

# APPROVED Church Council Minutes

December 15, 2020

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

Excused: Marty Coffin

Guests: Will Gervais, Bob Kenny

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Pete welcomed Will Gervais and Bob Kenny.
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened with prayer at 6:01 pm.
3. *November 2020 Minutes* – Bev distributed the final draft prior to the meeting.  
**Motion:** from Stan to approve. David second. Motion approved.  
**Action:** Julie Ridl will post in the E-pistle.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed prior to the meeting. SEE ATTACHED.

Highlights:

- We continue to receive letters, emails and donations from people who are watching our worship videos worldwide. YouTube views alone were over 10,000 for the past month.
- Wednesday's Zoom "Centering Prayer" group continues to meet during the Advent season with participants joining in from Saginaw, Flint, Miami, and New York.
- The 50 hours of training will be completed in January 2021 for our new Stephen Ministers.
- Thank you to congregants who helped on November 23<sup>rd</sup> deliver food to Christian Neighbors Food Pantry and for helping out that day. Thank you to the congregation for fulfilling all of the holiday gift requests from Christian Neighbors on our "Giving Tree."
- DUCC's Christmas Eve tradition of the "Lessons & Carols" will be broadcast on YouTube and Facebook at 7 pm.
- Took part in an online meeting with representatives from United Church Homes, who are exploring the idea of an "Open and Affirming" assisted living facility in Saugatuck/Douglas.
- Talked about DUCC on the "Morning Grind" Radio Show on December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Officiated a small wedding in our church on December 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Thank you to Floyd Fleming and Jim Bailey for the Advent decorations...estate of Jewell Hall for the \$1,000 gift to DUCC...to Bud Baty for the "Christmas Greens" \$750 in sales generated for our church and to Marty for maintaining the church grounds.

In addition: UCC Leadership has offered to DUCC a prepared Sunday service we can use in January if desired. No decision at this time. Pastor Sal is grateful for the thoughtfulness.

5. *Financial Report* – Gemina. Written report pending.
  - Income continues to be favorable to budget.
  - Water bill issue resolved.
6. *Trustee Report* – Marty via Pastor Sal.
  - Friendship Hall ceiling painting completed.
  - Fall clean-up including campus leaf raking and pick-up completed.
  - Pastor Sal reported the microwave door at 88 Spring St. is broken.
  - David reported that he reinforced the American Flag onto the pole outside of church after seeing it was not secure.

**Action:** Pastor Sal will notify Marty of broken microwave door.

7. *Committee/Group Updates* – Will Gervais and Bob Kenny.

- **Update:** Financial Oversight Committee (FOC) Procedures and Policy manuals: Will and Bob distributed the final Draft of “DUCC Policy Handbook” and “Financial Procedures Handbook” prior to the meeting as well as a list of specific provisions of these two documents for our consideration.

- Discussion:

- a) Financial Procedures Handbook, pg. 16, “Bookkeeper”, suggests that the Administrative Assistant undertake the tasks of a bookkeeper in addition to the current Administrative Assistant job description.

- ❖ Question: Are we setting ourselves up for failure by including the role of bookkeeper within the Administrative Assistant role?

- ❖ Question: Are we financially at the scale that warrants a separate bookkeeping position?

- ❖ Bookkeeping responsibilities have been discussed with our current Administrative Assistant, Julie Ridl. She indicated familiarity and comfort with “QuickBooks.”

- Action:** Bookkeeper responsibilities will be added to Julie Ridl’s current role as Administrative Assistant. These additional bookkeeping tasks will be evaluated periodically for manageability as well as the possible necessity for additional paid hours.

- b) Financial Procedures Handbook, pg. 10, “Capital Planning Budget.” The Financial Oversight Committee (FOC) will work with Marty (Church Trustee) to budget potential future maintenance items.

- c) Policy Handbook, Section 4-5, “Audit.”

- ❖ Moved from Financial Procedure Handbook.

- ❖ Cost of official audit remains prohibitive.

- ❖ Performed not less than every three years unless deemed by Church Council to be necessary as circumstances dictate.

- ❖ Ideas:

- Internal audit could be done by a congregant who does not have a financial role within the church.

- Partner with another church, “we do theirs, they do ours.”

- d) Policy Handbook, Section 2-6, “Project Expenditures.”

- ❖ Added that payment of any expense exceeding \$1000.00 shall require two signatures.

- ❖ Pg. 2, “Banking – Checking Account”, Financial Procedures Handbook, noted that the current signatories are the Pastor and Treasurer, two easily assessable people.

- Suggestion: that Church council consider other signatories as well.

- e) Policy Handbook, Section 4-2, “Investment of Isabel Graham Fund.”

