

**Fountain Street Church Governing Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 21, 2022**

**Board Members Present:** Steve DePolo, Win Irwin, Shellie Jeffries, Kristen Loch, Kristin Mayer, Brad Miller, Katie Mitchell, Amy Preston, James Taylor, Chip Wall, George Zuiderveen, Jerrod Nickels, Matthew Huizing, Geoff Kempter

**Staff Present:** Rev. Christopher Roe, Melissa Hoezee

**Guests:** Ann's iPhone, Buzz Wynbeek, Carole V., Dan and Liz Bullock, Janet Peterson, Judith's iPad, Julie Smith, Marie Penny, Mary Peterson, Patrick Eaman, Sherron Collins, Tim Creamer, Tony Kroes, Wes Beck

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

**Call to Community:** Katie read about receding ice from "Ireland" by Frank Delaney, appropriate for Spring and church.

**Congregant Comments:** None

**FSC Thank Yous:** George thanked Fountain Club and the leaders who have been in it for a range of time.

**Governing Board Feb. Minutes:** Katie moved to accept the February minutes. Win seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Finance:** Win updated:

- We reviewed the upcoming Bell Tower Proposals for structural analysis and noted the cost of \$101,736. This is a separate Governing Board agenda item.
- Financial Statements through the month of February:
  - a. Income
    - i. Both pledges and contributions of record are very positive
    - ii. Rental income is still coming in slowly.
    - iii. Overall Income is very positive at \$40,659
  - b. Expenses
    - i. All categories are under budget so far this year with two exceptions
    - ii. Administrative/leadership is showing over, however, there is a non-cash adjustment for our 'savings investments' that is over \$3,000. Without that, our expenses would be under budget.
    - iii. Properties is still over budget because of utilities – mostly heat and electric. This is an area that we will need to investigate more thoroughly – are we using more energy than anticipated, have prices gone up more than our budget assumptions, can we do anything to mitigate the increases, how much over

budget might we land by year end.

1. Melissa/John Considine/Bruce Ling are trying to figure out the electricity
2. Win has offered to help investigate heat

c. Bottom line

Year to date we are positive at \$28,897.

d. Foundation

Note that the foundation investments are at \$4,182,261 – lower than last month due to the annual distribution and \$311,000 in market adjustment.

e. Cash Reserve

- i. We are still at a healthy \$215,020

- The Finance Committee reviewed and discussed our current Financial Policies in some detail. Policies are listed in the By Laws, Governing Board Policies, and ET Policies. The committee is working on a number of items listed in our minutes, but the policy that needs the greatest attention is under Asset Protection and the requirement to have 'sealed bids' when spending \$20,000 or more, in addition to the requirement for 'competitive pricing' for spending \$1,000 or more. Tim Creamer, George Zuiderveen, and Melissa will be doing some research to see if we can find policies from other churches/organizations that better suit our needs.

Jim asked if Samaritas had to do with the increase. Win said maybe, but probably not.

Kristen asked if rental income was going up. Win wasn't sure, but some things were probably coming. George mentioned Laugh Fest. Some discussion. Win said it doesn't seem the committee is worried about rental income. Amy supported this.

George moved to accept the Finance Committee minutes. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**Stewardship:** Win updated:

We are at 268 pledges, \$569,002. Over 8% are new. More increases than decreases.

Only 55 people need to be thanked yet. Everyone please take names.

Hoping to have a Governing Board sponsored "Welcome Back Lunch" when we truly reopen the church. We'll probably ask for volunteers.

**Bell Tower:** Win updated:

At the January Governing Board, we received Governing Board approval to move forward with the architectural firm Quinn Evans to prepare a proposal for the structural analysis of the bell tower.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, Ann Dilcher of Quinn Evans and their structural engineer Jenna Bressler were at the church to do a preliminary inspection of the bell tower. They were joined by Jeremy Taylor of OAK and

Blair Bates of Building Restoration Inc., as well as most of the Bell Tower Committee. After their review, Quinn Evans promised to submit a quotation for the structural analysis work. OAK was asked to submit a quotation to provide the crane, personnel, scaffolding, etc. to allow the structural analysis to take place.

We received both proposals within 10 days. The Bell Tower Committee then met to discuss the proposals and we produced a few questions and concerns. Win Irwin and Bill Brunner then met with OAK and later Quinn Evans to see if we could resolve our concerns. We were successful and Quinn Evans made modifications to their proposal. We have attached the proposals for approval at the March 21<sup>st</sup> board meeting.

Some key points:

- The Bell Tower needs repair, the situation has gotten worse in the last few years, and we really have no choice, but to move forward with this project.
- We have been planning on this for a long time and we have accumulated over \$800,000 in capital reserves plus pledges and donations.
- We anticipate that the structural analysis work will take place in May, however, there are approvals and contracts to line up before we will know the exact date.
- As part of the Quinn Evans contract, there will be a static analysis to determine whether our bell tower structure is sufficient to withstand the ringing of the bells.
- Our Governing Board Financial Policies require three sealed bids when spending more than \$20,000. Since the total of this project is \$101,746, we must have the Governing Board approve these contracts.

