

*St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Vestry Meeting  
2024 - monthly meeting # 1  
Date: January 23, 2024*

Draft: Note that words/ideas needing clarification are highlighted below

Present (virtually by Zoom):

Rev. Nina Pooley, Rector  
Craig Reynolds, Co-Warden  
Josephine Ellis, Co-Warden  
Suzanne White, Treasurer  
William O'Neill, Assistant Treasurer  
Dr. J. Christopher Perry, Clerk  
James Alden  
John Culver  
John Garinther  
David Nevin  
Christopher Plankey  
Wendy Webster-Coakley  
Vestry-person elect: Beth-Anne Hamlin

Regrets:

Vestry-person elect: Caleb \_\_

Meeting began at 7:00 P.M., but clerk's recording did not begin until 7:19 P.M., due to a weather delay.

**I. Opening Prayer offered by Rev. Pooley**

**II. Clerk Report: Minutes from previous meeting**

Because the November meeting minutes were not uploaded in time, they are to be reviewed and amended/accepted at this meeting.

November 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes

a. corrections

none

b. Minutes approval.

Motion by: Josie Ellis

Seconded by: Jim Alden

Approval: unanimous

December 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

a. corrections

b. Minutes approved (as corrected).

Motion by: Josie

Seconded by: John Culver

Abstentions: Craig Reynolds abstained from voting, as he couldn't open the draft

Approval: all voted for approval but one.

### **III. Old Business**

Action Items from Previous Meeting

1. Approve 2024 Proposed Budget When available

### **IV. Committee Reports and New Business**

**Property Committee** (John Garinther, Chris Plankey)

John Garinther led a discussion of the HVAC report of options.

Option 0: Keep everything the same (boilers, piping, registers). Just keep things going with about \$6,000 recurring annual maintenance to the system, but a lot of man-hours are also needed yearly to monitor and tweak the system.

Option 1: replace the steam system with hot water boilers, with fan coil units to disperse the heat. This option can be upgraded to add a cooling unit for summer. It is a question whether the air conditioning option for the Parish house could also apply to the sanctuary.

Rev. Nina Pooley, question about whether frozen pipes **are** a possibility in a hot water system?

Craig Reynolds. Would the system have an additive, like glycol (antifreeze) to prevent that?

Jim Alden. There is a benefit to switching from steam, like less clanking.

Suzanne White. Will we be replacing the coverings of the heating system in the Sanctuary?

John G. We'll probably keep the current covers.

Chris Perry: Hot water is more efficient than steam because you just heat and don't have to spend energy to boil the water, and it is almost instant-on. Also heat exchange covers may need to be changed if they are not efficient in heat transfer,

Option 2: This includes the following.

Air conditioning for the parish house but not the main church.

Heat pumps for Parish House., so-called mini-splits, with both heating and cooling.

A disadvantage of heat pumps is that, if the ambient temperature falls below 10-15 degrees F, they have trouble keeping up, not effective. We would keep our existing steam boilers for those days

Also this option requires equipment to be placed outside the edifice on the Parish house roof.

Chris Perry. I recall that the question of putting solar panels on the Parish house roof was dismissed because of concerns about approval by some **historical commission**. Is that right? Might this also be a problem for heating/cooling equipment?

John Garinter. The Parish House can accept solar panels or equipment, but we would have to get approval of the Historical Commission, if we wanted to remain on their registry. We did this for the outside glass additions to the stained glass windows. Anything on the roof wouldn't be visible, anyway.

Chris Plankey. The Historical Commission needs to be informed and approve of any changes to the outside of the building.

Bill O'Neill. As to the Historical Commission, if nothing changes on the exterior of the building, they may not have any jurisdiction.

Chris Plankey: heating piping goes through cinderblock chases, which would need to be destroyed. There may be costs that are not included, because construction costs may be greater than may seem obvious. Option 2 might be the most expensive to deliver the HVAC changes. But also Option 2 delivers the most rebates, up to 200,000 due to use of heat pumps.

John Garinther. I am not sure if the rebates are already accounted for in option 2 estimate. That is a question we'll have to bring to them.

Chris Perry Heat pumps use electricity, and are more efficient than methods that directly burn energy to produce heat.

