoon for returning members, clergy, and wardens. Father Dan encouraged all who can to attend; sign up materials will be available soon.

Realm: A question was raised about using the directory feature. Matt Rodgers and Father will develop a plan for the rollout of the directory to parishioners.

Pledge Calling List: Prior to the meeting Father Dan distributed a list of people who have previously pledged but haven't this year. Each Vestry member was assigned four people to contact by phone; Father asked that the contacts be completed before Christmas and any information gathered given to Mike Trumbold. At the meeting Father provided and discussed materials to help guide members through the calls and answer questions.

Vestry Nominations: Although there has been some interest in serving on the Vestry nominations are still needed to replace the members finishing their terms. The nominations committee will meet to discuss candidates on December 18.

Dates for Calendar: Epiphany – January 6
 Next Vestry Meeting – January 8 at 1:00 p.m.
 Evensong – January 25
 Annual Meeting – January 29

The meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m. following a prayer by Father Dan.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michael Waltz
Clerk of the Vestry*