Win moved that the Governing Board approve the attached agreement with OAK dated February 23, 2022, for \$49,286 and the Quinn Evans agreement dated March 10, 2022, for \$52,450.

Kristen L. asked about the ringing of the bells. Will the answer be forever? Win and Amy said the answer is for going forward. We just don't have the records to give us enough info now.

George asked how the 3 sealed bids fit in. Win said we're looking ok doing this without the bids.

Kristin M. asked if we even HAVE 3 companies that can give us bids. Win said that is a challenge, and OAK has really been head of the pack. Getting 3 bids in a reasonable time is a big stretch.

George asked if the analysis included a "fix" bid. Win said this is more about what NEEDS to be done. Once we know THAT, we can get bids for the actual work.

Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**Search Nominating Group:** Tim Creamer updated. We have 14 fully vetted candidates:

Kathy Higgins

Angie Walters

Ken Norris  
Kathy Barr  
Carol Thompson  
Paul Arnold  
Andrea Haidle  
John Willette  
Wes Beck  
Mary Peterson  
Marie Penny  
Judy Botts  
Natale Beversluis  
Chip Wall

So the SNG will get with Amy on next steps.

Chip will be resigning from the Gov. Board to run for the Search Committee.

**Communications:** Kristin M. updated that the CC has been working on some way to acknowledge our losses. Meredith Bradley and Renee Therriault are working to develop and get the word out on an art project. Recognize, Remember, and Release. There will be strips of paper for people to write these things, and then those will be put together and displayed. This will probably carry through the church year. Thinking that groups can do this - Kayak, Singles, etc. to use the structures that already exist.

Kristen L. said just a thought to reach out to those who can't get to church. Kristin M. said we are working with Melissa to set up a system for that.

**Staff Report:** Rev. Christopher updated after saying he'd just come from a local interfaith prayer service for Ukraine, and was so grateful for our community at FSC. He felt like a fish out of water. This was well received with warm laughs. :)

Jake Heuber is gone and Conor Bardallis is leaving soon. Working to ensure we're covered.

Summer Series to be in either Chapel or Social Hall.

Memorial services coming up. Going to have them on Saturdays and Sundays.

Shellie asked if we are actively searching for a replacement for Jake. Yes, the search has begun and that might be more of a full time thing, combining Jake and Conor's jobs.

Chip asked about the order of service and giving, and explaining to people how it works. Rev. Christopher

said he and Greta Jo are discussing maybe putting cards in the pews to make it easier. There is an order of worship, we just don't publish it. Might be printing it, might not. There will be a debate and it will depend on the season. We also have decades of literature to share with visitors. We should try to get something more complete and cohesive and branded.

George asked if someone would be available to help people with the tech side. Good laughs. Rev. Christopher said they've talked about how to introduce and maybe even have practice runs.

David Smith has been off for a while. Clergy is "triaging" the incoming needs, but they want to get more proactive. Maybe congregants/liaisons can be more involved there. We want a more organized system.

**New Business:** Amy reminded that, at last month's meeting, the Gov Board charged the officers with creating a sort of draft of a covenant/code of conduct for FSC. The Officers met and discussed and have something to use for now. We got lots of ideas from board members and congregants.

We feel that a more permanent solution needs to be from "the ground up." This isn't something the board can do alone. We're looking to do this at the bylaw/policy level (perhaps in the Safe Church policy). We will use the Communications Committee, along with Oversight, to get this in motion. It will take time. It should probably also involve clergy.

The Officers' homework assignment was to get these guidelines about acceptable and unacceptable interactions between members/congregants/clergy/staff, which were mailed out to the board. Maybe we won't need to enforce this.

Jim asked if the officers had conversations with the people involved with the situation we discussed last month? Amy said we did not have it for many reasons, including not having an existing policy. We are confident the message got through to the involved parties.

Jerrod asked if Amy and Rev. Christopher went to the class on this topic? Amy said they did not yet, but they will.

Jerrod also asked for elaboration on the Safe Church Policy. Kristen L. said it was a sort of "catch-all" for things that might happen here, such as a person who shouldn't be here, or a fire, or whatever. It came to include some behavioral aspects. This felt like a good place for the conversation we're having. You have standards, but you can't create specific policies on such events.

Win said such a policy will also lower our insurance. The Finance Committee would review this every year. Lots of hard-to-hear audio.

Jerrod asked what would be involved in adding this to the Safe Church Policy. Amy said it would involve the Senior Minister. Jerrod asked if we should send this out to the whole congregation? Seems like that

would be helpful.

Chip was concerned that the covenant would get buried in the Safe Church Policy. Jerrod asked how this differs from a covenant. Rev. Christopher said usually a covenant has boundaries. There's inclusion of a "consequence" or steps to take if things aren't working. We obviously can't refer to denominational guidelines. Jerrod said a covenant would come from the congregation.

Geoff commented on the audio in the meeting. He went on to say that this needs a lot of editing. Less detail might be better than more, as we don't want to back anyone into a corner or suppress expression. Is this just a draft?

