

APPROVED Church Council Minutes

March 16, 2021

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

Excused: Gemina Petruzelli, Mary Fechtig.

Guests: Karen Clark, Julie Ridl, Will Gervais, Mike Boston.

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Pete welcomed Karen, Julie, Will and Mike.
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened with prayer at 6:03 pm.
3. *February 2021 Meeting Minutes* – Bev distributed the final draft prior to the meeting.
Motion: from David to approve. Stan second. Motion approved.
Action: Julie will post in the E-pistle.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed prior to the meeting. See attached.
Suggestion that “One Great Hour of Sharing” **special collection** on Sunday, March 21 make use of the new Vanco interface being presented tonight under “New Business.”
Noted: the amount budgeted would be spent if the collection monies fall short.
Action: Julie will post Pastor Sal’s detailed report in the E-pistle.
5. *Financial Report* – Mike (Financial Oversight Committee).
Revenue remains strong and favorable to budget for the month by 33%. Expenses for the month are favorable by 26%. Narrative report attached.
Noted: The newly formed committee (as discussed in February’s Council meeting) is scheduled to begin working on the 5 year fiscal plan that proactively addresses future major repair needs to be included in the budget.
6. *Trustee Report* – Pastor Sal/Marty.
 - a) Pastor Sal thanked Marty for cleaning the Spring St. garage.
 - b) Marty will replace the broken Retreat House upstairs bathroom sink drain.
 - c) Marty is in contact with Don McGee regarding the Retreat House HVAC system.
7. *Committee/ Group Updates* – Karen (Grant Proposal Committee).
GPC requesting insights from Council with regard to three grant requests that are time sensitive and do not appear to fall within the GPC guidelines. Karen distributed the grant applications to Council prior to meeting.
 - a) Proposal #1 – Hudsonville UCC \$2,500 request for their “Raise the Roof” Campaign.
Noted: GPC is supportive of the grant if IGF guidelines are met.
Discussion:
 - 1) Are churches automatically considered 501c3 organizations as long as they meet IRS criteria?
 - 2) Hudsonville UCC is an ally church.
 - 3) Hudsonville UCC lost members when it became an “open and affirming” church.
 - 4) Could funding be provided by other means (rather than the IGF) while still staying within the church budget?

Action: Karen and Pete will verify Hudsonville UCC's 501c3 status and update Council of same. Pete will request a final vote from council via email.

- b) Proposal #2 – 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.

Noted: GPC would like to see at least part of the money awarded, but since this is not a 501c3 entity, asked if other options within the church budget could be used for funding.

Discussion:

- 1) Does Douglas still offer hazardous waste collection to their residents?
- 2) Does the contract with Republic include hazardous waste collection for the Tri-Community?
- 3) This Hazardous Household Waste event does align with our commitment to Creation Justice.
- 4) Is it appropriate for this type of community request be directed to the GPC?

Action: Pete will provide Karen with Council input.

- c) Proposal #3 – Sundance Center \$2,000 request for equine assisted retreats. Prior requests have been funded by IGF. Sundance is not a 501c3, but they do partner with the Friendship Office of Americas that is a 501c3.

Noted: GPC is not sure about the IGF being the appropriate funding stream for this request.

Discussion:

- 1) Community requests for grants that don't meet the IGF guidelines are increasing thereby creating repeated confusing situations for the GPC.
- 2) Would the GPC committee like Council to address and firm up GBC guidelines?
- 3) Should the budget include a category to address funding requests that fall outside of the IGF requirements?

Action: Pete will provide Karen with Council input.

8. *Ongoing Business* – C-19 issues and planning - Pastor Sal.

Returning to in-person church services.

Noted: National UCC and Grand West Association have not offered an exact date to return to in-person services. However, when the shut downs began, National UCC's President did say churches should be one of the last institutions to re-open. Preparation for when we do return to in-house services include:

- a) Moving ahead with providing Comcast internet service to the sanctuary enabling the live streaming of Sunday worship.
- b) Installing HEPA filtration systems.
- c) Making available hand sanitizers, masks, etc.
- d) Discussion of requirements for participation such as vaccinations, wearing masks, social distancing etc.
- e) Remaining cognizant of CDC recommendations and SOM laws.

- f) Engaging the congregation by distributing the on-line “Return to In-Person Services Survey” developed by Julie. This will give voice to congregants and assist in the decision of when and how the return to in-house services.

Motion: from Stan that Council members examine the survey via email and respond with suggestions/revisions etc. David second. Motion approved.

9. *New Business*

- a) New Vanco giving pages – Julie/Will.

Noted: Vanco is offering a new online giving page interface that is free to implement.

- 1) Makes use of “tiles” that display different church funding campaigns and events.
- 2) These “tiles” will allow for tracking the different income streams.
Suggestion: caution about having too many giving tiles options.
- 3) Messaging can be shared behind each fund on the giving page.
- 4) User ID and passwords carry over from the current Vanco application.
- 5) User friendly: a link is available to return to the website, shopping basket etc.

Motion: from Bev to approve the new Vanco giving page interface. Stan second. Motion approved.

Action: Julie will share the new Vanco giving resource page in the Epistle with a “how-to” video and provide a quick demonstration during Sunday’s “coffee hour.”

Discussion: Should donors be asked to cover credit card usage fees?

Motion: from David that a check box be available for donors to include credit card usage fee with their payment. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.

- b) Church budgeting consideration – Mike (FOC).

- 1) Request from Mike to pay the final \$2,000 installment to UCC’s “Shaping the Future” campaign for FY 2021.

Motion: from Pastor Sal to pay the final \$2,000 to UCC for FY 2021. David second. Motion approved.

- 2) IGF Fund 3% withdrawal (over three year average) amount to the GPC has decreased due to the Spring St. property status change within the IGF.

Suggestion: Consider increasing the IGF withdrawal amount to the GPC from 3% to 4%.

- 3) Cash position continues to increase:

Discussion:

- Should a percentage of the budget be established for mission spending independent from the IGF?

Action: Pete and Mike will continue to work on FY 2022 budget and update Council. Council members will give thought to best practice in establishing a metric for mission spending.

10. *Next Meeting Date* – April 20 @ 6 pm.

11. *Adjournment* – 8:04 pm

Motion: from Pastor Sal. Stan second. Motion approved.