John Garinther and Chris Plankey: We would have to upgrade our service panel to 600 amps.

Chris Plankey: They estimated energy costs gas vs **electricity** for heat pumps.

Rev. Nina Pooley. Option 2 only addresses the Parish House and relies on the old system for the church building.

Jim Alden. That doesn't solve the problem.

John Garinther. We could do something between Option 0 and 1, spend less money and keep things close to the same. All of these options go from 0 to 2 and a-half million dollars.

Josie Ellis. What is the process of deciding on the best option?

John Garinther. We'll gather our questions, and send them off to Michael Lorenz our contractor-consultant. He'll respond to questions, and then we'll meet with him face-to-face. After that meeting, his contract ends, and we pay him. Then the Property Committee will review everything and come up with suggested options to present to the Vestry. So we are not at a decision time now.

Option 3.

- Forced air (hot/cold) to Sanctuary only (requires new duct work).

- Parish House heating system remains the same (still steam)

- Equipment installed outside church, but not on roof.

- Excavation under the church to make room for equipment.

- Only \$463,000 + construction costs.

Rev. Nina Pooley. Any idea of the extra construction costs?

Chris Plankey. probably this would have the least amount of extra costs. Outside stuff will be in the alleyway right next to the boiler.

John Garinther. Yes, we should ask Mike for his guesstimate.

David Nevin: Do we know where our property boundary ends.

John Garinther. Yes, it is tight to the footprint of the building. An offset of about 6-8 feet away from the church building in one area.

Nina : So, this option maintains the current Parish house system, but reduces the load

on that system.

Option 3 might be fine, most impact positive on parishioners.

Suzanne White. Our tenants and the dining room space, how will they be affected. Air conditioners fo windows?

Rev. Nina Pooley. The basement is cooler than the rest. Maintaining heat adequately should do it.

Chris Perry: Is there an option as to energy source: electricity instead gas boilers? We have to think about the future price of energy. If the Diocese does go ahead with a solar farm initiative, future electric energy costs would be capped, then decrease after paying off the investment. The price of gas will only rise.

Option 4:

Air conditioning and heat provided for both the Parish House and Sanctuary replace steam with hot water boilers equipment to be installed on roof, and outside church, plus needing some excavation in the basement.

This costs 2.5 million dollars plus construction costs.

Chris Plankey. Option 4 is the most expensive, most difficult to install, worst list of drawbacks. The company we pick for the equipment, we'll be bound to them for maintenance nd parts, since nothing is off the shelf that we can get from other companies.

John G. We invited Bill Engle (a retired engineer from GE) who had some relevant experiences. One of the options only had a guaranteed life of 15 years!

Craig Reynolds. That was option 2, with the proprietary equipment. Worst deal on life expectancy of the new system.

Rev. Nina Pooley. That's a major drawback.

Chris Perry. Can we split the boilers and do the work in 2 phases? That would allow us to spread the expenses over a longer period of time, better from a cash-raising perspective.

John Garinther. That is a good question, we'll ask.

Josie Ellis. I know this is a lot of detail. We want to be transparent, as leadership, we

may be asked questions. That's why we go into such detail.

Beth-Anne Hamling. Thank you for that.

John Garinther. We made the decision that we aren't ready to send these options to the Parish. We are not there yet with the information, and we don't want to alarm anyone with the costs.

Beth-Anne Hamling. I appreciate the chance to be here for this meeting.

### **Financial report** (Suzanne White)

Josie Ellis. We will review the 2024 Budget. Suzanne and Bill were unable to pull together a document from the Finance Committee meeting, other than the Budget. The Budget was passed last week unanimously by email-poll.

### **Stewardship** (Wendy Webster Coakley)

The number of pledges went down from 89 to 83 last year to this year, but the amount has gone up by 9k to 209 k. We do not know if 6 people who didn't pledge this year but who did last year have some change. We maybe some new pledgers this year, and possibly some who have left the Parish.

Sarah Morrison will prepare a list of those persons who didn't pledge for Rev. Nina, to see if there are any pastoral care issues requiring attention.

Everyone, please sign up for tasks at annual meeting.

Wendy Webster Coakley. D did we need seating in the Guild Room and any overflow seating in the Sears Room?

