

Minutes of Congregation Council Meeting
May 19, 2020
7:00 PM

- I. **Call to Order** at 7:04 pm. Note that this meeting was a virtual meeting, with members of Council calling in via a Zoom arrangement, allowing for audio only or audio-visual participation.
- A. **Attendance:** M. Binkley, M. Blower, F. Casciano, R. Doty, Pr. R. Elliott, K. Ervin, S. Mathieu, C. McGrath, K. McNally, N. McNally, C. Pirrotta, Pr. T. Reichley, D. Rohrbach, Pr. S. Steele, M. Stanziola, R. Stevens
- B. **Excused Absences / Absent:** None
- C. **Devotions:** Mark Blower
- II. **Approval of Minutes**
- April 28, 2020 Council Meeting - Motion:** To approve April 28 council meeting minutes as submitted - by C. Pirrotta, second by M. Blower. Motion **Approved**.
- Minutes of Council Electronic Votes of April 30 – May 1 and May 16-17, 2020 – Motion:** To approve the minutes of the Council electronic votes of April 30 – May 1 and May 16-17 as submitted – by F. Casciano, second by M. Binkley. Motion **Approved**.
- III. **Staff Reports**
- Pr. Elliott stated that he was proud of what the staff has done in recent weeks, with the transition to on-line activities. He did observe a potential concern that staff seemed now to be always “on duty” in that atmosphere, and therefore that arrangements for staff “off duty” days needed to be made.
- IV. **Mission Team Reports**
- A. **Outreach** – A meeting of the Mission Team was recently held; emphasis remains on rebuilding Team membership and definition of near-term priorities, especially within the context of the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus. It was noted that data are available on community needs, which should help the Team in its work.
- B. **Faith Formation for Children and Nursery School** – Efforts to define a workable VBS program continue. Input from parents seems to suggest a format using one day per week versus four straight VBS days may be preferable.
- C. **Faith Formation for Youth** – At a recent meeting, attempts continued to define optimum ways to increase the opportunities for and numbers present for events targeting catechetical-age and high-school-age youth.
- D. **The Ad Hoc Building Task Force** will be meeting soon to continue its efforts.
- E. **Stewardship** – The discussion of activities planned for the traditional fall pledging period is on-going; the emphasis is likely to be on promoting methods of on-line giving.

F. Finance – (1) Revenues during April were about \$74.6k (\$0.4k under plan) and expenses were about \$88.6k (\$3.3k under plan), resulting in a month that was slightly better than expected (+\$2.9k). As for March, the timing of a couple of large contributions assisted in the better-than-expected result.

(2) Results from early May (1-11) were generally positive, again aided by two large contributions. With continued good revenue over the last three weeks of the month, the revenue plan for May should be met.

(3) Monies from the PPP loan have been received. Tracking of salary, utility and other relevant expenditures is underway, to ensure a high percentage of the loan is converted to a grant.

G. Staff Support – Meetings of the Team have occurred, focusing primarily on the upcoming retirement of Deacon Jane Elliott and the transition of her duties and responsibilities to others. Input from Deacon Jane suggests that about 50% of her time recently has been spent on liturgy / worship preparation, 30% on communications, and 20% on CFL and other adult-faith-formation activities. Nikki Clark is likely to assume responsibility for preparing the PowerPoint slide sets used during on-line worship. Pastor Tami has taken over responsibilities regarding welcoming and integrating new members into the congregation. Some small group and other activities may need to be more lay-volunteer-led over the coming months, to ensure that the individual(s) who may be hired to take on assigned duties previously with Deacon Jane have a chance to transition into those roles.

For the short term (e.g., six months), Staff Support is recommending hiring an individual for about 19-20 hours per week, focusing on liturgy / worship duties and Center for Faith and Life (CFL). For the longer term, Staff Support believes it may be appropriate to use two part-time positions – one, a “salaried, half time” position focusing on liturgy / worship preparatory activities and CFL, and two, a part-time Director of Communications, given the needs of on-line worship and other on-line congregation activities and the probability of growing technological demands on the church to function effectively.

Further discussion may be found under Section VI.B below.