- ❖ Subsection 2 was deleted in its entirety because it was contradictory to the Endowment/Asset Policy guidelines established for long term reserve funds (Isabel Graham Trust Fund) which sets both the equity and fixed income allocation at a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 70%.

- Noted that there are provisions in the guidelines that FOC will come to council to approve any allocation changes.

- These allocation parameters provide latitude within a reasonable range and a trigger if a conversation with Council becomes necessary.

- **Recommendation:** Human Resource/personnel type provisions are currently addressed in the Financial Procedures Handbook. FOC recommends that Council consider the development of a Personnel Handbook to more appropriately address employment issues.  
**Motion:** from David to approve the updated Policy Handbook and Financial Procedures Handbook. Mary second. Motion approved.  
**Action:** FOC will move forward and begin implementation of the updated provisions.
- **Status update 88 Spring Street** – Will Gervais.  
Will reviewed the July 5, 2017, “Special Congregational Meeting” minutes when the congregation gave approval for the purchase of 88 Spring St., “financed from the DUCC Fund” and “recorded as an investment in real property instead of investment in equities and bonds”.
  - **Issue:** The Isabel Graham Fund (long term reserve fund formerly known as the DUCC Fund) Organizational Policy and Investment Policy in the Policy Handbook (section 4-1 and 4-2) allow for an annual transfer (calculated by multiplying 3% times the average total investment of the Isabel Graham Fund for the last three years) to the church for DUCC missions. The real estate value of 88 Spring St. does not produce cash earnings.
  - **Question:** Should the property be transferred out of the Isabel Graham fund?
  - **Discussion:**
    - a) At the time of the purchase of 88 Spring St., there was concern about using Isabel Graham Fund monies for a real estate purchase. Issue was resolved by keeping 88 Spring St. within the Fund.
    - b) Solution would be to exclude the book value of the property from the Isabel Graham fund for the annual missions’ calculations and that 88 Spring St. be designated as diversification into a hard asset.
    - c) Consideration for the future would be to give the property to the church for use towards the Capital Campaign.  
**Motion:** from Mary. Beginning in fiscal year 2022 the annual withdraw from the UCF Isabel Graham Investment Fund (calculated by multiplying 3% times the average total investment for the last three years) will be limited to liquid assets only. Stan second. Motion approved.

8. *Ongoing Business* – Pete

- Covid-19 issues and planning:
  - **Discussion:**
    - a) DUCC continues to follow SOM and UCC’s laws and guidelines.
    - b) Noted that statewide calculations for re-opening may not be directed specifically to our area.
    - c) Michigan Conference does give guidance but it is Council that decides when and how to open.

9. *New Business* – Pastor Sal, Pete

- Grant Request Application revision:
  - Douglas UCC is an “Open & Affirming” church, one that fully welcomes, affirms, and celebrates LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) people in our church’s life and ministry. How is your organization supportive and inclusive of the LGBTQ community?  
**Motion:** from David to add this statement and question to the Grant Request Application. Second Sal.  
**Action:** Pastor Sal will notify Karen Clark (GPC).

- Mission Statement revision:
  - Pastor Sal distributed suggested revisions prior to our meeting. Council offered additional suggestions.  
**Action:** Pastor Sal will review and provide to Council a final draft for approval prior to January’s Mid-Year Congregational Meeting.
- Return to Church Budget:
  - Pete distributed prior to the meeting a “Return to Church Budget” that includes both “One Time Expenditures” and “Monthly Expenditures.”  
**Action:** Church opening financial expenditures will be presented at the Mid-Year Congregational Meeting.
- Floyd Fleming’s gift to DUCC.
  - A Painting entitled “The Bread of Life” by artist John Ortman (a friend of DUCC with his wife, Carol Watson) was purchased by Floyd 20 years ago and is currently displayed in the Friendship Hall. A letter from Floyd to Council describes its origin and setting as well as Floyd’s desire to donate the painting to the church. The appraised value is \$2,200.00.  
**Action:** Pastor Sal will send a thank you note to Floyd. Gemina will record donation.
- Mid-Year Meeting Planning (January 10, 2021 at 11am):
  - Draft agenda items:
    - a) Express gratitude for the congregation’s incredible support especially during the in-house shutdown.
    - b) Present DUCC’s adopted “Policy Handbook” and “Financial Procedures Handbook.”  
**Action:** Announce in the E-pistle that the manuals are available from Julie Ridl.
    - c) Present DUCC’s revised Mission Statement.
    - d) Address re-opening: when/how and additional expenditures for re-opening (budget).
    - e) Capital Campaign: re-introduce plans and thoughts from last year.

10. *Next Meeting Date:*

Mid-Year Congregational Meeting: January 10, 2021.

Church Council: January 19, 2021.

11. *Adjournment* – 7:32 pm.

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