

Fountain Street Church Governing Board Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2023

Board Members Present: Cele Badgerow, Steve DePolo, Matthew Huizenga, Shellie Jeffries, Geoff Kempter, Tony Lanninga, Kristen Loch, Kristin Mayer, Katie Mitchell, Amy Preston, Jon Spalding, James Taylor, Tim Creamer, John Willette, George Zuiderveen

Staff Present: Rev. Christopher Roe

Guests: Paul Arnold, Carole, Sherron Collins, Kathleen Higgins, Win Irwin, Joan's iPhone, Bunny Johnson, Carol Kooistra, Heather Palmer, Marie Penny, Chip Wall

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:01 pm.

Call to Community: Matthew read a piece called January 1 by GK Chesterton.

Congregant Comments: None

FSC Thank You: Shellie thanked the Foundation Board for all they've done for the church, and the dynamic, thankless task, which they do with cheer.

George (our liaison to the Foundation Board) added that the FB will make quarterly calls to Legacy members. They also met with Rev. Jody recently.

Governing Board Minutes: Katie moved to accept the November minutes. Tim seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee Officer Nominations: James moved to approve the following officers:

Kristen Loch, Vice Chair
Tim Creamer, Treasurer
Katie Mitchell, Secretary
Jon Spaulding, Member at Large

George seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Finance: Win Irwin (as last treasurer) Updated:

For this fiscal year, we budgeted a deficit of \$53,650, with the understanding that any deficit will be absorbed by our healthy Unrestricted Cash Reserve.

Income

- Pledge Income is \$27,102 behind budget.
- Contributions of Record are \$22,508 ahead of budget.
- Cash Plate is \$898 behind budget.
- Rental Income is 678 ahead of budget.
- Other Income (mostly Stewardship Events) is \$7,795 ahead of budget.
- Total Income is \$2,981 ahead budget.

Expenses

-Overall, our expenses are \$42,240 under budget

-Expenses significantly over budget:

- Professional Services (7967)
- General Maintenance & Repairs (11,283)
- Heat (9,673)
- Electric (11,478)

-Expense significantly under budget:

- Administrative Staff Expenses 40,350

Net Loss for Year - \$8,121

Significantly better than the budgeted loss of \$53,650

The Unrestricted Cash Reserve at the end of December was \$144,836.

Foundation Investments were \$3,910,102 at the end of the month and the foundation has received \$156,798 in gifts in 2022, without counting the property donated for the Bell Tower Repairs.

Finance Committee Meeting 1/18/23 Additional Notes:

Separately, the Finance Committee approved a new Financial Policy on Balance Sheet Designated Funds to be added to the Financial Governing Board Policies. A copy of that draft is attached.

The committee received updates on various Building/Properties items including: elevator, narthex doors repair, bell tower work, sale of property for bell tower repairs, new EPS cameras, new social hall chairs, and AV equipment. Much of this was made possible by generous gifts.

The committee will review a new draft of the 2023 budget after Melissa and Christopher have had time to make adjustments. Currently, annual pledges are behind last year.

The committee is also updating their Chart of Work for 2023.

Tim (new treasurer) moved to accept the financial report. Jon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Balance Sheet Designated Funds

Tim presented:

The church has many designated funds on the church balance sheet. Each fund has been created for a specific purpose. A master list of the purpose for each fund will be kept and reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.

The church finance manager will keep accurate records of income and expenses for the designated funds.

The Finance Committee will annually approve a list of individuals and staff who are assigned to “sign off” on uses of the designated funds. That person will take responsibility for making sure the funds are used for the specific purpose for which they were created.

Tim **moved to toss this to oversight**, Tony seconded

Kristin M. asked a question on clarification

Jim suggested a clause for absorbing dormant funds into the general budget.

Tim added the language. Kritsen L. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Tim noted “kudos” to the staff for budget management.

Stewardship:

Win updated:

Running about \$80,000 short, meeting tomorrow and will take all the help we can get. Many people are pledging less, whether from income changes or people we’ve lost. So we need to think of ways to bring in more money. Interestingly, contributions of record are UP. How do we encourage this without “beating people over the head?” We’re adding members too, so that’s good.

George asked what a contribution of record was - a check? Kristin M. said it just needs to be specifically noted to NOT be in the plate.

Shellie asked about adding a QR code or some other easy donation method on the order of service. Discussion on the logistics of this, streamlining the process and enhancing the sense of security.

Bell Tower:

Win updated:

At the request of our preservation architect Quinn Evans, we had a meeting on Friday, January 20 th to review the Non-Destructive Evaluation Memorandum which summarized the findings from the

December 13 th and 14 th evaluation by Atkinson Noland & Associates and Silman (our structural engineering firm).

Kelly Gawinek of Quinn Evans led us through the report, their findings, and their recommendations which reported:

There has been additional structural deterioration of masonry since the last inspection in May which confirms the seriousness of the necessary repairs. They found areas where anchors were not detected where they had been specified on original drawings and some areas where there was anchoring.

They recommended removing as soon as possible the decorative upper cornice stone panels found just under the pyramid roof and reinstalling them using stainless steel anchors as recommended by the structural engineer.

In addition, they recommended installing stainless steel anchors for bell tower masonry where anchors are not present. In those cases where the masonry is displaced, the masonry will have to be removed and reinstalled in its original locations.

For the period until we can conduct this work, we will need to regularly inspect these areas by drone to make sure no further movement is taking place – especially after freezing/thawing conditions or high winds. Blair Bates will undertake this work.

