

St. James Vestry Minutes

Thursday, May 16, 2019

5:45PM

Participants – Fr. De Freeman, Jr. Warden Bruce Stone, Sallie Smith, Elizabeth Orr, Drew Downey, Kris Bradley, Francis Patton, Mary Hopkins Chamblin, Roger Guilian, Callie Grissett, Ed Shell, Parish Administrator Meghan Fancher, Treasurer Pel Henry, Clerk Anderson McKean

Opening Prayer & Recitation of the mission statement

Those present recited St. James mission statement: *We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God, sharing His love, and serving others.*

A Meditation was led by Fr. De Freeman focused on the difference between “headliners”, people who achieve fame, fortune and accolades vs. the people in our lives who teach us, help us through difficult times and make us feel appreciated. Very few of us could name the headliners, but we all could readily list the people we care about, and who care for us. Father De read a quote from Mother Teresa, emphasizing the importance of being kind, honest and doing good, even when others are not.

School Update– Shelley Miller & Jennifer Lambert

Enrollment and summer programming update

Jennifer Lambert represented the St James school board. Jennifer requested help from the Vestry with purchasing two interactive whiteboards for school. An interactive whiteboard is a multi-sensory device used in the classroom to engage children in learning. Jennifer explained that interactive whiteboards will help St James school remain up to date and competitive with schools in area.

The school is requesting one interactive whiteboard for the Kindergarten class and another for the three to four-year-old class. The whiteboard could be used for Sunday school and things related to church.

Mary Hopkins Chamblin inquired about the cost of the device. Jennifer explained the cost of an interactive whiteboard can range from \$3,500-\$5,000 depending on options pursued. Parishioner Randall Wright has provided the school with detailed information on two vendors.

St. James School Director Shelley Miller explained that the interactive whiteboards are very important to school, offering positive effects on teachers and students; supporting all learning modalities, enhancing fine and gross motor skills, etc. Additionally, the interactive white boards will further prepare students beyond St James.

The school board requested the Vestry to release funds to purchase two interactive whiteboards by August in order for teachers to use them during professional development and be ready for the fall semester.

Elizabeth Orr inquired about any additional maintenance costs or contracts. Shelley Miller explained that after the initial purchase, there would be an additional \$49 per year for software. Kris Bradley asked where the funds for the white boards would come from; Treasurer Pel Henry explained if approved, they would come from unrestricted cash. Pel reiterated that the school has exceeded expectations in terms of cash flow; we were prepared to lose money the first year but the school has a positive cash flow.

Mary Hopkins Chamblin made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$11,000 for interactive whiteboards from Unrestricted Cash with the understanding that the school board members will be making the final decisions on model and options. Cassie Grissett seconded the motion; all approved.

Shelley shared that 45 students are currently enrolled in the summer program; the program capacity is 72 students. She further clarified that weekly camps are not housing 45 each day.; 45 are enrolled in 7-week program; the most housed during one week is 32 children.

Shelly shared that the school board would like to form a fundraising committee. This committee would be charged with fundraisers to offset costs in the future. A fundraiser similar to the Giving Tree could potentially raise funds needed to furnish two classrooms; these will share space with the church nursery for 2 ½ year olds. It was noted that fundraising needs to be coordinated with the church stewardship committee

Bruce Stone asked if Vestry approval is required for the school to pursue a fundraising committee? Father de confirmed that approval is needed.

Financial Update

Treasurer Pel Henry provided the April financial update. He reminded everyone that the updated budget is based on the decision to go back to 2018 budget.

April was a strong month in terms of income, \$96,046 in income vs. \$96,150 budgeted. YTD actual income was \$397,197, \$14,000 above last year's actual income and \$18,000 above budget.

Pel noted that school's income of \$14,286 is on budget. The school's total income of \$110,332 is also on budget. The school's balance sheet has exceeded expectations during its first year of operation.

Pel moved onto to review April's actual expenses of \$88,882 compared to budgeted expenses of \$89,018. School expenses were below budget; \$14,647 vs. budgeted \$15,645. Total actual expenses were \$103,529 vs. budgeted actual expenses of \$104,663. YTD expenses of 354,663 were up slightly from the prior year due to raises.

Pel completed his Financial Report with a Restricted Account review, noting the only major activity was a transfer from unrestricted cash to the building fund to prepare for replacement and repair of major systems around the church buildings. The Outreach line item was higher due to a flow of money for these initiatives.

Callie Grissett asked about the \$40,000 that was owed to St. James from convention. Pel Henry explained that it would be reflected on last month's ledgers. Father De and Pel will review, confirm with Jim Ketchum and report back at the next meeting.

Organ Concert Update

Father De shared that the May 8th Organ Concert series raised \$338 in donations for Notre Dame Cathedral.

PCI Compliance

The Vestry was informed that a handbook and policies are required for taking credit cards.

A motion was requested to approve the April financial report. Roger Guilian motioned to approve the financial report; Callie Grissett seconded the motion; all approved.

Discussion

Jr. Warden Report - Bruce

Update on rezoning and sign variance

Jr. Warden Bruce Stone provided a summary of his discussion with the City's Planning & Zoning Commission. St. James is zoned as residential. There had been previous discussions regarding whether St. James should get rezoned, the benefits, drawbacks. According to the City, as a house of worship, we are what is known as non-conforming zoning. All churches are "R2" like us, so we don't have to worry about getting rezoned.

Bruce further explained that the sign ordinance is a stand-alone ordinance. He will make a presentation before a municipal court judge requesting signage approval. Regarding the location of the sign, Bruce explained that we are currently within the St. James easement, but in order to get approval to move signs closer to Section Street, Bruce has to get a signage application permit. He will provide the City what it needs to get the larger sign and work on permit to relocate closer to Section Street.

Building and Grounds updates

No update, everything is in good shape; Bruce asks to come up with future proposals to address ongoing window issues in the Sanctuary. Bruce asked what we can do to preserve integrity and address leakage.

Francis Patton asked if the traffic circle planned by the City will impact the sign location? Bruce noted that all depends on location of traffic circle; various members noted it would be nice to know if we will be substantially affected and agreed to try and acquire additional information.

Church Updates - De

Calendar

The Vestry is cooking for the Summer Evening Event on Wednesday, July 24, 530PM. Bingo is the activity planned for the evening. George Huckabay is heading up the Vestry cooking team. Before he reports to Seminary, there will be a summer send off for Kenneth White-Spunner on July 28 after the 10AM service.

Attendance

De shared that 1262 people visited the church on Easter Sunday; noting how spectacular the music, flowers, and acolyte presentations were at each service. Average Sunday attendance in April was 687 and 421 in May. Anderson McKean asked why the summer schedule begins in mid-May vs. when school lets out. De explained that the shift to the summer schedule is based on the average attendance in May over time.

Security

In light of the recent church shootings, questions have been raised regarding St. James' security. Father De shared that most of what is being done is vigilance. Ushers watch for suspicious activities and characters before and during each church service. We do not want police presence, or anyone coming into the service armed. Ushers did some security training in the past; the group agreed that it is time to update that training. Roger Guilian asked if we need to have any off-duty police presence, noting St. James could be more of a target because of the city officials in congregation. De confirmed their security teams are happy with what St. James is doing and have not asked for additional security measures to be in place.

Decision

Father De requested a motion to approve the April Vestry Minutes. Kris Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; Drew seconded and all approved.

The meeting was closed in prayer at approximately 7pm.