

Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting
April 20, 2022
Beacon Hill Drive, Saratoga Springs

Attendance: Fr. Charles Wallace, Priest in Charge
Darren Miller, Senior Warden
Sara Manny, Junior Warden
Karen Finkbeiner, Treasurer
Mark Claverie
Laura Kszan
Marcia MacDonald
David MacVane
Steven Rucker
Holly Sofarelli
David Wilder
Ann Bullock, Clerk

Absent: Robyn Colonell

Opening Prayer

The regular meeting of the Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry was called to order at 7:08pm on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, at Beacon Hill Drive, by Fr. Wallace

Devotions:

Fr. Wallace offered devotions.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2022, were unanimously approved as corrected. (D Wilder, movant; M MacDonald, second)

Priest-in-Charge Remarks:

Lovely to see people in church on Easter Sunday. It was a busy Holy Week with good attendance.

Fr Wallace will be away in May. Warden D. Miller will chair the May meeting.

Walking group resumes in May. Jane Agee and Kate Berheide will take turns leading this group and will put messages in the bulletin concerning meeting times and locations.

Treasurer's Financial Report: K Finkbeiner, Treasurer

K Finkbeiner sent report showing that the trends we saw YTD February are continuing. Expenses are well over budget, in part due to timing issues, some of which will resolve as the year progresses. For example, on the Programs line, Funeral Expenses are over budget, as is

the Income from funerals. Note that Wedding and Funeral expenses/revenue are separately itemized. Fr Wallace remarked that funeral expenses should be a wash: his fee and that of the organist are covered by the family's payment. Question as to the income to the church, which is part of the diocesan assessment, as opposed to the fees for service which should not be subject to diocesan assessment. More funerals this year than we expected, sadly.

Although most of the expense overrun is either funded (funerals) or timing that will resolve as the year goes on, the Utilities overrun will probably continue as the increase in the budget most likely will not cover the actual cost increases this year.

We are currently over budgeted expenses somewhat; will include a note in the bulletin to remind parishioners of the need for continued giving.

Pledge and Plate income is on budget, which is good news. One large donation was made 'early' against a full year pledge, so that benefit is a temporary timing benefit, but it helps with our first quarter cash flow.

Accounts payable is all current, thanks to the cash surplus we had at the end of 2021 due to the special giving late in the year.

We had an enthusiastic (\$2,015) response to our March Special Envelope drive. As a reminder, the Jan and Feb Special giving was designated to Fuel, included in Other unrestricted Operational income as it offsets our Utilities expense.

In January, we spoke about excess cash in our checking accounts from the end-2021 giving. It has been moved now into investments where it is earning income.

D Wilder asked about line item for episcopal church clergy: K Finkbeiner will investigate this. Also, flower fees this year for Easter were significantly less than last year. Christmas flower/greenery income was higher last year than usual. Fr. Wallace reports that we have plenty of flower funds

D Miller reports that the City has permitted us to close the letter of credit with Saratoga National for the Mercy House project. K Finkbeiner will speak with Elaine about the best process to return this to endowments.

(Motion by M Claverie; L Kszan, second, to accept the financial report. Approved unanimously)

Churchwardens' Report:

Senior Warden: D. Miller

The "anonymous donor" still wishes to remain anonymous. It is hoped that, within eighteen to twenty-four months, they will be able to make the donation to the Church. The current transaction is intended to close in May.

Junior Warden: S Manny

Financial committee intends to meet with Barbara concerning her position and best use of her time and abilities. Expect to have time cards or better time controls in place. She presently

works 26 hours per week; will investigate whether time needs to be adjusted. May close the office Mondays and change the published hours staff is available to the parish.

Coffee hour will resume as spring progresses.

Question as to the summer party: is it financially viable? Is it appropriate currently? Coming off the pandemic, is this a needed social event?

Fr. Wallace went to an event at the Cathedral before Easter, catered by Fr. Jonathan Beck's wife. Suggests a Food and Wine pairing event as an event for social purposes and fundraising.

Question as to a location for this: could we use the Methodist Church? Or a tent on the side lawn?

K Finkbeiner observes that anything that makes us look like we are open and active (tent on the lawn; coffee hour outside) is a benefit to all of us. Need kitchen space available.

D Wilder suggests either the Methodist or Baptist church. D MacVane asks what the objective of this event is: we need to grow the church. Bring guests to this dinner. Must "grow sales" of the church. Fr. Wallace will talk with Fr. Beck about the possibility of this event.

S Rucker; H Soffarelli: D MacVane will work on this event. D MacVane suggests this should be free; have it in September, rather than August. Rather like SPAC Wine and Food event in Sept?

Matters arising/ Committee Reports:

Capital Projects:

Roof Project: Mark Claverie:

Removal of old roofing material. Deck was inspected and found to be in good condition. New plywood decking installed over existing deck and water/ice shield applied. Passed inspection by the city building inspector. No leakage detected in the church in the newly roofed areas – leaks in the areas where the roof has yet to be replaced.

Little debris inside the church, fortunately.

Concern with the east side of the church as there has been damage in the past in this area.

Moved the piano out of the way and will continue to monitor.

The completion date for the roof project has slipped slightly – the new finish date is July 6th with scaffolding removal and lawn restoration completed by July 20th. They are aware of the July 23rd wedding.

National Grid still needs to come and put a rubber boot over the electrical service line to the church. This will allow scaffolding to be erected for trim work and painting. Was to have been completed by last Thursday – still not done.

The louvers in the bell tower were inspected by Chris Bennett and Sano-Rubin from lift. Does not seem complicated to replicate. Sano-Rubin will be able to produce them in their workshop. (Note: Sano Rubin has been acquired, but we will continue with the same personnel on projects.)

Chris Bennett evaluated the side door previously.

The Holy Rollers have been very helpful—and it's like a coffee hour. It has been both a work effort and social effort. Always had a good turn-out.

Next projects: S Rucker:

The fire escape: presently the only egress from the church in the rear is down the stairs to the undercroft and out into the "courtyard." The door from the Sacristy is barely functional. S-R and J Waite have both evaluated the door. It is an historical door with historical stained glass (so Lamb Studio is part of this too.) The estimated cost to repair the door and make it a useable fire door with adequate stairs for escape is \$65,000 including the S-R management fee. This does not include the work to restore the stained-glass window, another \$9-10k. May be able to reduce this cost with some value engineering, eg. repair of the metal stairs, rather than new construction. The work must be done since it is a fire/safety issue. K Finkbeiner reports that we do have the money to do this in investments after the roof work. Motion to approve the repair of the door and escape stairs near the Sacristy for no more than \$70,000. (K Finkbeiner, M MacDonald, second; approved unanimously)

New Business: none

Parish Life:

P Houde has organized a Pastoral Care group; meals and outreach at Easter to the home-bound and those in need of parish care.

Next meeting: May 18, 2022

Blessing and Adjournment

Blessing by Fr. Wallace

Meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ann C. Bullock, Clerk