

Minutes of the Vestry

St. Mark's Church, Capitol Hill
January 24, 2010
Adams Room

Present:

Clergy: Paul Roberts Abernathy, Rector
Susan Beth Pinkerton, Assistant Rector

Wardens: Kenn Allen, Senior Warden
John Sedgewick, Junior Warden

Vestry: Doris Burton, Ed Corr, Christine Farrell, Kristen Hartke, Cecilia Monahan, Vicki Street, Susan Thompson-Hoffman, Mary Lee Watts

Treasurer: Kathryn Powers

Register: Greg Niblett

Legal Counsel: Michael Knipe

Absent:

Vestry: Joe Calizo

Human Resources
Officer: Ed Cousins

Agenda

1. Paul Abernathy, Rector and Chair of the Vestry, called to order the meeting of St. Mark's Vestry at 1:15 pm on January 24, 2010 in the Adams Room in the Undercroft of the St. Mark's Church.
2. Kenn Allen offered an opening reflection.
3. **Report by Worship Leader Co-Leader – Loretta Veney:**

Loretta Veney and Jan Lipscomb are co-chairs of the Worship Pillar. Loretta Veney represented both of them and the Worship team in general.

Loretta gave a very positive report followed by questions and discussion. The following represents highlights from the oral report and is not meant to be comprehensive or all inclusive.

- The worship process in 2010 is off to strong start and promises to be an exciting year.
- Loretta noted that those involved in worship planning have valued the working relationship with both the Rector and the Assistant Rector.
- She noted that the membership of the worship planning team fluctuates and that there are several regulars that help ground the process while new volunteers also help bring fresh insights.
- She particularly highlighted Raiford Gaffney as being key to the success of the worship process due to her knowledge and expertise from having served as parish assistant for many months.
- An ongoing challenge is always getting volunteers.
- Loretta announced that Charlie Rupp was the new treasurer for the Worship Pillar.

During the discussion period various Vestry members and clergy thanked Loretta, Jan, and the worship committee for their excellent work.

4. The Shower Project

Kenn Allen, Ed Corr, and John Sedgewick provided context for the proposed initiative to place another bathroom in the undercroft with a shower facility so that St. Mark's could continue to participate in the homeless shelter project with Capitol Hill Group Ministry. Construction of a stand-alone shower, as discussed earlier, was deemed unacceptable by agencies that must authorize the project.

The purpose of the discussion was to both seek the Vestry's approval to construct such a bathroom and also to seek approval to launch a fundraising effort to raise the money needed for the project. Stephanie Deutsch attended the meeting and spoke in support of the effort and described activities to be conducted to raise funds for the construction of the bathroom. She also fielded questions and participated in the discussion. Attached is a memo from Stephanie Deutsch and Elizabeth Becker about fundraising activities.

After an explanation of the initiative and some initial discussion, the following motion was made and seconded:

“That the St. Mark’s Vestry endorse the construction of a bathroom with a shower in the undercroft so that St. Mark’s can continue to fully participate in the Capitol Hill Group Ministry shelter project. This bathroom will be available to other parish functions as well during the course of the year and as required for specific uses as approved by the Junior Warden and/or the Rector. In conjunction with this endorsement the Vestry also authorizes a fundraising effort to raise approximately \$12,500 for the construction of the bathroom with a shower. Any excess funds raised beyond the cost of the construction project will be placed in the Building

Replacement Reserve Designated Account to assist in future repairs or maintenance.”

Discussion of the motion addressed the impact on storage and the need for additional storage space, and how the bathroom and our continued participation in a homeless shelter program is in line with St. Mark’s mission. A portion of the discussion also focused on security issues such as who would have access to keys to bathroom and how would we monitor who was using the facility either with or without authorization.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the motion as worded above was passed unanimously.

[Note: During discussion the primary motion above was amended by a motion which also passed requiring that all excess funds to be placed in the Building Replacement Reserve Designated Account rather than in the Outreach Account. The Outreach Account was the recipient of the excess funds in the wording of the original motion and in the attached original fundraising application.]

[It was also noted that the funds raised would go to the “Shower Designated Account #70524” which is the correct title of the account rather than to the Outreach Designated Account #70564 which was the account listed in the original fundraising application.]

