

First Congregational Church of Woodstock
MINUTES of COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. via Google Meets

In attendance: Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, Jim Nowak (Moderator), Laura Boies, Charles Bottieri, Suzanne Cimochoowski, Jennifer Duggan, Tom Duggan, Bob Kirk, Debby Kirk, Alexandra (Sam) Lyman, Bruce Lyman, Leilani Nixon, Kathy Packard, Debbie Pallatto-Fontaine, Charlene Swanson

Welcome

- Moderator Jim Nowak opened the meeting at 7:02 pm.

Opening Devotion

- Debbie P-F shared a Samhain devotion.

Clerk's Report (Laura B)

- There was one error noted in the Minutes of the October meeting. The term "bedrock beliefs" was replaced with "core values" and the minutes were accepted with appreciation.

Treasurer's Report (Tom D)

- Please see the Treasurer's Report for details.
- We are currently about \$17,000 over budget: \$5,500 over on income and \$11,000 under on expenses.
- Pledges, Rites and other contributions are over budget by about \$8,000.
- Fundraising is over budget by almost \$6,000, with \$4,100 net from the recent Arts & Crafts Festival.
- We had budgeted for a \$10,000 withdrawal from the New Century Fund but the Trustees felt it was not necessary at this time and would be better left in the fund, especially due to the current market situation.
- Expenses are \$11,000 below budget.
 - Worship and Faith Formation are under by about \$8,000.
 - Office expenses are under by \$2,000
 - Facilities (excluding capital items) are under by about \$1,000
- There is a separate report for Capital, Investment & Restricted Funds
 - \$17k was used for major repairs to the rear exterior of Harrison Hall in September.
 - \$38k of sanctuary repainting costs were funded by the Trustees Angel Fund.
 - Thanks to Toby B, we now have a working balance sheet for the restricted funds.

Pastor's Report (Rev. Kevin D)

- Please read the full Pastor's report.
- Intent vs. Impact during our Restructuring Process
 - Rev. Kevin encourages all to review the Change Cycle he shared in the March Pastor's Report. This can be a stressful time.
 - "Often the best intentions can result in unintentional negative impacts on others, that we may not even realize."
 - Remember to approach challenging issues with open hearts, expecting that people have the best of intentions.
- New Family Ministries coordinator: the search is underway with ten applicants so far and an interview team in place.

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- 2023 Ministry Planning: Unfortunately the expected planning changes will not be able to be implemented this year because some teams are unable to start their planning until December which will not allow enough time to make the anticipated changes in time.
- The office email address has not changed: office@firstchurchwoodstock.org
- Please get content for the weekly emails and bulletins in by 10:30 am on Mondays.
- Migration of unofficial FCCW related emails to Google Workspace needs to be completed. If you have not updated your church related emails yet, please do so as soon as possible.

Updates from Boards, Committees, and Church Members

Christmas on the Hill (Debby K)

- \$700 in Sponsors and 66 chicken pot pies ordered to date.
- An ad was placed in the Shopper's Guide.
- Still taking orders for pot pies, wreaths, cookies, etc
- Need help moving boxes and baking cookies.
- Online Auction on Bidding Owl is going great.
- Debby and Rev. Kevin will be on WINY on Monday morning.
- There has been discussion regarding assessing and evaluating our entire fundraising approach with respect to the current size of our congregation. Can we continue to run three large fundraisers consecutively in September, October and November?

Visions and Values (Jen D)

- After congregational gatherings and small focus groups the team now has a draft of our Core Values, consisting of four major values which the team plans to share with the congregation:
 - Worship
 - Service to Others
 - Openness and Inclusivity
 - Building Community Through Relationships
- The next step is to explore our Competing Priorities; those things that keep us from living out these values.

2023 Stewardship Campaign (Charlene S)

- Pledge Sunday was on Nov. 6th. Thirty pledges have been received so far amounting to \$100,371.82 including:
 - 4 first time pledges.
 - 12 pledges were the same as last year.
 - 11 pledges were increased from last year
 - 3 pledges were reduced from last year.
- Online pledging with Vanco is not ideal. The app doesn't sufficiently delineate the information we need. Other options will be investigated.

Trustees (Charles B)

- Trustees discussed plans to replace the Palladian window in Harrison Hall at a 2nd Hour on Sunday.

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Restructuring (Debbie P-F)

- The team has been meeting at least every other week.
- They have reviewed our current bylaws and are considering proposed changes to be voted on by the congregation.
- Continued discussion of Interim Governing Board plan, ie: policies, procedures, duties, etc.
- Beginning plans and recruitment for Ministry Teams and their leaders.
- Proposing structure to review and report how the Governing Board is working once it's underway.
- 2nd Hour to be held on Dec. 4th
- The Restructuring team will work with the Nominating Committee and the Pastor to begin the process of nominating members for the Governing Board. The slate of nominations will be voted on at the Annual Meeting in January. Recommendations should be shared with the Nominating Committee (Bob and Deb Kirk).

Sharing Prayers and Celebrations

- (Bruce L) Luke West expressed great appreciation for prayers for his 6 month-old daughter who had been hospitalized with RSV, and for prayers for his grandfather who is on hospice.
- (Charlene S) Tom Chase has COVID.
- (Charlene S) Bev Brazeal was able to get away for 2 nights of respite. She is very reluctant to ask for help but needs relief if anyone can offer to spend a little time with Earl.
- (Jen D) Expressed appreciation to Charlene and Stan for opening their home to any guests for Thanksgiving.
- (Rev. Kev) Nancy Horsefield is having a slower than expected recovery from knee surgery and struggling with a respiratory issue.
- (Bob K) Asked for prayers for our country on this election day and the coming week.

The Moderator is accepting offers for opening and closing prayers for future meetings.

Closing Prayer: a doxology was shared by Debbie P-F.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:17pm

Scribe: Laura Boies