

St. John's Episcopal Church
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
October 20, 2024

In Attendance: Fr. Hahneman, Ms. Davis, Mr. Kalnins, Mr. Del Nin, Mr. Bracken, Ms. Dulack, Ms. McFeely, Mr. Gillespie, Ms. Coles, Camille Gillespie (nominating committee)

Absent: Ms. Bent, Mr. Ormand, Ms. Daly, Ms. Witt

Opening Prayer

Fr. Hahneman opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous vestry meeting were approved, as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Gillespie provided the income and expense report and balance sheet for September, and circulated the following report via email prior to the meeting:

I note that we are still \$20,000 over budget on endowment fund withdrawals, and cash-flow needs may require yet an additional endowment transfer. The operating funds account is at a level that is barely able to cover a month's operating expenses, and with the Fete approaching, there will, no doubt, be additional expenses. Hopefully, a successful Fete will compensate for both (the additional fete expenses and the excess endowment withdrawals). Finally, as previously discussed, it appears that Foundation will need to draw on the amount previously approved by the vestry to fund about half of the sample renovation project underway, because the Foundation currently has insufficient funds to pay the contractors in full. The Foundation's current shortfall is in the range of \$100,000. The Foundation will need to draw on the church's commitment prior to running its account balances down to zero (to avoid having the accounts closed, among other things). Obviously, any contributions that come in for the renovation project in the next few weeks would mitigate the need for funds from the church.

Property Report

Ms. McFeely reported that Rod Pleasants has volunteered to lead an effort to get the cottage painted and repaired.

Ms. Davis reported that an updated lease of the rectory was executed by the Gunn School, that she visited the Washington assessor to discuss the parish's request to have the rectory classified as tax-exempt for local property tax purposes, and that the updated lease and other documentation was submitted to the town assessor in connection with the Parish's request to have the rectory classified as tax-exempt for purposes of Washington property tax. She also thanked Mr. Gillespie for negotiating the revised lease terms.

Also noted was the performance of septic maintenance on the parish campus, which was paid for by the parish. In the future, it was noted that the cost of septic maintenance for the rectory should be paid for by the Gunn School, as lessee.

Home Coming Picnic Report

Mr. Bracken reported that the parish hosted a second “annual” picnic at Waldingfield Farm, that there were about 60 people in attendance, that the owners of the farm provided its use free of charge, and that, with various donations, the cost to the parish was approximately \$150. Mr. Bracken also noted that the attendance appeared to be boosted due to numerous personal emails he sent, encouraging attendance. Notwithstanding less than ideal weather, there was consensus that the event was a great success, and that it should be continued next year. The vestry expressed thanks to both Mr. Bracken, Ms. Witt, and all those who assisted with the picnic.

Foundation Report

Mr. Bracken reported that the renovation project on the church building was progressing nicely, and that he hoped the work would be finished by Thanksgiving. He noted that much effort went into the selection of mortar color and that the contractors were accumulating information on potential problems with the building and the magnitude of a full renovation project. Also discussed was the need for a parish meeting to discuss the project, a web site for the restoration project and setting up a QR code for contributions. Also discussed was the mechanics of various accounts to facilitate contributions including use of a PayPal account.

Fete Report

Ms. Witt and Ms. McFeely noted that although there was a downturn in donations for the Fete, through Rod Pleasants, various effects from the Stephen Sondheim estate have been donated. There was a discussion about marketing of the Sondheim items. Also noted was that invitations are in progress, that furniture would be included in the items for sale, and that Sarah Lee Martin would be the only vendor at this year’s Fete

Warden’s Report

Ms. Davis noted that a stewardship committee had been formed and met, which consists of Ms. Davis, Natalie Dyer, Emily Fitzhugh and Tom Hollinger. There is to be a stewardship sermon on November 17th, and pledge cards are requested to be submitted by December 15th.

Mr Bracken noted that a Halloween potluck lunch was being planned for the Sunday before All Saints Day.

Priest’s Report

Fr. Hahneman described his plans for a Halloween liturgy to take place on the Sunday prior to All Saints Day. He also noted plans for an All-Saints Day liturgy, including evensong. Fr. Hahneman also requested authorization to form a nominating committee, in connection with the upcoming annual meeting and election of vestry members and officers. The vestry approved the formation of the committee, which will be populated by Fr. Hahneman.

Fr. Hahneman closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, David Gillespie