V. Old Business

A. Re-opening Task Force

The re-opening task force has met once in May and plans another meeting during May. They are working on completing a matrix using color-coded re-entry headers on one axis (red, orange, yellow, and green) and activity headers on the other axis (worship, music rehearsals, CFL, fellowship, and so on). Individuals have been assigned to complete specific “boxes” on the chart. On completion and verification with health and ELCA authority guidance, the completed matrix will be brought to Council for finalization. Pr. Elliott observed that it will be a “long time” until LCHS will be able to offer worship

services similar to those pre-pandemic. Generally, there is conceptual agreement that re-entry into the facility is unlikely until the quality of experience which could be offered would be better than that offered on-line. Note was made that LCHS may need to offer a sort of simulcast in the Nave, the Fellowship Center, and the Speary Café if social distancing is required or prudent even after re-entry to the facility.

It was stated that Bob Stevens is planning a Council Forum on Wednesday May 27 at 12 noon and 7 pm on-line, to discuss status of several items of relevance to members of the congregation.

B. Capital Project: Design Phase Approval

Work has continued with Arthur Funk and Sons Inc. Construction Services regarding development of needs for pre-construction services, primarily regarding architectural and structural services (~\$29k), interior design services (~\$9k), and civil engineering services (~\$44k). Those services, plus construction manager pre-construction services (~\$24k) add to a May 15, 2020 figure of \$105,947. Costs would not be billed to LCHS until either construction starts or one year has passed since date of the services proposal (May 15, 2020).

Work on the design phase involves “the site engineering, permitting and other design aspects of the project to generate a final scope and bid pricing for the project”. It was stated that the project now includes removal of the canopy at the center entrance and will consider in more detail the AV and IT aspects of the project.

Motion: The Building Project Team moves that Council authorize the Team to enter into a contractual arrangement with Arthur Funk and Sons Inc. Construction Services for pre-construction services for a cost not to exceed without prior approval \$106,000, based on the May 15, 2020 proposal from Funk and Sons. M. Blower seconded the motion.

The motion was **Approved**.

VI. New Business

A. Memorial Garden Tree Replacement

The existent white pine trees have become quite large and shed needles into the gutters of the Fellowship Center. Replacement of these trees with slower growing Norway Spruce trees is recommended by the Property Team, to maintain a visual and sound barrier which does not interfere with the rain gutter system. Cost is estimated at \$7.5k from the Memorial Garden Fund. **Motion:** The Property Team requests Council authorize replacement of the existent white pine trees between the Memorial Garden and Cedar Crest Blvd. with Norway Spruce, at a cost of about \$7.5k from the Memorial Garden Fund. The motion was seconded by C. McGrath. Motion **Approved**.

B. Staff Support Position Description

(This follows up on the discussion under Section IV.G above.)

A proposed position description for an Acting Director of Liturgy and Center for Faith and Life was brought before Council. It was noted that changes to the description may

be appropriate once a viable candidate(s) for the position is identified.

Pr. Elliott asked members of Council if there was a sense of Council that staff should proceed in identification of possible candidates. After discussion, the sense of Council appeared to be a “yes” to Pr. Elliott’s query. Note was made that one candidate has been identified who will consider level of interest in such a position. The NEPA Synod may be asked to help in identifying viable candidates if LCHS determines that to be necessary.

Three relevant points from the discussion are as follows: (1) a temporary position is deemed appropriate for now, given the pandemic and with a new person in a new position; (2) the cost of two part-time positions without benefits would be expected to be less than the budgeted cost of the current full-time position with benefits; and (3) the second part-time position (in communications) may not be filled until early in 2021.

C. Wotring Endowment Changes

The Wotring family has requested changes be made to the endowment fund to increase the flexibility of the congregation to use the fund as accumulated. It is now up to the congregation to accept the proposed changes. Pr. Elliott made the **motion** that R. Slimmer, M. Casciano, R. Micheletti, and Pr. Elliott be authorized to sign the revised Wotring endowment documents as trustees for the congregation. M Blower seconded the motion. Motion **Approved**.

VI. Next Steps

A. Next Meeting Date: June 16 at 7 PM

B. To Do/Assignments: Devotions for June 16 – Chris McGrath

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by Pr. Steele.

Time of adjournment: 8:28 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Doty, Council Secretary