

Bethesda Episcopal Church
Saratoga Springs NY

Minutes: Vestry Meeting
Wednesday January 17, 2018

Vestry
Mark Claverie
Darren Miller
Steven Rucker
Gordon Boyd
Catherine Berheide
Mark Griffin
Jane Agee
Field Horne
Sara Manny
Mayumi Kato
Pam Houde

Clergy
Dean Marshall J. Vang, Interim Rector

Clerk
Geneva Henderson

Treasurer
John Van der Veer (excused)

Call to order: Dean Vang called to order the regular meeting of the Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry at 7:00 PM on January 17, 2018 at Skidmore College.

Devotions: Agee began the meeting with devotions.

Previous meeting minutes: Horne moved to accept the minutes from the previous meeting, seconded by Manny, unanimously approved.

Interim Rector's Report: Christmas was wonderful despite weather, though attendance was down by about 100 (likely largely due to the snowstorm); this affected our December income. Solenski did a fantastic job decorating the church. 1st Baptist is going to have to rearrange tenancies, so our office space there will likely move across the hallway sometime in the next few months. There will be no increase in rent and we will have room for file cabinets. The room will not be shared with anyone else and we will have room for a table for small meetings, so this will be a positive change. The Saratoga Clergy Association will no longer report to the mayor, but may invite the mayor to meetings twice a year. The Parish Leadership conference will be on the last Saturday in January. Its theme is "Empowering the Laity for Further Ministry in the Parish". Commission on Ministry is moving Landon from postulancy to candidacy. Church attendance has dropped, likely due to weather.

Churchwardens' Reports: Miller: We have four candidates for the five vestry vacancies. Horne moved and Boyd seconded the nomination of Ann Bullock, Marcia McDonald, John Huppoch and Jamie Piraino to vestry. The motion passed unanimously. He and Boyd have been investigating setting up a 501c3 to serve as property manager of the new parish house and would like to retain Kristin Pratt of Young Summer to represent us in this matter. Horne moved, Kato seconded, all in favor. Miller met with the Wilton Town Assessor last month to discuss removing

the rectory from the tax rolls and has consulted with Ann Casey (Bullock)* who talked to the County Assessor, who has agreed with our position. Ann Casey and Miller are putting together a package to submit to the Town of Wilton.

Berheide: Elaine provided figures for how much has been raised for flowers and how much they cost. Planning to budget only \$1000 for Christmas 2018 (about half of what we spent in 2017) and \$800 for Easter. We'll only have flowers on the altar when people donate money for that Sunday.

Treasurer's Report: Berheide gave the report in the absence of Van der Veer. Unrestricted support came in about as budgeted. Temporarily restricted support was only about 60% as budgeted. 2017 budget expected \$35,000 from Griffith, \$5000 to seminary scholarship \$3,600 from Weideman, \$4,000 from Parke fund and about \$2,000 for fuel, but not sure which fell short (except seminary which was removed). Rent hadn't been budgeted, neither had \$3,600 for moving Vang into Rectory. Program and building expenses were far over budget. (Building makes sense (Boyce & Drake), program are flowers, for part, but unsure what the rest is.) Only brought in \$24,500 in December (vs \$29,800 in 2016). Henderson moved to accept the treasurer's report, Claverie seconded, all in favor.

2018 Budget: Budget (attached) was circulated via email. Includes a new line for donations from new parishioners so we can track how that's doing. Budgeted \$1000 from the Weideman trust to set up a church school area in the basement. Not donating to Nashotah House this year. Balanced budget. Boyd moved to accept the 2018 budget, Horne seconded, all in favor.

Vang proposed eliminating the requirement for two signatures on checks less than \$1000. Berheide suggested talking to auditor to see what she would suggest.

Building Committee: Boyd reported that we still need to raise about 2,000,000 and still need to bring cost of building down. Have a call set up for the 24th with the Waite firm and then should be able to meet with Bonaccio.

Communications: Horne reported that he has mailed out the new newsletter to 480 households. Deadline for contributions for the next newsletter is March 7th. Took 9 hours to assemble it (folding it and putting labels on) with two people working on it.

Parish Life: Houde is sending handwritten notes to any visitors. Potluck supper has been rescheduled for February 10. Boyd and Houde have conspired to create nametags for parishioners and the project is progressing.

Property Management: Griffin reported that Boyce and Drake found a leak in a closet in the basement, which threw off the pressure in the entire system, affecting the furnace's functioning. Pipe will need to be replaced. 3 of the blowers are gone. Passed the fire re-inspection and we're good until October. The church's electrical system needs to be revamped. A company called Mr.

Electric provided a \$1473 estimate for sorting out the back of the church. Sorting out the front of the church, including sacristy, would be about \$1457. Emergency lighting in basement as well as fixing electric in undercroft estimated as costing \$1413. Horne moved to accept the proposal from Mr. Electric. Boyd seconded the motion. All in favor.

Claverie: Church school is resistant to moving downstairs because of the mold. Will move them to the front corner instead for now.

Stewardship: Kato: Next year's budgeted pledge and plate is \$230,000. There's only \$130,000 pledged. Regular donor list is about 70 names, and it's dropped this year by 23. Some of those people probably need to be reminded. Pledge increases are averaging about 5%.

Rector's Search: Meetings with parish coming up. Draft of survey has been distributed. Will need more demographic questions.

New Business: Henderson reported that her Christmas Facebook post had reached an unprecedented 201,517 people, been shared 1,961 times and had about 9,000 like or love reacts. She encouraged vestry folk to go have a look at it and to think about what that level of reaction says about what people are looking for from a church.

Rector's Expenses: Boyd moved to approve the rector's expenses for the month. Griffin seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Closing: Boyd moved to adjourn the meeting. Griffin seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

*Note: Ann Casey and Ann Bullock are the same person. "Casey" is the name she uses for her professional work as an attorney, while "Bullock" is the name she uses at church.