

Grace Memorial Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

December 20, 2022

Members of the Vestry Present

Keri Beck

Roosevelt Carter

Andrew (Andy) D'Antonio

Sally Fraser

Bindu Newell

Calvin Richardson

David Waldow, Jr. Warden

Kevin Walsh, Co-Sr. Warden, Rector's Advisor

Clergy Present

The Rev. Martin Elfert

The Rev. Liz Klein

The Rev. Dan Carlson

Others Present

Charles McGee, Co-Sr. Warden, Meeting Chair

Curt Germundson, Treasurer

Kirsten Greene, Gala Chair

Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk

Members of the Vestry and Clergy Absent

Sammi Harvey

Holly Puckett (Sr. Petra)

1. Formation

1.1 Opening Prayers

- The meeting began at 6:00 pm with a reading of the fifteenth chapter of Job in abbreviated form of lectio divina followed by an opening prayer.

2. Items

2.1 Consent Agenda

- There were no corrections or additions to the Consent Agenda, and Roosevelt moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Calvin seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved.
- Martin did not have any additional comments for the Rector's Report, and David did not have any additional comments for the Jr. Warden's Report.
- Liz urged everyone to review the emergency reference information from the Safety Committee and noted one version includes names and contact details and the other version does not. She added she attended another de-escalation meeting offered by Portland, which she thought was very worthwhile and urged all to attend the next one.
- Charles did not have any additional comments for the Grace Institute (GI) Report.

2.2 GMEC By-Laws

- Sally sent suggested language for amending the GMEC By-Laws to the Vestry just prior to the Vestry meeting. She noted there is another month for review of the suggested changes before the changes are voted on by the Parish at the next Annual Meeting. The redrafting of the language aims to clarify Vestry members who are eligible to vote during Vestry meetings (elected Vestry members) and those who have a voice but no vote (non-elected Vestry members). Sally asked that comments be sent to her prior to the next Vestry meeting. A vote on the acceptance of the revised By-Laws by the Vestry will take place at the next Vestry meeting.

2.3.a Treasurer's Report

- Curt reported that operating expenses through November were very close to the budgeted amount, but revenue was down by about \$13,000. He is making progress on the new budget for 2023 and said Jackie has been in the office more lately but is still out quite a bit. He added investments are up a little and noted the restricted funds seldom change as there is not much monitoring for those accounts. The Foundation funds are up a little bit.

At this point, the Gala Chair, Kristen Greene was able to join the meeting, and she was asked to give her report so that she could then drop off the call.

2.4 2022 Grace Gala Report

- Kristen noted the Gala netted approximately \$32,000. She thanked everyone for their participation, and she has some recommendations for changes to the Gala in the future, which she will share with the new Gala chair(s). The Vestry offered thanks to Kristen for all her work, and Martin noted it would be beneficial to begin Gala talks sooner as well as possibly holding the event earlier in the Fall.

Kristen left the meeting and the Treasurer's Report was resumed.

2.3.b Treasurer's Report

- Curt said he needed a motion to allocate a housing allowance of \$1,500 per month for Dan. He added this does not change Dan's salary but is for tax purposes. Sally so moved, and Roosevelt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed.
- Martin noted he needs a similar motion for his housing allowance, and an amount of \$32,500 for 2023 was suggested. Sally moved to allocate \$32,500 for 2023 for Martin's housing allowance, and Roosevelt seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed. As with Dan's housing allowance, this allocation does not affect Martin's salary.
- Curt proposed increasing the medical benefit allowance for full-time lay staff to \$500 per month. This would likely only affect Kris Doty at this time, whose current benefit allowance is \$250 per month. Curt explained the lay staff finds their own medical coverage and is reimbursed with the medical allowance. If a Campus Steward is hired, which is a proposed new position, the position would most likely also be eligible for the same medical allowance. There was a brief discussion noting the importance and Grace's commitment to offering fair benefits. Andy moved to have the medical allowance for full-time lay staff increased from \$250 to \$500 per month, and Kari seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed.
- There was an extensive discussion regarding the new 2023 budget, and the possible need to renegotiate contracts for the usage of the campus. It was agreed a more business-like approach is needed and fair rates negotiated. However, it was noted market rates are not the goal with any renegotiated contract. The goal is to be good stewards of the campus and good partners to all who use it.
- The Finance Committee has suggested reaching out to Grace members regarding pledges, and Curt noted he has been making calls to do this. He has also discovered some incorrect pledging information in the system and is working to correct the information. He added Grace needs either more pledging members or increased pledges to meet the 2023 budget goals, and he urged the Vestry to work on stewardship issues and pledging concerns. It was suggested to provide communication to the Parish regarding stewardship and possible projected budget deficits. Curt said the projected 2023 budget deficit at this time is about \$46,000.

- There was discussion regarding adding Evelyn Prater, the digital verger, to the payroll as a part-time employee with a salary. The online work she provides is very important to the growth of the parish. Sally moved to add Evelyn Prater's position with a salary to the 2023 budget, and Andy seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed.

2.5 Safe Church Training

- Kevin will e-mail all Vestry members the Safe Church Training program and urged everyone to complete it before the new Vestry members are elected.

2.6 Vestry Nominating Committee Update

- Kevin will e-mail information soon and added the committee is still recruiting new Vestry members.

2.7 Initiate Conversation with PHAME

- Martin will talk to Jenny at PHAME regarding their intentions for leaving the Grace campus.

2.8 Chairs for Chapel

- Sally reported cathedral chairs are being proposed to replace the pews in the chapel to allow for more flexibility in the space, which in turn will lead to increased usage of the space. The Chapel Renovation Committee has talked to a carpenter about leveling the floor, which will also add flexibility to the space, and has explored fabric possibilities for the chairs. There will be a forum with the parish to discuss the proposed changes and to explain the goal is to have the chapel become more of a living space in the church. One possible thought is to have members "adopt" or sponsor a chair. There are restricted funds available for some of the work. The importance of honoring chapel memorials is definitely part of the proposal.

2.9 Moment of Grace

- Andy performed a lovely Czech Christmas carol for his Moment of Grace.

2.10 Other Business

- Charles thanked all for their participation, and he extended the Vestry's prayers to Fr. Martin and his family.

2.16 Closing Prayer

- Liz offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alicia Perkins Lehrle, Clerk