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St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting
2024 - monthly meeting # 7
Date: August 27, 2024
Draft: to be reviewed September 24, 2024

Present (virtually by Zoom):

Rev. Dr. Nina Pooley, Rector
John Garinther, (Junior) Co-Warden
William O'Neill, Assistant Treasurer
Dr. J. Christopher Perry, Clerk
Beth Anne Hamling
Caleb Harmon
David Nevin
Christopher Plankey
Wendy Webster Coakley

Regrets:

Josephine Ellis, (Senior) Co-Warden
Suzanne White, Treasurer
James Alden

Meeting began at 7:00 P.M. by Zoom

I. Opening scripture and Prayer offered by Rev. Pooley

II. John Garinther Josie Ellis: Discussion

1. John G discussed Vestry Terms of Office.

Chris Plankey, Josie Ellis, Wendy Webster Coakley have served their three years and cannot be elected again. Beth-Anne Hamling resigned on Sunday. We do not have to fill Beth-Anne's vacancy since we are in the latter part of the year. When replaced this will be a 2-year term, given one year having gone by, to keep terms staggered.

Bill O'Neill will become Treasurer.

Josie Ellis will leave being Warden.

David Nevin will stay on.

Wendy will start a *Google Doc* for consideration of potential new Vestry members

John Garinther expressed concern that we find people who are consistent participants in the service to join the Vestry.

All told, we have 4 people rolling off Vestry.

2. Rev. Nina Pooley discussed building community by gathering people. After the dining room is finished, we can have a potluck "simple supper". This would be

socializing to build community.

John Garinther is working on buying new round tables for the dining room. The ceiling should be finished by end of next week.

3. We need another *Newsletter* for the fall. Nothing is in the folder yet. Articles, stories, anything you want to tell the parish. Get drafts in by October 1. Sarah edits.

4. We discussed developing a 501(c)3 charitable corporation to support St. Stephens Table.

Bill O'Neill noted that a charitable organization, can accept donations and give receipts for tax deductions. The steps to do this include:

1. File incorporation documents with the MA Secretary of State
2. Get a Federal EIN
3. Get Federal approval.

The entity would be non-denominational and therefore can qualify for grants from the State and other non-denominational organizations. Church will always be involved.

Issues to be discussed include who are the President, Clerk, Board of Directors: St-Stephens Parishioners, community persons? Where does Dan Moon fit in?

St. Stephens is not a 501(c)3.

J. C. Perry noted that we should build in additional aims such that if the foundation can't spend enough of the proceeds, there are additional aims, e.g. assisting a food pantry or Soldier On, a salvation army foodtruck etc..

J. C. Perry and Bill O'Neill will meet and come up with a draft document.

Question: Does the chef work for St. Stephen's Table or for the church?

II. Clerk Report: Minutes from previous meeting

July 23, 2024

Chris Plankey did the July Minutes.

a. corrections

1. Nina wasn't present, nor Wendy Webster Coakley or Chris Perry

We will need to have those present vote on-line to approve the minutes.

The Executive Session in July was a non-public meeting, a closed door session. Chris Plankey kept those notes separately. Only Vestry have permission to read these in the Google Drive.

III. Old Business

Action Items from Previous Meeting

Both action items done.

Rev. Nina Pooley met with Sarah to discuss change of hours.

Rev. Nina Pooley organized the 501(c)3 group

IV. Committee Reports and New Business

Financial report (Suzanne White, absent) Led by Nina Pooley

Finance meeting on Sunday. Property: how are we going to pay for property work? Looking into the housing thing. No conclusion was reached about where the money is coming from. Bill O'Neill will talk to Sarah, about the housing issue and the trust for rector's housing allowance, approximately \$ 240,000 at present.

Rev. Nina Pooley noted that we are just trying to use the restricted money funds more purposefully, in the intended ways. Don Phipps, our archivist and a previous Treasurer, knows about the histories of these funds.

Property Committee (John Garinther, Chris Plankey)

Chris Plankey. The stained glass project was completed this summer as planned.

The HVAC system. We are trying to get the most for the least amount of money, such as making the system more autonomous. We Need a more modern system, capable of remote monitoring of components throughout the building: leaks, floods. Light is almost functional for the sign on the front line. We have a new sidewalk, but the City damaged the electrical line.

We are tasked with having a donor recognition wall. Chris Plankey and Don Phipps are trying to come up with an idea as an addition.

We would like to acquire our front lawn, which the city owns. If we owned it, we could add handicap accessibility.

Stewardship (Wendy Webster Coakley)

Wendy: We have *Episcopal Network for Stewardship* materials for this year's campaign: "Walk in Love." This year we should take advantage of these materials. Leah Luczinski, our "creative" member is less available because she is busy and we are down one member.

The pledge card is already made. We have 10 articles written by various clergy to send out and get familiar with the themes. Al Symmonds will read all the articles, and Leah will look at the creative assets.

Stewardship kickoff will be on 10 - 27 and ingathering on November 24th the Sunday before Thanksgiving,.

We Will need speakers for Oct, 27, and Nov 3, 10, 17 (4 speakers), who could also be potential effective new Vestry members.

In-gathering is it is late this year 11-24. When we kick-off, we will hand out the pledge cards, and perhaps a launch-lunch.

Creation Season ends on Indigenous People's Day.

Dec 1st is the beginning of Advent.

We will need someone to succeed Wendy as head of Stewardship, as of February.

Wardens' Report (Josie Ellis, John Garinther),

John Garinther noted that Safe Church training has started. Sept 3, 9th .

Rev. Nina Pooley noted that we are switching cleaning groups from BARC to “Roots and Dreams and Mustard Seeds” a Ecuadorian cleaning Co-op that is worker-owned. We will pay more and get more.

Rectors Report (Rev. Nina Pooley)

There will be an ecumenical worship service will be Sept 29th on the Commons. We will have a meal afterward and St. Stephens will donate a sheet cake.

Theme envisioning is to make Pittsfield Whole (gospel theme from St. Mark).

Rev. Nina Pooley will be away on vacation in Mid-September to Toronto, missing one Sunday. Bill Loutrel will cover.

Rev Nina Pooley talked to Sarah and moved some tasks to Bert Boos.

Nina will talk with the Choir.

Action Items from this Meeting:

1. Wendy will start a Google Doc for consideration of new Vestry, to which others can make suggestions and add to it. Vestry will have two 3-year terms, one 2-year term, one Assist. Treasurer, and one Jr. Warden.

2. 501(c)3 meeting with Bill O'Neill and Chris Perry

3. Newsletter articles are due Oct 1. (Publishing anticipated roughly Oct 15).

4. Rev. Nina Pooley will pick a date for Simple Supper

Next Meeting scheduled:

1. Vestry Meeting September 24, 2024

V. Closing Prayer offered by Rev. Pooley

The Lord grants us a peaceful night and a perfect end.

Amen

VI. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent: 8:36 P.M.