Amy clarified that this was just temporary and a draft, as the Officers were directed to do at last month's meeting. A long term solution will take a lot more time for the reasons Geoff stated. This a far shorter version than we started with. We're not making any motions, simply discussing.

Jerrod asked Geoff what seems oppressive. Geoff said mainly he wants more time to read it over. "Code of Conduct" doesn't sound right. Gossip, for example, is a loaded term. Or differentiating passion from abuse. Jerrod doesn't find it repressive.

Kristin M. said this was a temp solution so that if something comes up, we have a guideline to get to the underlying issue, since we have no policy with which to resolve the issue. Defining a covenant will take a lot more work. This is just a place to start and doesn't seem too restrictive.

Jim said he appreciates the route the Officers took with this. This is one step to being a more welcoming community and maybe even a response to Rev. Mariela leaving.

Steven chatted via Zoom that berating staff creates a toxic work environment. This goes back to last month's discussion.

George mentioned that he's hearing that this is a "temporary solution" and that we don't have rules with which to confront anyone. How is this going to solve anything if no one sees it? And there are ways to talk to people without having "rules" to break.

Win said that, in fairness, not everyone wanted this. We wouldn't have a huge "rulebook" in the corporate world. Most religious organizations have some sort of "code" to reference.

Kristen L. brought it back to, if we have nothing to refer to (as other religious organizations do), what do we do when something happens?

Chip said that in the corporate world, there has to be a resolution. We also go directly to the person who's causing an issue. So that's helpful, but we need some sort of structure to refer to, whatever we

want to call it.

Kristin M. pointed out that, in a business/school/etc more people have a professional code to follow. We need to verbalize why we're choosing to be a community together. Saying what we're NOT is not enough to hold us together. And now we have years of staff and clergy being mistreated, and that's not ok.

George asked: If we didn't have the specifics we discussed last month but someone said we should have a covenant, what would it say?

Win said we already have a statement that was approved. An inclusion statement that was on our website. This was from Brad and social justice efforts a few years back. Discussion about if it was part of Rapid Response efforts?

Rev. Christopher said a covenant would give this a purpose, such as "to be safe/inclusive/etc." These are core values, but do we connect them to our purpose IN writing?

George posited: What if someone said we need a covenant? It would take time and the whole congregation would know.

Jerrold asked but what is it? It's not rules/regulations/policy, as some have said. But it does allow someone who is being harassed to refer to something that can regulate dialogue with board support.

Discussion on what inclusive/safe/etc mean and when we crafted these statements. Hard to hear audio. Kristen L. reminded that the Officers were charged with this.

George asked if there were other ideas about talking to the congregants involved. Win said we are sure the message got through at the last board meeting. Kristen L. this all goes back to how we treat each other. Jerrold said we must allow speaking our minds, but that does not include belittling. What Rev. Christopher experienced does not line up with what we want.

Amy said we're talking about more than just words. We were addressing a pattern of behavior that was meant to accomplish a goal. We can't have this happen again. Can't lose another (acting) senior minister. We want to go forward and be awesome without this kind of business.

Kristin M. said the website also has core values. She read them to demonstrate that we have a lot of the pieces here. And the pattern of behavior clearly does not align with it. What's missing is more input from the congregation on what putting these into action looks like.

Geoff applauds the sentiment but doesn't think we have a big problem here. The document just needs some editing and clarity. Maybe expand the inclusion statement we already have. Circulate it on the board and revisit next month.

**James moved to table the discussion.** Jerrod seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Communications Committee discussion and vote will be postponed.

### **Plate Contributions**

Brad said he was appointed liaison to the Social Action Committee:

**Brad moved** that the Governing Board ask the Finance Committee to review the amount of Sunday plate proceeds going back into the community. It is currently at 50% and the Social Action Committee would like to see it restored to 100% as it was for many years before being reduced three years ago to help cover a budget shortfall. Input from the Finance Committee would help the Governing Board know if a return to the “100% Community Plate” that was so successful in the past is again possible.

Geoff seconded.

Chip is concerned that the move is premature. We need analysis from Finance. Also concerned that people don't always understand money going back out to the community and won't be happy with money not staying here. Also concerned that there's a better way to think of the whole social action, rather than spreading it out via the committee.

Win reminded that the motion is only for the Finance Committee to review the situation and report to the board. Brad confirmed that.

Amy asked if we're going through the grant cycle as usual. Brad thinks they are doing some form of that. *Point of order*, ask Tim Creamer, who says they are doing the grant cycle, but decisions now will not impact the current cycle.

Brad said it's been a long time since we've discussed this. Think it's worth revisiting now. A clear cut ask on Sundays can make the plate contributions go up, as it does in other places.

Jim asked if we need to vote? Win said that's good governance to research before making motions (as Brad has done). James called for a vote, George seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.

**Congregant Comments:** Tim Creamer said we brought up language that we passed before. We've long had the issues we're discussing. In a business it's easier to deal with. The language isn't helping... what else are we gonna do?

**Adjourn:** Learned a few things in this hybrid meeting, and we'll work on that for next month. Chip moved to adjourn. Kristen L. seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.