

Church Council Minutes - Approved

November 14, 2023

Present: Pastor Sal Sapienza, Mark Johnston, Stacy Honson, Kelly Wright, Stan Greene, Bernice Lopata, Mike VerMerris.

Excused: Jim Kern, Mike Mok

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Mark called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened the meeting with prayer.
3. *October 2023 Meeting Minutes* – Mike V. distributed the final draft of both October 10 Council, and October 30 Special Council minutes prior to the meeting.
Motion: from Stan to approve Oct. 10 minutes. Stacy second. Motion approved.
Motion: from Bernie to approve Oct. 30 minutes. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.
Action: Both meeting minutes will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed the November report prior to the meeting.
Highlights:
 - a) More than 70 people attended the Michelle Willis concert on October 26 and more than 50 people attended the Bobby Jo Valentine concert on November 3. We are grateful for all the people who offered their assistance to make the Fall Concert Series a success.
 - b) After several years of hosting an annual Transgender Day of Remembrance service at our church, this year we are partnering with Holland UCC and Out on the Lakeshore to co-host the event at the Holland Armory on November 20.
 - c) Our Douglas UCC Safety and Wellness Team is hosting a presentation in the Friendship Hall on November 30 at 3:30 PM by Allegan County Senior Services, outlining the many services provided free-of charge to Allegan County senior citizens.
Action: The detailed report will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
5. *Financial Report* – Stacy distributed September and October's financial reports prior to the meeting: Profit and Loss Comparisons; Monthly Balance Sheets; Budgets vs. Actuals FY24 P&L.
September Highlights:
 - a) Collection plate income is \$9300 under budget for the month.
 - b) There was a mix-up in payments for Sal's retirement which required a catch-up of \$9900.
 - c) Actual net income was a loss of \$7966 vs a budgeted loss of \$2410.
 - d) Actual income for the quarter \$80,612 vs budget of \$88,271.

- e) Actual expense for the quarter \$81,571 vs budget of \$87,150.
- f) Net loss of \$2067 vs budget of income of \$1,122

October Highlights:

- g) Expenses over budget in October: General & Administrative over by \$1300 - Printing new directory and mailing expense for capital campaign. Property & Liability insurance - Quarterly payment made. Virtually all other expenses are at or under budget.
- h) Actual income for the month \$26,607 vs budget of \$34,992.
- i) Actual expense for the month \$23,340 vs budget of \$28,950.
- j) Actual income for YTD \$107,217 vs budget of \$123,264.
- k) Actual expense for YTD \$104,911 vs budget of \$116,200.

Motion: from Stan to approve the financial reports as presented. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.

CWS/CROP Donation:

- a) Our DUCC team, which included ten walkers raised \$12,911 toward this year's CWS/CROP Walk. Historically a matching donation was made by the church through the Isabel Graham Fund. In recent years our walkers have been so successful this is not possible. After discussion, an amount of \$6,000 was set.

Motion: from Stacy to approve the CSW/CROP Walk donation amount of \$6,000. Bernie. second. Motion approved.

Pastoral Relations Committee Request:

- a) The PRC has requested \$1,000 to fund the farewell brunch for Pastor Sal.

Motion: from Stacy to approve the amount of \$1,000. Bernie. second. Motion approved.

6. *Trustee Report* – Kelly distributed the report prior to the meeting.

Completed:

- a) Church/Friendship Hall:
 - Replaced filters and lights in the five air purifiers.
 - New church water heater burner installed on Nov-7.
- b) Isabel Graham Center (Spring Street):
 - Design determined and exterior building lettering ordered. Installation date to be determined.
 - After an electrical outage several weeks ago, upon power restoration several Wi-Fi devices had difficulty reconnecting to the internet. Specifically, the front door lock, thermostat and one TV. Manually restarted all three devices and the lock and TV came back online. The thermostat continued to have intermittent issues, so a service technician was called to investigate. They did a device and app factory reset and currently the thermostat Wi-Fi is functioning properly. Note, the thermostat functioned fine, it was the Wi-Fi connection that was the issue.
- c) All Properties:
 - Sprinkler system winterized for the season.

- HVAC/water heater inspection & service completed. Inspection identified church water heater burner needs to be replaced. Part ordered, upon part receipt installation will be scheduled.
 - Campus lawn hoses drained and stored for the season.
 - Campus snowblower fueled and started for season, snow shovels and deicer distributed to all campus buildings.
- d) Miscellaneous:
- Numerous small items addressed: light bulbs changed, Retreat House concrete pad furniture stored in garage, etc.

Pending:

- a) Church/Friendship Hall:
- Considering having a site review and requesting a quote from a commercial exterminator for an ongoing pest control program.
 - Lead inspection at the church will be done by the city on Friday, Nov-17.
- b) Isabel Graham Center (Spring Street):
- Install lettering on exterior of building. Note, depending on delivery and weather, installation could be in the spring when the weather moderates.
- c) All Properties:
- Working to expand the Safety & Health team.

7. *Committee/Group Updates*

8. *Ongoing Business*

Campus Stewardship Drive:

- a) Jim reported:
- Total pledges received to date = \$216,048.
 - Number of pledges = 81.
 - Number of members represented = 114.
 - Pledges Paid = \$71,354.
 - The current pledge total = 79% of our final goal.
 - We will be mailing the congregation a letter, thanking and updating them on the progress.

9. *New Business*

Interim Pastor Discussion and Planning:

- a) Prior to the meeting, for our review, Mark emailed an interim pastor candidate profile sent to him by Rev. Cheryl Burke:
- The applicant's qualifications and experience were reviewed.
 - Pastor Sal knows the applicant and gave his recommendation.
 - The applicant is a viable candidate for interim pastor.
- b) The discussion on the interim pastor topic continued – should we hire and if so, when, process to review candidates, etc.:
- Each member offered their thoughts on where they are at in regard to moving forward.
 - After much deliberation, the following plan was formulated.

- Stan will head-up development of a process for reviewing interim pastor candidates.
- Pastor Sal will help organize our local resources, using them for the first three months prior to hiring an interim pastor.
- Mike V. will organize our volunteers, expanding the positions to cover all aspects of the worship service.
- Offer our Administrative Assistant additional hours.
- Revise Policy 2-5 Compensation Rate for Pulpit Supply – increasing the rate to \$250.

Motion: from Mark to approve the plan as defined. Kelly. second. Motion approved.

10. *Next Meeting Date* – Council Meeting, December 12, at 6 pm

11. *Adjournment* – 7:12 pm.

Motion: from Kelly to adjourn. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.