

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes
December 13, 2023
Zoom Meeting

Present: Fr. Bailey Norman, Fr. Ashton Sims, Leah Bailey, Adam Cavender, Tom Clary, Emily Doane, Betsy Ellis (Secretary), Cleon Hartman, Ashley Hillis, Rachel Kirk, Courtney Manrod, Cyril Meredith III, Beth Reed, Jim Rousey, Barbara Steele

Guests: Craig Brent, Heather Hartman, Alan Liby, Ben Shassere, Tyler Walker

Call to Order: Fr. Norman Items for Discussion

Fr. Norman called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Opening Devotional: Rachel Kirk

Ms. Kirk opened with a prayer.

Approval of the Agenda: Fr. Norman

An item "Update from the Envisioning Committee" by Heather Hartman was added under item "2020 Audit" was added under "Items for Action." (C. Hartman/Clary)

Approval of the Consent Agenda: Fr. Norman

Two corrections to the November minutes were identified:

- Page 3, paragraph 2 –"approval of 2024 committee" was corrected to "approval of 2024 commitment"
 - Father Ashton's report—the dates of the Camino trip should be 9/28/24-10/8/2024.
- The amended minutes were approved unanimously. (C. Hartman/Clary)

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Priest-In-Charge's Report: Fr. Norman

Frs. Norman and Sims both have COVID and this Vestry meeting was conducted via Zoom. Bailey thanked the outgoing Vestry members and welcomed the incoming Vestry members. There will be a Vestry party at the beginning of next year to acknowledge the service of members who are rotating off Vestry at the end of 2023 and to welcome the new members whose tenure begins in 2024. The new members were asked to review and become familiar with St. Stephen's policies which are on the website. Fr Bailey also encouraged questions that may arise from this review.

Assistant to the Priest in Charge: Fr. Sims

Fr. Sims led the DOK Quiet Day which was attended by both St. Stephens members and members from other parishes. The planning process for the Camino trip has continued. Six people attended an informational meeting and appear to be committed to going. Further outreach is planned to others who may be interested in going.

Senior Warden: Courtney Manrod

Ms. Manrod reiterated Vestry's responsibility to govern the temporal affairs of the Parish affairs.

Junior Warden: Leah Bailey

Ms. Bailey reported that the silent auction raised ~\$3,800. She appreciated the support of the Vestry for attending, bringing items, donating and helping clean up. Ms. Bailey acknowledged the Communication Committee for their active role in publicizing Parish Life events.

Item for Action

Election of 2024 Vestry Officers: Fr. Norman

Senior Warden: Courtney Manrod

Junior Warden: Leah Bailey

Secretary: Betsy Ellis

Treasurer: Alan Liby

All were elected by unanimous consent.

Approval of the November 2023 financial statement: Tom Clary

Line item costs are tracking close to the budgeted amounts. To date, \$46,000 has been drawn from investment interest income this year to pay for General Fund activities. The Finance Committee does not anticipate needing to withdraw additional funds in 2023. Investment accounts are starting to accrue interest increases after being flat for the last several years. Mr. Clary noted there is only about \$5,000 of interest income (combined from the two investment accounts) remaining which will not help much in developing the 2024 budget.

The Finance Committee represented this as a true and accurate statement of finances of the parish and recommended the Vestry approve the financial report as submitted. The report was approved unanimously.

Closure of Choir Trip Ad Hoc Account: Leah Bailey

The account has zeroed out, and no money is owed. The Ad Hoc Committee requests that the account be closed. Approved unanimously. (Clary/Manrod)

Approval of Developmental Goals: Fr Norman

The Developmental Goals are designed to help St. Stephen's develop the skill set essential to being the best church we can be, both now and in the future. They are also a part of completing the Priest-In-Charge process. Two conversations have been conducted with parishioners about these goals. Additional conversations are planned in early 2024. Bailey asked that the goals be accepted. Accepted unanimously. (Rousey/Liby)

Envisioning Committee: Heather Hartman

The Envisioning Committee survey is designed to gain parishioner input about local community interaction and best use of St. Stephen's building and grounds. The committee met this past Saturday to review the survey. The survey will be distributed to the parish electronically via email, with paper copies available in the Hospitality area. Mrs. Hartman stated that an email address will be required on electronic survey responses to identify any irregularities (e.g., the response is from a parishioner and multiple entries from one person). The goal is to make the survey available next week running through January 12, 2024. It was suggested that a QR code be provided in the bulletin so that people can access the survey that way. Bailey and Heather will meet this week for finalize the process and the survey.

On December 16, 2023, Heather sent an email to Courtney and Fr Norman stating that she loaded the survey questions as presented to the vestry with a few changes. The email addresses will be removed from each response before the responses are shared. On December 18, 2023, Courtney emailed the revised survey to the Vestry members requesting a motion to approve proceeding with the survey. Motion was seconded and approved with no further discussion via email vote on December 20, 2024. (L. Bailey/C. Hartman)

Items for Discussion

Priest-in-Charge-Process: Leah Bailey

Ms. Bailey has the responsibility for Vestry to coordinate completion of the Priest-In-Charge process. She reviewed the steps and status to complete the Priest-In-Charge process with Vestry. The Development Goals have been finalized. Fr. Norman has provided a statement reiterating his desire to become the Rector of St. Stephen's. The next step is for Vestry to formulate a letter to the Bishop requesting and describing the reasons why Fr. Bailey should become Rector. The Bishop will then to respond to the request. The Vestry will meet in Executive session on 6:30 pm on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, to begin formulating content for the letter to the Bishop. It was noted that, as 1/9/24 is the regularly scheduled time for the monthly Vestry meeting, the January Vestry meeting will be conducted one week later to 6:30 pm on January 16, 2024.

Personnel status: Adam Cavender

The Parish Secretary returned to medical leave in mid-November 2023. Judith Delaney and Roni Boyd are covering her responsibilities through the end of the year. Conversations will be held in early 2024 regarding how to fill the vacancy and apply of church policies that apply to the secretary's situation.

2024 Draft Budget Review: Tom Clary

The Finance Committee has developed a draft 2024 budget. Pledges are still coming in – 85 pledges for \$470,000 to date – with a trajectory of \$556,000 based on past trends. In 2024, the salary for the Curate will not be supplemented by the Diocese as it was in 2023, and funding for our seminarian is required by the Diocese. Fortunately, parishioners have pledged support for the seminarian. The Personnel Committee has recommended a 3% salary increase for staff. The Finance Committee recommends full funding of the Diocesan pledge of \$71,050 which is included in the budget. Each committee has been asked to justify its budget request. Outreach funding will be cut from \$15,000 in 2023 to \$10,000 in 2024. Staff salary is 65% of the budget. The by-laws require a 10% buffer to balance the budget. The draft 2024 budget is \$710,500 with expected expenses of \$683,000 plus the 10% buffer.

Committee Reports

NOTE: No reports were received.

Old Business

Annual Bylaws and Policy Review: Courtney Manrod

The Personnel Committee has submitted a list of changes. The policy changes for Christian Education which involve separate policies for youth and adults has not been submitted to date.

Building access control improvements: Courtney Manrod

Progress has been limited due to lack of funding estimated to be \$17,000.

New Business

Nothing to report.

Fr. Sims closed the meeting with a prayer for the church. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Next Vestry meeting is January 16, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Ellis
Secretary