Rev. Nina: no we didn't need it because we set the tables up differently.

Suzanne White. You are right, not for Stewardship luncheon.

Rev. Nina Pooley. So, let's set the tables up the same way.

Wendy Webster Coakley. No one did coffee service. We'll have little pita rolls of food. People liked them and better value than wraps. We should we have coffee.

Suzanne White. My hunch is that people do like coffee with the lunch.

Wendy Webster Coakley. Yes, it's winter too, and something hot is nice. Can someone be the coffee person?

**Wardens' Report** (Craig Reynolds, Josie Ellis),

Budget Vote: The budget was approved via email on January 19, 2024.

Continuing on Vestry are:

Wendy Webster Coakley

Chris Plankey

James Alden

David Nevin

To be elected at Annual Meeting: the Officers

Co-Warden: Josephine Ellis

Co-Warden: John Garinther

Clerk: Dr. J. Christopher Perry

Treasurer: Suzanne White

Assistant Treasurer: William O'Neill

New Vestry Members:

Caleb Harmon

Beth-Anne Hamling

Other points from the Warden's **Report**:

Winter Newsletter: Is there a target date?

Dining Room & Foyer Refresh Update

IT Infrastructure: we are switching to Mad Macs from Network Engineering

Josie Ellis. Any questions?

No one had any questions about the Warden's Report

Josie Ellis. Thank you Craig. You have served a long-time, diligently and religiously!  
We all thank you.

John Garinther. We'll just have to figure it out. If we can't, we'll just have to call Craig!

Craig: You mean we figured it out?

Joyous bantering followed.

**Rectors Report** (Rev. Nina Pooley)

My Dad isn't doing great. He spent 4 days in ER and they couldn't find an appropriate facility for him. He needs continuous supervision. My sister is taking that on, but she needs support. Dad went a little nuts and was threatening. I may need to go back again, because she has children and this, too. She needs a break. Dad's brother, my uncle, who lives in Baltimore is going to try to go down. It's really hard.

February 4<sup>th</sup>, we will have another baptism.

The Bishop will be here in late April, and we will have another baptism

It will be good if I don't have to leave tomorrow [to South Carolina]. Craig will step up to assist John Garinther, if I am away.

We need to get Dad into a memory care unit. Then things will settle down. I'm just worried about my sister, as my Dad will be getting the best possible care. My baby sister. I am knitting her a prayer shawl.

Suzanne White. She is in the sandwich generation. She has both her kids and Dad to worry about.

Rev. Nina Pooley. We need to have a vote on the Rector's Housing Allowance.

Housing Allowance Resolution for 2024

The following language should be used by the vestry to stipulate the portion of total cash compensation that is to be designated as housing allowance:

"Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the Gospel to exclude from gross income a church-designated allowance paid as part of compensation, to the extent the allowance represents compensation for ministerial services; is used to pay housing-related expenses such as utilities, repairs, and furnishings; and does not exceed the fair rental value of the housing (furnished, plus utilities) and

"Whereas, The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley is employed as a minister of the Gospel by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church which does not provide a residence for The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation of \$ xxx to be paid to The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley during 2024, that \$ 40,000 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further



“Resolved, that the designation of \$40,000 as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2024 and all future years unless otherwise provided.”

Chris Plankey. the first amount [where “xxx” is above] should be written as the *total compensation* as the two figures are handled differently from a tax point of view.

Rev. Nina Pooley. Yes the total compensation is 99,000, of which 40,000 is the housing allowance.

Josie Ellis. We are following what the Diocese stipulates about the housing allowance.

Josie Ellis put the motion.

Motion seconded by Jim Alden and David Nevin simultaneously  
the motion passed unanimously.

*The [above] resolution was duly adopted by the Vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at its regularly scheduled meeting held on January 23, 2024, with a quorum being present.*

**Action Items from this Meeting (Clerk):**

1. Sign up for Annual Report luncheon tasks

**Next Meeting scheduled:**

1. Vestry Meeting February 27, 2024 (via Zoom)

**V. Closing Prayer offered by Rev. Pooley**

*Lord help us to know ourselves, answer and serve through Jesus Christ, the master of the Table.*

**VI. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent: 8:40 P.M.