

ASCENSION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2017

Present: Faye Armstrong, Glenn Criswell, Margo Kaplan, Michelle Feagin, Liz Goodman, Alan Burton, Lee Nirider, Doug Meyers, Tom Sutton, Fr. Todd Bryant

Regrets: Cheryl Coppock, Clement Falayi, Cindy Breton

Guest: Miranda Griesbaum, Director of Religious Education

Call to Order and Opening Prayer: Fr. Todd Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and an opening prayer followed by a short Bible study of John Chapter 4 concerning Jesus' healing of the royal official's son; this being the second sign that Jesus did after coming back from Judea to Galilee.

Consent Agenda: Motion #1 – Tom Sutton made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented. Glenn Criswell seconded the motion, there was no discussion and the motion carried.

New Business:

Safeguarding Requirements: Miranda Griesbaum handed out information concerning the two safeguarding classes required for all vestry members; Safeguarding God's People and Safeguarding God's Children. She explained the requirements and initiated discussion about the best way to schedule training classes that would allow the greatest number of vestry members to attend. Miranda stated that she is qualified to teach the Safeguarding God's Children but not Safeguarding God's People and offered the opportunity for an interested vestry member to take the "train-the-trainer" class needed to become a trainer for the Safeguarding God's People class. This would place our parish in the position of being able to offer both training classes on a schedule convenient to ourselves, rather than relying on the training schedule provided by the dioceses. Fr. Bryant asked Miranda to select a few dates for offering the Safeguarding God's Children class in-house and then poll the vestry members needing that class. There were some questions about the process of completing the necessary paperwork and the background check which Miranda answered.

Treasurer's Report: Motion #2 – Glenn Criswell handed out the treasury report and explained that our current financial situation is tight but not urgently so, yet. Glenn pointed out that, on average, our expenses run about \$40,000 per month, and that after accounting for restricted funds and similar line items in the budget, our cash-on-hand position is around \$20,000. This leaves the parish in the position of not being able to cope easily with unexpected expenses, such as the major HVAC repair in the fall of 2016, which required us to draw \$25,000 against our \$100,000 renewable line of credit with Amegy Bank. A new form titled *Expenditure Approval (Over \$1,000)* was handed out and explained as being the new way of approving expenses above the threshold. This form must be completed and approved by the Treasurer or Senior Warden prior to exposing the parish of any financial obligation over the specified amount. Glenn explained the protocol for checks being signed by designated persons who are on file with the bank. There are currently four previously identified vestry members willing to become designated check signers, but there is the need for a fifth to ensure someone is always available to sign checks, especially for larger amounts which require two signatures. Glenn asked for a volunteer

ASCENSION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2017

to fill this need and Margo Kaplan agreed to going through the process of becoming recognized by Amegy bank and then serving in this capacity. Tom Sutton motioned that the following persons be affirmed as the five designated check signers for 2017:

Alan Burton

Tom Sutton

Glenn Criswell

Lee Nirider

Margo Kaplan

This motion was seconded by Liz Goodman and carried. There was some additional discussion concerning the financial controls, checks and balances stipulated by GAAP (generally accepted accounting practices) guidelines. Alan Burton and Glenn Criswell explained that this topic is under review by the finance committee. Glenn mentioned that our outstanding debt to Amegy bank (the line of credit above) is currently only being serviced to the point of paying the interest of about \$80 per month. Glenn suggested we begin paying some amount above this minimum as a means to begin the process of paying back the principal. This idea received general support and Glenn agreed to add it to the next finance committee meeting. Additional discussion concerned the desirability of including some type of financial summary in the weekly bulletin or some other communication to the parishioners as a means of keeping them apprised of the financial situation of our parish. Glenn agreed to add this topic to the next finance committee meeting.

Ministry Visioning Document: Motion #3 – Fr. Bryant handed out a draft version of a new document titled *Ministry Planning Document* and described his thoughts on how a document such as this could be a good means of coordinating ministry planning. Overall, the concept is that when a person or group has an idea for a new ministry or ministry-related event, they would complete the form; providing the name of the proposed ministry or event, the committee members and other volunteers already agreed to serve, duration, proposed dates and other information that would likely need to be communicated to others within the parish including existing committee leaders. Fr. Todd asked the vestry to accept the general concept, realizing that additional work may be needed on the form itself. Tom Sutton motioned that a new form be used as a coordination tool for planning future ministry events. Margo Kaplan seconded the motion and it carried.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Closing Prayer: Fr. Todd offered a closing prayer followed by full Vestry recitation of The Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by Lee Nirider, on behalf of Cheryl Coppock, Clerk