

# APPROVED Church Council Minutes

April 20, 2021

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Present: Pastor Sal Sapienza, Peter Mueller, Gemina Petruzelli, Mary Fechtig, Stan Greene, David Geen, Beverly Hawkes, Marty Coffin (via Zoom video conference).

Guests: Chris Clark, Will Gervais, Mike Boston, Peter Black.

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Pete welcomed Chris, Will, Mike and Peter.
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened at 6:07pm with a prayer of gratitude that even though the church had to close one year ago due to the pandemic with no one knowing what to expect, here we are, still thriving and moving forward.
3. *March 2021 Meeting Minutes* – Bev distributed the final draft prior to the meeting.  
**Motion:** from Pastor Sal to approve. David second.  
**Action:** Julie will post in the E-pistle.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed prior to the meeting. See attached.  
Highlights:
  - a) The online church survey had a response of 130 members. 82% watch our online services and 81% are staying connected with other church members. We are grateful for such strong support and feedback. The survey summary was shared in the E-pistle.
  - b) Our church will again be taking part in the Care-a-Van Community Pride Car Parade event in Saugatuck/Douglas on June 5<sup>th</sup> at noon.
  - c) Our knitting group and a new Qigong Group will start meeting outdoors on our church campus. CDC guidelines will be followed.
  - d) Rev. Willie Watts shared his vision for “Huts for the Homeless” at a meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The “huts” would help to meet the needs of the homeless in Holland, currently at 137 people. This initiative includes collaboration with Manpower of Holland, a substance abuse rehab facility and other entities. Our Grant Proposal Committee (GPC) will soon be receiving a grant request.  
**Action:** Julie will post Pastor Sal’s detailed report in the E-pistle.
5. *Financial Report* – Gemina  
Revenue remains strong and favorable to budget for the month by \$19,136 or 117%. Expenses for the month are favorable by \$4,455 or 25%. Narrative report attached.
6. *Trustee Report* – Marty
  - a) Retreat House broken sink drain replaced.
  - b) Received estimate from Don McGee for the Retreat House HVAC system that Don believes would necessitate installing 2 furnaces due to limited space. Marty

will do more research on single furnaces and obtain two more estimates including a recommendation from Gemina.

- c) Need to address spring campus cleanup, weeding and mowing needs. David has spoken with Tino regarding same.

**Action:** David will notify Tino of the approval to go ahead with grounds keeping. Gemina et al will continue to maintain the Memorial Garden.

7. *Committee/Group Updates – Pete/Mary*

- a) March 18, 2021- Council members re-visited and approved (via email) the GPC \$2,500 grant request for Hudsonville’s UCC “Raise the Roof” campaign following the confirmation that the IGF 501c3 guidelines were being met.

**Motion:** from Pastor Sal. Bev second. Motion approved with 7 yeas.

- b) GPC request for approval of \$1,500 to the Saugatuck-Douglas-Fennville Arts Initiative to help fund the “Keepers of the Fire” event at the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center on August 14<sup>th</sup>. This event will be a “celebration of the traditions and cultures of the Potawatomi Tribe in Western Michigan and held in connection with the outdoor exhibit ‘The First Michiganders’ and ‘Art of the People: Contemporary Anishinaabe Artists’.”

**Motion:** from Gemina to approve. David second. Motion approved.

- c) Update and request from Mary to re-visit the Tri-Community Recycling Committee \$5,000 request to organize a Hazardous Household Waste event on May 1, 2021 open to Saugatuck, Douglas, and Saugatuck Township residents. GPC asked at last month’s Council meeting if the funding could be found within the operating budget because the entity did not meet IGF 501c3 guidelines. Update: Jim Sullivan from Saugatuck-Douglas Rotary asked if the Rotary, being a 501c3 organization could act as a conduit for the grant and thereby meet IGF requirements.

Discussion:

- 1) As a Creation Justice Church it is hard to imagine DUCC not helping to fund this community event.
- 2) This event aligns with our mission and is an opportunity to set an example as good stewards of the environment.
- 3) DUCC is often asked as a church to meet community needs not met by other entities by filling gaps and providing safety nets.

