

**First Church Congregational Council Meeting
September 28, 2021; 7:30 pm – Zoom Meeting**

Minutes

In Attendance: Jim Muschett, David Spollett, Jacqueline Paige, Craig Way, Patty Bilotto, Joy Nazzarro, Rite Skog, Elisabeth Pavlofsky, Wendy Williams-Brown, Carrie Curtin, Maria Ferrante, Heidi Butler, John McGeehan

Call to Order

Opening prayer

John McGeehan: Welcoming the Afghan family

- Likely to receive a “humanitarian parolee” who are not entitled to any rights and privileges of a refugee, but same need for services / professionals that were supporting efforts for nation building (ie. Journalists, human rights activists, women’s rights activists) / have up to 2 years to seek asylum
- IRIS: opportunity to “own” the experience of the family
- Pro rata share of 40 hours/week and initial cash call (\$15K) with coalition
- IRIS preparing for 700 individuals / CIRI preparing for 100
- 7 member coalition (Al Madany Center, Christ and Holy Trinity, First Church, St. Luke’s ...)
 - MOU and SELF assessment
- Town Hall tomorrow (9/29) for leaders and committed volunteers / Nikki Kenney will be our representative from First Church on the Steering Committee
- May receive family by end of October

Jim Muschett made a motion to approve minutes from 9/1/2021. Motion was seconded by Joy Nazzarro. The motion was unanimously approved.

Maria Ferrante: Netflix plan to filmed at First Church / will be visiting church on October 18th for 4 hours / December 6-8th for prep, filming, restore of Sanctuary / Compensation of \$15000 + additional labor fees / Maria and Jacque to sign on 9/29

- Jim Muschett made a motion to approve the use of Sanctuary by Netflix for a contracted amount. The motion was unanimously approved.

Personnel / Search Committee: Update on Pastoral discernment / cottage meetings.

- 18 cottage meetings scheduled / strong cross section of church

Facilities: Updates on approved upgrade to electrical service and HVAC installation.

- Unanimous approval at All Church Meeting / \$100K upgrade of electrical / \$160K to install air circulation and distribution system + ultraviolet light system + preventative maintenance on boiler
- Assessed and chose to use MERV 13 filtration and sound insulation in duct work

- Estimated annual maintenance for system / 2 visits/yr for \$945/yr / warranties for the equipment
- 3 column wall to surround the system in garden will be nice stone and reduce sound
- HDC does not require approval
- Survey complete by mid-October □ drawings completed □ bid out with electrical companies (~2-3 month process with UI) / HVAC work can be done and then will be live once electrical was complete

Finance Board Report

- Jacque made a motion to move \$2000 from the Invite Love and Bless Pathway and \$500 from the Racial Justice Pathway to support to support Afghan Refugee Program. David Spollett seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.
- Update on 127 Rowland Road Parsonage Sale / Went on the market on Friday, 9/24/21. Had 10 showings on Friday and Saturday with 4 offers by Saturday morning. All offers are at or over the asking price of \$1,149,000. We are in conversations with one offer in particular and should know the resolution by 10/11/21.
- **Finance Board Initial Recommendation for Distribution of Money**
 - 40-50% of net to Bulkeley Maintenance Fund in Endowment
 - \$100K to Outreach at \$10K/year for at least 10 years. Set up a separate account in the endowment.
 - Balance of \$475,000 to be used for property improvements both cosmetic (to attract new members) and functional.
 - Recommend Vanessa to head up a team to decide distribution and target projects with the goal of presenting at Congregational Meeting in December 2021.
 - Keep in mind existing debt of \$329,798.58 636 Old Post Road Mortgage and \$75,548.16 to pay off balance of line of credit\
- **Endowment is currently at \$2,077.052.92**
 - Non-profit endowment target is 2x annual budget. Our annual budget in 2020 was roughly \$800K or \$1.6K should be retained in the endowment at all times
 - We have \$477K over and above the recommended minimum less \$260K for HVAC and electric work or a balance of \$217K.
- **2022 Budget is Due on Halloween 2021**
 - Jacque will email to everyone who has a line-item to budget by 9/30. Please fill in your lines by hand or by typing and return to her or Maria by 10/31/21.

Joy Nazarro presented on the Three Kings Bazaar for the first weekend in December.

- Meetinghouse Committee are still clear that we do not have activities in church or sanctuary until new system is in place
- Suggest having in Wakeman Hall, Stage, Jones Wing on a smaller scale
- Hotdogs, bake sale and hot chocolate outside + caroling
- Concern for getting volunteers for tag sale / storage of goods before the event
- Jim Muschett made a motion for concentration on outdoor event. Motion was seconded by Rita Skog. All others approved. Jacque Paige opposed. No abstentions.

Jacque Paige presented Michael Traum's report from the Property Management Board regarding the sanctuary improvement and repair projects.

- Discussion points:
 - Memorial Garden question about access / potential to build pathway
 - Vanessa's idea (presented by David) for a Hobart Scholarship to Montessori
 - 5 year lease to Montessori
 - Concern about cross from chapel
- Jacque Paige made a motion to convert Hobart Chapel to Montessori elementary classroom to be funded through the facilities maintenance fund in the endowment for \$15K and begin as soon as possible. Motion was seconded by Craig Way. Jim Muschett amended it to refer for a congregational vote. Amendment was seconded by Rita Skog.
 - Discussion points:
 - Have regular chapel attendees if they have been asked about their feelings about relocation? Jacque Paige has spoken to about 25 people, but once they have heard the solution seems fine.
 - David Spollett called for a vote of amended motion. There were 4 votes for the amended motion and 5 votes against. Motion failed
 - Jim Muschett called for a vote of the original motion. There were 8 votes for the original motion and 1 abstention. Motion passed.
- Jacque made a motion to expand and improve the Children's Chapel to be funded through the facilities maintenance fund in the endowment for \$12K and begin as soon as possible. Joy Nazarro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Comments: Jim Muschett likes the idea and would like to consider that space as a chapel.
 - Library books: stored for time being
 - Book group book shelves will be saved
 - 2 memorials will be safely stored from Library
 - AV equipment to closet in Deacon's Room
 - Other business
 - Curtain for stage
 - Tiffany Windows Lexan removal
 - Starter list to prioritize for the working group concerning building improvements

Benediction provided by Heidi Butler

Meeting adjourned by Jim Muschett at 9:56