

**MINUTES OF ST. MARK'S VESTRY MEETING  
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WASHINGTON, DC  
FEBRUARY 26, 2012**

**PRESENT:**

- Clergy: Paul Abernathy, Rector; Assistant Rector Justi Schunior
- Wardens: Cecilia Monahan, Senior Warden; Phil Guire, Junior Warden
- Vestry Members: Ed Corr, Bill Dickinson, Rick Hayes, Grady Hedgespeth, Charlotte Murray, Marilu Sherer, Jim Steed, Vicki Street, Janet Vail
- Officers: Mary Cooper, Register; Crane Miller, Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer Yann van Geertruyden
- Visitors: Parishioners: Betsy Agle, Leslie Allen, Doug Ammon, Pamela Blumgart, Charlie Brodhead, Sally Garr Brodhead, Jack Burton, Kitty Donnelly, Terese Doran, John Edwards, Eric Fiala, Raiford Gaffney, Janice Gregory, Fritz Henn, Suella Henn, Erika Lehman, Don Mosher, Charlie Rupp, Jane Rutherford, Rick Rutherford, Linda Staheli. Seminarian Kristen Hawley, Director of Music Jeff Kempskie. Capital Campaign members Kenn Allen, Doris Burton, Mike Townsend and Consultant Alex Berley.
- Absent: Karlyn Stanley, Counsel

**OPENING PRAYER** was offered by Marilu Sherer.

**1. OFFICER REPORTS**

**Register:**

**January Minutes:** The minutes of the January meeting, which had been distributed prior to the meeting electronically, were presented. Marilu Sherer moved and Charlotte Murray seconded that they be **APPROVED.**

**Fund-Raiser for Haiti:** Register Cooper reported that the Vestry had voted electronically on a proposal to raise funds for Haiti relief at a concert at St. Mark's. The proposal was **APPROVED.**

**Treasurer:**

**2012 Budget:** Treasurer Miller distributed the proposed budget for 2012 electronically. He commented that pledges are budgeted at \$781,000 but could rise to \$805,000 when all pledges are received. The Finance Committee will review the budget again in June in light of income projections at that time. The budget as presented is in deficit by over \$32,000. Salaries are kept

level, hopefully to be increased at the June review. Canvass Chair Bill Dickinson expressed doubts that pledges will rise to the desired level and supported the plan to review the proposed budget in June.

The Treasurer reported that some satellite accounts are in arrears and efforts are underway to rectify that situation. The Meditation Center will have a new satellite account. Jim Steed moved and Janet Vail seconded that the budget for 2012 be **APPROVED.**

**Senior Warden:**

The Senior Warden reported that the Green Lions and Space Use charters are still in process of development.

**Rector:**

The Rector reported that a bequest had been received from the estate of Marlis Jarvis in the amount of \$37,964.46. The normal procedure for an undesignated bequest is that it would be divided 50% to the Building Fund and 50% to the Endowment. The distribution of this bequest will be considered at a later date.

**2. CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

The Senior Warden reported that there would be no final vote at this meeting of the Vestry. Instead, there would be the opportunity to gather more input from the parish, followed by a special meeting of the Vestry in March.

Mike Townsend reported that this has been a 30 month effort so far. The funds raised to date have exceeded the established goal and the amount the fund-raising consultants had predicted. Total pledges now stand at \$1.72 million.

Kenn Allen reviewed the increased estimates of costs as discussed at the December Vestry meeting and explained in a detailed memo that he had distributed electronically prior to the meeting.

Ed Corr reviewed the three options that were before the Vestry, as outlined in the materials distributed in advance of the meeting.

Option A is to renovate Baxter House and leave the church offices there. He indicated that making that building safe and accessible would reduce available space by 20%.

Option B would include building the undercroft under the parish hall but not a second floor.

Option C essentially builds only the second floor, primarily for staff office use.

With regard to making the project as environmentally sound as possible, Kenn Allen said that the committee is fully committed to making the building sustainable. There will be a solar installation and the committee is still looking at ways to employ geothermal technology.

Approved by the Vestry April 14, 2012

Regarding financing, Mike Townsend analyzed the likely monthly costs. Paying for this project (assuming approval of either Option B or C) would require the sale of Baxter House and taking a mortgage. Borrowing from the Endowment Fund is possible. Several people raised questions about whether the parish would be able to repay the Endowment Fund fully. Kenn distributed a report on the funds in the Endowment Fund.

Many of the basic deferred maintenance problems in the present buildings are not addressed in these proposals. For example, new heating and air conditioning installations would be included for the reconstructed parish hall but not for the nave and undercroft.

