

First Congregational Church of Woodstock
MINUTES of COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. via Google Meets

In attendance: Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, Jim Nowak (Moderator), Laura Boies, Charles Bottieri, Suzanne Cimochowski, Jennifer Duggan, Tom Duggan, Bob Kirk, Debby Kirk, Bruce Lyman, Christina Manuilow, Leilani Nixon, Kathy Packard, Tom Singleton

Welcome and Opening Devotion

- Moderator Jim Nowak opened the meeting at 7:03 pm.
- Rev. Kevin shared from the book “Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship” by Brian Wren.

Clerk’s Report (Laura B)

- Minutes from last month’s meeting were accepted. No corrections were recommended.

Treasurer’s Report (Tom D)

- Please see the Treasurer’s Report for details.
- Unrestricted Funds
 - Net Income year to date is \$23,777. This is \$35,000 better than budget: \$16,000 due to additional income and \$19,000 less in expenses
 - Income increase is primarily due to higher pledges and increased fund raising.
 - Expenses are under budget mostly due to unused salary for the Family Faith Formation position.
 - Trustees decided not to take a withdrawal from the New Century Fund because we don’t need it this year.
- Capital, Investment, and Restricted Funds
 - Toby B has basically completed his analysis and adjustments of the capital funds. It has been beneficial to understanding these accounts better which leads to better use of the funds.
 - The Library Fund had \$250 left from a donation by Andy DeTreville in honor of his late wife Polly (our church librarian for many years). This was used to purchase a Hitchcock rocking chair in her memory. The fund is now retired.
 - \$64,000 of combined Capital funds were used for sanctuary repainting costs and major repairs to the exterior of Harrison Hall. There is now a balance of \$28,000 in the Capital Improvement Fund.
 - Prepaid pledges of \$55k were released to operating income in January, retiring the Prepaid Pledge Fund. Prepaid pledges will now be on our balance sheet.

Pastor’s Report (Rev. Kevin D)

- Please read the full Pastor’s report.
- Prep for Annual Meeting
 - A link to a template in the Google drive will be shared so that board and committee summaries can be added to the Annual Report as we did last year.
 - Due to conflict with MLK Day and need for more prep time Rev. Kevin suggests moving the Annual Meeting back two weeks. MOTION: to move the 2023 Annual Meeting from the third Sunday in January to January 29, 2023. Rev. Kevin/2nd Tom

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S. Motion passed unanimously.

- The Deacons, Board of Outreach and the Worship Team met to consolidate their thoughts about plans for the coming year which will be integrated into our plans for 2023 based on the four areas of ministry: Worship, Care, Discipling, and Faith In Action.
- Jan 22, 2023 will be our 20th anniversary of ONA, guest preacher Michael Streib.

Updates from Boards, Committees, and Church Members

Board of Outreach and Deacons

- This year's Christmas Eve offering will be used to create/fund a program aimed at social activities for local seniors (and others). The Board of Outreach and the Board of Deacons have made this designation rather than to the Deacon's Fund which is already well funded at over \$13,000.

2023 Stewardship Campaign (Bob K)

- Total pledges to date: \$131,500 (about the same as last year). This includes:
 - 47 total pledges, 9 new pledges,
 - An additional pledge of services equivalent to \$8,000.
 - Still waiting to hear on a few more possible pledges.

Restructuring

- A general plan for restructuring was presented and discussed at a 2nd Hour on Dec. 11th.
 - Council is in favor of adopting the new restructuring plan.
 - The Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for the new Governing Board. Confidential electronic and paper nominating forms are available. Please get nominations in by the end of December.
 - The Restructuring team is working on proposed changes to the bylaws to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. A draft will be sent to Council members for review. *Please* respond to this email to let the team know if you are in agreement with the proposal or have any questions or comments.

Trustees (Suzanne C)

- The CT Conference sent a reminder to include a housing resolution at the December Council meeting for our minister's housing allowance. Trustees were previously unaware that this was required. This is an administrative necessity for the IRS and does not change the current compensation.
 - MOTION: That beginning January 1, 2023 the compensation rates for all paid positions shall continue unchanged until such time as the Congregation approves a budget for 2023. The compensation rates in the 2023 budget shall be applied prospectively to work performed starting with the first day of the month following the Congregation's approval of the 2023 budget. The portion of the pastor's salary designated as a housing allowance in accordance with Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code shall continue to be \$2,200 per month until the compensation rates in the 2023 budget take effect, at which time the housing allowance designated in the 2023 budget shall replace it and shall continue in effect until a new designation occurs. Suzanne C/2nd Tom D. Motion passed.

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- Palladian window in Harrison Hall (Bruce L): The Trustees changed their decision and will now be replacing the large window in Harrison Hall with a round top palladian style window. An order was placed at the beginning of December. An additional \$5800 was required. Thanks to Sam L. who took on the responsibility of seeking donations, \$7800 was raised. Trustees will add an announcement to the January Share and/or weekly email.

Sharing Prayers and Celebrations

- There will be a Prayer Vigil for Sandy Hook on Wed. Dec. 14th at 9:15 am.
- Cimochofskis rejoice in regaining their health and being able to have their grandchild over again.
- Jim N expressed heartfelt appreciation for Suzanne C being a key aide in getting his son into a welding program for a new life-changing career.
- Jim also expressed appreciation for a recent family gathering.
- Rev. Kevin shared that we have at least five people seeking to become new members.
- Thanks to Christina M for organizing the carol sing again this year.

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

Closing Prayer: Rev. Kevin shared a prayer based on Romans 15: 5-13.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:01pm

Scribe: Laura Boies