

MINUTES OF ST. MARK'S VESTRY
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WASHINGTON DC
JULY 17, 2011
Approved September 18, 2011

Present:

Clergy: Paul Roberts Abernathy, Rector
Rebecca Justice Schunior, Assistant Rector

Wardens: Cecilia Monahan, Sr. Warden; Phil Guire, Jr. Warden

Vestry Members: Ed Corr, Bill Dickinson, Rick Hayes, Grady Hedgespeth, Jim Steed, Janet Vail

Treasurer: Crane Miller

Register: Mary Cooper

Visitors: Kenn Allen, Mike Townsend, Raiford Gaffney, Beryl Maloney-Lillaston

Absent: Marilu Sherer, Charlotte Murray, Vicki Street

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by the Rector at 1:10. He proposed revising the agenda somewhat to accommodate visitors.
2. **Opening Prayer:** The opening prayer was offered by Grady Hedgespeth.
3. **Update from the Vison 20/20 Steering Committee:** The Rector commented that the Episcopal Church Foundation will need to prepare campaign materials in August for an autumn launch and will need major decisions from the Vestry by July 31, which will necessitate a special meeting of the Vestry.

Kenn Allen reported that the parish is in good shape with regard to work done to date with the Episcopal Church Foundation, building design, the approvals process, and funding issues. There have been good meetings with the neighbors in the immediate area and representatives of the Folger Library, which owns most of the unit block of 3rd Street SE. He noted that they see us as good neighbors, largely because of work the Rector has done to improve relations in the community. Several neighbors wrote supportive letters to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, which recommended unanimous approval of our plans. Hiring a historic preservation consultant has proven to be a good decision, as there are many hurdles to clear and the parish has gotten excellent guidance. The Capitol Hill Preservation Society has also supported our plans. The Commission on Fine Arts and the Historic Preservation Review Board will review the plans and make their decisions later this month. It will be necessary to return to the Commission on Fine Arts for permits later in the process. The National Capital Bank has provided a one million dollar line of credit for the initial phases of the project.

Ed Corr reported that he and other members of the team have met with many groups using space in St. Mark's to discuss their needs. Now the committee is beginning to prioritize among different projects,

noting that many of the requests are related to deferred maintenance. The biggest demand is for storage space, with most groups asking for secured areas reserved exclusively for their use. In most cases this will not be possible and they will have to share space. The groups understand this and are modifying their requests. Security for the building, its contents, and the people using space is also a serious issue and one being given priority by the committee.

Kenn Allen said that, not surprisingly, the cost projections are higher than originally believed a year ago. Part of the reason for this is the decision to hire a project manager. The biggest single cost would be having a new HVAC system for the entire complex, but this might be reduced by having separate systems and not doing the entire job at one time. The highest estimate at this time is \$5 million. Kenn said that the funds would come from the capital campaign and the general budget, and that some of the changes would actually reduce future operating costs either by being more efficient or by eliminating the need for repairs by replacing some things that are not now in good condition. Making things more energy efficient is expected to reduce some later operating costs. The next step is to determine what in the design can be changed or reduced to lower costs.

Mike Townsend reported that Rob Hall has agreed to co-chair the fund raising effort and is seeking another co-chair. Fund raising will start with a "quiet phase" focused on parish leaders (Vestry, pillars, committee chairs, etc.). On October 29 there will be a big kick-off event at church followed by a series of smaller events for target groups. The hope is to wrap up in December. The capital campaign will be coordinated with the Canvass.

Crane Miller, the Treasurer requested that he be alerted ahead of time about large bills coming due in order to maintain adequate cash balances to meet such bills.

Carlyn Stanley, the Vestry Counsel, stressed the importance of maintaining accurate records of donations. Mike Townsend said that we have special software to account for capital campaign pledges as well as regular pledges to the parish. Register Mary Cooper reminded the Vestry of the problem the parish had after the last capital campaign. In that case, a major pledge was poorly documented and was still unpaid when the donor died suddenly, resulting in a long and difficult effort to have the pledge honored by the heirs, thus emphasizing the importance of maintaining good records of all pledges.

DECISION REGARDING SPECIAL MEETING: The Vestry agreed to meet at 2 p.m. on July 31 to make the decisions necessary to move ahead with the Capital Campaign.

4. **Options for Online Credit Card Payments:** Janet Vail reported that she has researched a number of companies that have systems for using credit cards and/or debit payments to manage pledges, payments for special events, etc. The issue is figuring out how to integrate our program with what the various companies offer. She requested the establishment of a committee to help make a recommendation to the Vestry. Carlyn Stanley, Bill Dickinson and Crane Miller volunteered to serve. Mike Townsend said he would ask someone from the capital campaign to serve also.