After reviewing the report, Jeremy Taylor of OAK and Blair Bates of Restoration, Inc. summarized what was accomplished in December. OAK removed the old wooden stairs and replaced it with new stainless-steel stairs, giving safe access to the Bell Tower. With the new stairs and two cranes, they were able to conduct the Non-Destructive Testing detailed above. Due to high winds, we were not able to follow the original plan of netting and tarping the tower, however, Blair Bates and Restoration Inc did install the proper caulking on the pyramid roof and installed some metal flashing to direct water away from the structure.

We did find asbestos in the tower flooring and the church will need to hire a local firm to properly remove it – OAK is not licensed for this work.

It was agreed by all the parties that we will target getting a cost estimate for all the Bell Tower work by Easter, with Quinn Evans completing their work by Mid-March so that OAK and Restoration Inc have time to meet the deadline.

It was reported that the team worked very well together and were able to accomplish all their objectives in less than 4 days, although we had allowed for 5 days. High winds prevented work on that Friday.

Discussion on how unsafe it actually is in the tower.

Bell Tower Committee: Tim Chester, Bill Brunner, Matt Riegler, Win Irwin, Amy Preston, Rev. Christopher Roe, Melissa Hoezee.

FYI- we were joined by members of the Foundation, Governing Board, Properties Committee, and Finance Committee.

Staff Report:

Rev. Christopher updated:

Advent was very successful. John Willette shepherded a robust series of 9:30 services. As disappointing as canceling on Christmas Eve was, it was wise. The NYD brunch service was very well attended. Planned on 30 or 40, and it was at least 120. It was electric. Had plans for the tables and discussion but we didn't even get to it.

So well received, and I'm thinking of having brunch services in months that have a 5th Sunday. It would be more planned and discussion based. This shakes out to quarterly. Hopefully we'd be open to doing something different 4 times a year, especially since it's often around the New Year. Would also like to renew a group who heads up worship planning. Lately it's been the Summer Speaker Series, but how can a group like that look at the whole year? Also a way to get worship back in the hands of the congregation.

Also looking at new membership. We have 5-10 families coming very regularly. Asking how to become members! But we don't have a formal way to welcome them. This is going to keep coming to the top of our needs list. Rev. Jody has a concept for this.

Likely to host a vigil in Feb. to mark a one year anniversary of Ukraine being invaded. Then a little later a marker for the one year anniversary of Patrick Lyoya's death with downtown ministers.

Kristin L. how opening the state Senate went. Rev. Christopher said it went well for "Foundation" Street Church (referring to another person's verbal slip at the event).

George asked if there's a Downtown clergy group. Rev. Christopher said he's trying. There's going to be a joint Good Friday Service and some conservative clergy will join. We are intentionally not invited to an existing pastor's group.

Joe DeWinkle is getting started with us and will be performing all duties of the job this Spring.

Old Business:

The congregant workshops we held were a success. Rev. Jody has been meeting with individual groups, including the Foundation Board, Chapel group, anti-oppression group (AOC).

In Feb. we'll have another congregant workshop and we'll talk about a covenant and behavior. In March we'll talk big picture, such as the Bell Tower. Talking about how to talk about these things and come to better decisions.

New Business:

Officers Committee did approve spending for the elevator (Officers were given that power by the Board).

Officers also approved Rev. Christopher's housing allowance, as it has to be approved before year end per IRS rules.

SMSC told us they had a candidate to present to the Board so we could call a special meeting. Candidate is a GVSU grad, has a Master's in Divinity, ordained at Lake Street Church, which also has connections to the Baptist church. It's Rev. Christopher. 😊

SMSC is charged with identifying a single candidate for an up or down vote. When they ID this candidate, the Governing Board calls a meeting for that vote. The membership meeting must be 14-30 days after the meeting is called. GB manages election. Nom Comm creates the ballot and sends them. We make accommodations if anyone has trouble.

We need to ID 3 electors to actually count the votes. Results will be announced at the meeting. If the SMSC wants to provide other info, they can do that. GB negotiates a contract. If the congregation calls the Senior Minister candidate, the contract becomes active. If the congregation doesn't call, the contract is null and void.

Kristen L. moved to hold a special meeting on Feb. 12 for the SM election. Cele seconded. Motion passed unanimously. YAY!!!

George asked about the contract. Amy said we negotiate the contract before the election, and she's had some conversations with Rev. Christopher. We'll have something in writing soon. But we can't discuss it tonight. We'll have to have a special Gov. Bd. meeting before the Membership Meeting to approve the contract. Contract discussed in a closed session, but the vote will be "public" (open to congregation). Will most likely be a Zoom meeting.

We need three electors to count the ballots:

1. Jon Spalding
2. Steve DePolo
3. Kristin Mayer

Amy, as Chair, proposes committee Chairs:

Katie Mitchell for Nominating Committee. James seconded.

Steve DePolo for Oversight. James seconded.

Tim Creamer for Finance. Jon seconded.

Kristin Mayer for Communications. Katie seconded.

Motions passed unanimously.

Want to revisit having the Governing Board table in the Social Hall on Sundays. Asking the present group to staff it.

The water heater died in the kitchen, but it had been there for a few decades.

Congregant Comments: Amy reminded everyone to show up to the Stewardship meeting tomorrow.

Adjourn: Cele moved to adjourn. Tony seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.