The floor was opened for questions and expressions of interest/concern/support from parishioners attending the meeting. The following points (in bold italics) were raised and responded to:

***The materials being discussed need to be made available to the parish.*** The Rector stated that they would be posted on the website and distributed to the congregation prior to the Annual Parish Meeting on March 11.

***Are any revisions proposed for the Dance Studio to make it more usable by other parts of the parish?*** It is already used by the choir and Yoga Studio for some things and expansion of such use is possible when dance classes are not in session. The Players, Yoga Studio, and Dance Studio are all part of the parish program and parish outreach activities.

***These proposals do not create additional space.*** They make the available space more flexible.

***The size of the parish hall would be slightly reduced.*** There would be more storage space, making it possible to put items now stored in the corners to be in dedicated storage space, thus increasing the amount of space usable for parish gatherings. There will be four columns in the parish hall to help support the floor above but they will be made attractive and as unobtrusive as possible.

***Regret was expressed that many deferred maintenance issues would not be addressed.***

***Concern was expressed about the ability/commitment to repay funds borrowed from the Endowment Fund.*** On the other hand, why borrow the full amount from the bank and pay interest when we have money in the Endowment Fund and new funds come into it periodically? To date, the Endowment has not been invaded for operating costs. The parish has a good record with regard to stewardship of the Fund. Also, servicing a huge mortgage would mean cutting staff.

***How do these plans make space available to the community?*** The space will be more flexible. It is not clear what community needs there are and how they could be served, but there is a strong commitment by the Vestry to utilize the space for community needs.

***What is the status of the idea of housing the Hill Pre-School?*** The Junior Warden reported that the cost of digging out the parish hall undercroft is prohibitive, thus making the plan unlikely.

***Where will the teens go when the Baxter House basement is no longer available?*** Their space will be in the current parish library.

***What about storage space for the music library and storage of choir robes?*** There will be storage space in the current undercroft for a music library and storage of choir robes.

***Could we dig out the space under the parish hall up to the columns needed to support the parish hall floor?*** This would raise the cost for underpinning.

***Was thought given to renovating Baxter House for meeting rooms and putting offices in the parish hall?*** No, because the funds from the sale of Baxter House are needed to pay for the work on the parish hall.

The need to make changes in the parish hall is driven by the fact that Baxter House is in very poor condition and cannot be used indefinitely to house staff in potentially unsafe conditions and to hold meetings in the Penniman and Gregory Rooms. Even if it were totally renovated, making it handicapped accessible as required by law would reduce the amount of available space, and dealing with the issue of an occupancy permit would be costly, time-consuming, and potentially futile.

***We need to find out what the cost would be for adding HVAC for the nave and current undercroft to the plans.***

The Rector thanked the parishioners for their attendance and input and invited them to stay for the balance of the meeting. Following a short break, the Vestry reconvened.

### **3. PAROCHIAL REPORT**

The Rector presented the Parochial Report, which had been distributed electronically and is due to the Diocese by March 1. Bill Dickinson moved and Grady Hedgespeth seconded that it be **APPROVED.**

### **4. PARISH AUDIT**

The Treasurer submitted the audit for 2010. A separate report was prepared for the Players since they have a July-June fiscal year. Vestry members expressed concern about the lack of specifics in the comments. Grady Hedgespeth moved and Vicki Street seconded that the audit be **APPROVED.**

### **5. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Vicki Street announced that there are nine candidates for Vestry. The Senior and Junior Wardens are both standing for re-election. The meeting will be held on Sunday March 11 at 11:30 following a single 10 a.m. service.

### **6. UPCOMING VESTRY MEETINGS**

**March 11** – Short meeting immediately after Annual Parish Meeting for the purpose of electing officers.

**March 18** – Special meeting of the Vestry at 1:15.

Approved by the Vestry April 14, 2012

**April 13-14** – Spring Vestry Retreat (details to be announced).

**7. What's New? What Needs Attention? What's Working? Who Needs Acknowledgment?**

**Agenda item for the next meeting:** Coffee Hour

**Shrinemont** – Charlotte Murray asked how people who register can pay online. This is still being investigated.

**Website:** The Assistant Rector noted that a contract needs to be signed with the new webmaster.

**Retiring Vestry Members:** The Senior Warden thanked Jim Steed, Ed Corr, and Vicki Street for their service on the Vestry. Jim Steed is eligible and running for a full term, having been elected to fill one year of an unexpired term in 2011, but Ed Corr and Vicki Street are completing their service.

**CLOSING PRAYER** was offered by Vicki Street.

**Submitted by  
Mary Anderson Cooper, Register**