5. **Officer Reports**

REGISTER: Bill Dickinson moved (Carlyn Stanley seconded) approval of the minutes of the June meeting, which had been e-mailed to the Vestry earlier. **APPROVED**

The Register circulated a sign-up list, requesting Vestry members to serve as Vestry Greeters for the rest of the year.

TREASURER: Crane Miller distributed a report dated July 11, which had been e-mailed earlier. He expressed concern about some satellite accounts, especially the Dance Studio, running deficits and said that they needed to either raise fees or cut costs, or both. He has asked that the Dance Studio elect a Treasurer. The St. Mark's auditor has audited their funds through 2009.

The Rector noted that he has requested a transfer of funds (\$1000) from his discretionary fund to that of the Assistant Rector to enable her to operate from now until the end of the year.

JUNIOR WARDEN: Phil Guire informed the Vestry that he is working on a new agreement with our gas suppliers.

SENIOR WARDEN: Cecilia Monahan said that she has sat in on meetings between the architects and various groups and that she has been pleased by the willingness to share and cooperate.

She noted that only about 250 people are enrolled in the parish's Yahoo Group and suggested that we publicize it so that more people participate. Suggestions included adding it to the website and the weekly parish bulletin.

THE RECTOR: Paul Abernathy announced that Megan Courtney's successor as Director of Youth Ministries, Marcella Gillis, will start on July 26, allowing for a few days of overlap with Megan.

6. Liaison Reports: Jim Steed's report on Worship was distributed by e-mail in advance of the meeting. There were no other reports.

Bill Dickinson said that he is still seeking a co-chair for the Canvass. Several names have been suggested and he has compiled a list of people interested in finance matters (as shown by the responses to a Survey Monkey several months ago). He requested that the Survey Monkey, which is still open for response, be publicized so that more people will participate and have the chance to volunteer.

7. Confirmation of Kenn Allen as Co-Director of the Endowment Board: Grady Hedgespeth moved (seconded by Phil Guire) that Kenn Allen be approved as a Co-Director of the Endowment Board

8. Review of the Membership Development Committee: Cecilia Monahan said that the committee has been dormant for some time and that new co-chairs are needed. She asked the Vestry to review the resolution adopted in 2009 creating the committee to see if it still describes the work of the group accurately. Rick Hayes moved (seconded by Janet Vail) to reaffirm the resolution. **APPROVED.**

The Vestry members on the committee are Marilu Sherer, Janet Vail, and Jim Steed.

9. November Vestry/Pillar Retreat: Cecilia Monahan expressed the hope that the November retreat could be held in town or nearby so that attendees could go home at night. Rick Hayes volunteered to chair the Planning Committee for the Vestry Retreat weekend and to look into possible locations for a program beginning Friday, November 18 and ending late afternoon on the 19th some place in the DC area, rather than out of town, as has been the custom in the past.

10. **Parish Picnic September 4:** Phil Guire volunteered to take the lead and serve as Grill Master.

11. **What's new? What Needs Attention? What's Working? Who Needs Acknowledgment?**

The Co-Directors of Christian Education and Worship have decided that the observance of September 11 and the opening of the church school year should be held on different days, so the Christian Education year will begin on September 18. There will be one service that day at 10 a.m., with the Vestry meeting at noon.

Register Mary Cooper said that she would be absent from the September 18 meeting and that a substitute minute-taker would be needed.

Crane Miller commented that, because of having the congregation seated for the Prayers of the People on June 17, it was possible to hear what was being said much better. Paul noted that this was one of Bill Flanders' innovations, intended to build community.

Episcopal Evangelism Network: A proposal was distributed earlier by e-mail from the EEN, requesting that St. Mark's serve as fiscal agent for the organization while it seeks to establish 501(c) (3) status. Bill Dickinson asked how much additional burden this would place on the parish Treasurer and Bookkeeper and further questioned whether a management fee should be charged, as is often the practice in such situations. He also questioned how bills would be authorized and paid. The Rector suggested that the recommendation be approved in concept, pending resolution of these questions and establishment of policies governing payments. He asked Carlyn Stanley, Counsel, and Crane Miller, Treasurer, to work with Otis Gaddis to resolve these questions.

12. **Motion to Adjourn** was offered by Rick Hayes (seconded by Jim Steed).

13. **Closing Prayer** was offered by Grady Hedgespeth.

Mary Anderson Cooper, Register