

Bethesda Episcopal Church
Saratoga Springs NY

Minutes: Vestry Meeting
Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Vestry
Mark Claverie
Darren Miller
Paul Ruzicka (absent)
Mary Withington
Geoff Delbridge
Gordon Boyd
Catherine Berheide
Mark Griffin
Jane Agee
Geneva Henderson
Sara Manny

Clergy
Dean Marshall J. Vang, Interim Rector
Peter Sweeney, Deacon

Treasurer

Anne Van Acker (not present)

Call to order: Dean Vang called to order the regular meeting of the Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry at 7:30 PM on February 25, 2015 at the Parish Hall on 43 Washington Avenue

Devotions: Deacon Sweeney began the meeting with devotions.

New Business: Dean Vang welcomed Jane Agee and Sarah Manny to the vestry, thanked Delbridge for his service as clerk and suggested Henderson to take over as clerk. Everybody tried to move at once to accept Henderson as clerk, but Delbridge was slightly ahead of the pack and his motion was recorded. Seconded by Boyd, unanimous approval. We will take a Vestry photo next meeting (March 25th at 7:00). There will be a service league supper on the 14th of March at 6:00 with a Q&A regarding the progress on the new parish house.

Previous meeting minutes: Delbridge moved that minutes from the previous meeting be accepted, seconded by Griffin, unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Miller reported that we are running about \$4,000 behind budget on pledge and plate, likely because of repeated inclement winter weather on Sundays. He suggested that the Stewardship committee remind people to catch up by mailing in their pledges if they are unable to make it to church. Total income is only behind by about \$90, but this includes the vestment donation (\$15,000) which cannot be used for anything else, so we really need to raise pledge and plate figures. In reality, we're having to pay higher utility costs than last year (more cold weather). Spending less on unemployment. It's likely that we'll catch up on the deficit once attendance improves over warmer months. He suggested that the finance committee work on maximizing the income from our assets and pointed out the necessity of consistency in the way checks are written. Berheide moved to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Claverie, approved unanimously.

Interim Rector's Report: Dean Vang reports that Attorney Casey has informed him that she's heard from the realtor that the purchaser for the Ensley property may want to close before the end of March. She has provided an agreement which will ratify the previous Vestry's agreement to sell the Ensley property for \$650,000.00. Dean Vang read this agreement aloud. Boyd moved that we accept the agreement,

Delbridge seconded the movement and the motion passed unanimously. Dean Vang commended the congregation for its participation in the annual meeting and Boyd for his Building Committee presentation. He requested that copies of the minutes henceforth be sent to the Parish Secretary as well as to the Vestry. We have already started receiving applications for an administrative assistant and have 28 so far which he reported having “scanned with [his] priestly eyes”. The advertisement for an administrative assistant has been scheduled to run for only one week, which ends this Sunday. He hopes to have narrowed down the list to a few finalists by the end of March. We will attend the Leadership Conference at the Spiritual Life Center on Saturday. The conference will focus on how to share one’s faith and will consist largely of small group discussions. We will discuss Commission Leadership at the next meeting but, in the interim, Dean Vang urged that we consider Communications (such as the newsletter) and Personnel (such as putting together an employee manual). Henderson pointed out the importance of a Facebook presence in reaching younger people and connecting with youth. Agee pointed out the importance of the archives in preserving church history, such as Vestry minutes and the process of building the new parish house.

Deacon’s Report: Deacon Sweeney is continuing to visit Wesley, specifically Sr. Mary Angelo and Mary Eddy, who he reports is doing very well with physical therapy and “cruising around”. Confirmation class will start on Sunday with 27 sessions planned. Confirmation will be on the 4th Sunday of Advent in 2015. He is looking forward to the Mission trip to Harrisburg with the youth and enjoyed delivering the Sunday sermon recently.

Building Committee: Boyd reported that the building committee met Feb 11th and earlier tonight and had unanimously accepted a resolution on Feb 11th that the cost per square foot should not exceed \$250 and the square footage should be approximately 29,600, including the basement (resolution attached). Much of the Vestry had not received the emailed attachments so Boyd summarized and those who had copies passed them around for review. Boyd requested that the vestry adopt the resolution and stated that the next step is to get tenants to commit financially to the project. He hopes we will be able to break ground by the end of the year. Griffin expressed faith in the plan and moved to accept the resolution. Miller seconded, unanimous approval.

Boyd then presented a contract proposal from the Episcopal Church Foundation for a feasibility study, which will cost \$10,975.00, which we can take from the income from sale of property. This study will develop a case statement and questionnaire for potential significant donors which will allow us to estimate what the parish can afford to raise. Boyd estimates approximately \$2,000,000.00 in special gifts and \$600,000.00 from parish donations (three times annual pledge and plate). Henderson requested clarification regarding the time-frame and the way projected finances had been estimated. Boyd moved that we enter into the contract with the Episcopal Church Foundation, Miller seconded, all in favor.

Stewardship Report: Delbridge reported that giving statements went out, but did not include donations from the Building Fund Party or the last three weeks of 2014. He expects that new statements would go out by the end of the week. Next year, all donations should be included in the final statement with interim statements coming out quarterly. We have not yet been able to switch over to Church Windows.

Claverie moved to approve Dean Vang’s expenses. Griffin seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Closing: Delbridge motioned to dismiss the meeting. Claverie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.