**Motion:** from Stan to approve a \$2,500 grant from the IGF for the Tri-Community Recycling event. If the remaining IGF monies for this FY will not be sufficient to cover this amount, any necessary additional monies will come from the operating budget. Mary second. Motion approved.

**Action:** Pete will notify Karen Clark (GPC). Mary will notify Garnet Lewis (event representative). Mary will send Gemina the information necessary to dispense a check.

8. *Ongoing Business – Chris/Will/Peter Black.*

- a) Covid-19 issues and planning:  
Comments from the online survey indicated that many members would be comfortable to return to in-person church services if they were held outside

following CDC guidelines. No return date has been determined but if services are to resume in an outside venue (Retreat House yard, i.e. June/July/August), equipment requirements need to be addressed.

- 1) Peter researched the necessary equipment for sound and shared a quote from Sweetwater Music Instruments and Audio. (Equipment list with costs was distributed prior to the meeting).
- 2) Pastor Sal suggested that an outdoor platform would cost approximately \$700-\$800.
- 3) Chris suggested provisions be made for outdoor video recording.

Discussion:

- a. Having the equipment to offer an outside venue could also be used for weddings, special events, Easter services etc., thereby utilizing the investment for more than Sunday services.
- b. A church member has offered the use of his outdoor covering for inclement weather.
- c. Online member survey indicated that 90% of members still wanted pre-recorded online services to be available.
- d. Noted that this time of transition requires both a pre-recorded and outdoor live service.
- e. The decision when to return will be based on Coronavirus metrics and best practice.

**Action:** Pete will include the potential equipment cost estimates in the “Back to Church” budget.

- b) Phone and internet service for the church building and Spring St. - Chris contacted Comcast and shared installation costs.

**Action:** Chris will send the written quote to Peter Black, Pastor Sal and Pete (for Council distribution).

9. *New Business* – Will/Mike (FOC)

- a) Ladder Investment Strategy (Proposal that included option #1 and option #2 spreadsheets were distributed prior to the meeting).

Background: FOC was referred to the Cornerstone Fund by our UCF investment manager because it offers other investment options that provide higher earnings than UCF while not incurring greater risk. The Cornerstone Fund is a UCC affiliated organization and has experience with multiple UCC churches.

Proposal: FOC proposes adopting option #2 that would transfer approximately \$200,000 to the Cornerstone Fund using a “ladder” investment strategy (investing \$100,000 in a 12 month note; \$50,000 in a 24 month note and another \$50,000 in a 36 month note).

Discussion:

- 1) This strategy offers a plan for dealing with the growing Cash Reserve Fund. Assuming the level of current revenue generation, FOC does not see the need to access these funds during the associated time frames.
- 2) If this fund will eventually be used as part of the church expansion, best practice for Capital Campaign funding would be on a 3 year sliding scale.

3) Starting a relationship with Cornerstone will be helpful for future DUCC financial needs.

**Motion:** from Mary to approve the implementation of FOC's recommended option #2 as stated. Stan second. Motion approved.

b) Church Council Term Limits – Pete

1) Council members Bev (Recording Secretary) and David (Member-at-Large) have completed a 2 year term and will exercise the option to renew for two more years.

2) Council member Gemina (Treasurer) has completed a 2 year term and will not exercise the option to renew for two more years.

3) Council member Mary (Financial Secretary) has completed a 5 year term noting that a 1 year extension was allowed because of Mary's expertise.

**Action:** Jim Kern will replace Mary as Financial Secretary and Stacey Honson will replace Gemina as Treasurer pending congregational approval at the annual meeting in June. Jim and Stacey will be invited guests at our May Council meeting.

c) Annual Congregational Meeting – Pete

Date of June 27, 2021 was approved.

10. *Next Meeting Date* – May 18 @6pm.

11. *Adjournment* – 8:10 pm.

**Motion:** from David. Gemina second. Motion approved.