5. Register’s Report – Greg Niblett

- a) The Register presented the minutes of the December 13 meeting which were taken in his absence by Vicki Street. A motion was made and seconded and passed to accept the minutes as presented.
- b) The Register also noted that electronic votes had been conducted in between Vestry meetings to approve fundraising efforts for the traditional Lenten mite boxes and the St. Mark’s Players annual fundraiser. Each of the fundraisers was approved by electronic vote.
- c) The Register also announced that an electronic vote had been held in between Vestry meetings to approve David Deutsch and Linda Ewald as members of the nominating committee to seek Vestry candidates to stand for election at the March 6 annual meeting. Third year Vestry members, the Rector, the Senior Warden, and the Junior Warden also make up the nominating committee per the by-laws.
- d) Kenn Allen also reported that authorization had been given to raise funds for the victims of the Haiti earthquake crisis. These funds was primarily raised through a special collection during a worship service in January and was matched by a \$2,500 contribution from the Vestry.
- e) Review of schedules for the year – The Register reviewed various schedules with the Vestry including future Vestry meetings, the Greeter schedule, and annual meeting schedule.

6. Consideration of the Proposed 2010 Budget

- Treasurers Report
- Status of 2009 Giving
- Status of 2010 Pledges
- Review of 2010 Budget and Alternatives and Approval of Budget

The above items were grouped together in a seamless discussion that led to the approval of the budget.

Kathryn Powers presented the usual monthly treasurer's report.

Kenn Allen then informed the Vestry that \$790,000 has been raised in pledges. He and Kathryn Powers then formally presented the 2010 budget which is attached and which had been sent out in advance of the meeting so that Vestry members could study it. Kenn Allen praised and thanked the finance committee for their exceptional and thoughtful contributions to crafting the budget.

In order for discussion to move forward, Susan Thompson-Hoffman moved that the budget be adopted as presented and Doris Burton seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued on the budget primarily with questions of clarification and no significant issues were raised.

At the end of the discussion the motion to accept the budget as presented was passed unanimously. The budget is attached as is the memo from the Rector, Senior Warden, and Treasurer detailing the decisions made by the finance committee in crafting the budget.

7. Proposal to proceed with a discernment phase of planning for a capital campaign.

Kenn Allen referenced several documents to provide context to the Vestry discussion on a capital campaign and to prepare for a vote on how and if to proceed. These documents were sent to the Vestry in advance to study and are attached.

These documents are:

- Addressing St. Mark's Space Needs – a January 2010 progress report of the Building Task Force completed after several meetings.
- A memo to the Endowment Board requesting a grant to fund studies to be commissioned during the discernment phase.
- A memo to the Vestry from the Rector and Senior Warden requesting approval to take needed next steps to explore the feasibility of a capital campaign.
- A scope of work for a renovation feasibility study.

Kenn Allen thanked the members of the Building Task Force who had held deliberations leading to some of the attached documents, specifically Mike Townsend for being the primary author of the attached space needs document and Ed Corr for his contributions and

leadership on the “scope of work”. Other members of the committee included the Rector, the Senior Warden, Don Ellison, Rob Hall, Penny Hansen, Greg Niblett, Jane Rutherford, John Sedgewick, and Ed Turner.

After initial discussion, the following four part motion was made and seconded.

- a) *To approve the proposal from the Senior Warden and the Rector to proceed with the discernment phase to determine if St. Mark’s should conduct a capital campaign and to appoint the necessary committees and take the necessary actions for discernment.*
- b) *To grant approval to the Rector and Senior Warden to enter into such contracts as are required to conduct studies or seek guidance and input during the discernment phase.*
- c) *To grant authorization to the Rector and the Senior Warden to enter into a loan agreement (a promissory note) with the Washington, DC Diocese to obtain consulting services to assist with the discernment process, particularly whether and how to conduct a capital campaign and to address some of the architectural or construction considerations.*
- d) *To endorse using such funds borrowed from the Washington, DC Diocese to contract with the Episcopal Church Foundation to provide consulting services to guide St. Mark’s through the discernment process.*

Discussion on the above motion continued and was passed unanimously.

8. Signage for 5pm Service

This topic was postponed due to the absence of the assistant rector who had to leave the meeting early to prepare for the 5pm service.

9. Report of Annual Meeting Committee and Nominating Committee (March 6)

Doris Burton spoke on behalf of the committee. The following points represent highlights from her report and are not meant to be all inclusive:

- a) Food arrangements are going well with the Vestry first year class set to prepare various kinds of chili; a dessert competition will also be held.
- b) The most pressing need is to obtain candidates to run for the three Vestry positions and the Diocesan Delegate position that will be vacated. Several names were discussed and members were encouraged to contact members of the parish and urge them to run.

10. What's New; What Needs Attention? What's Working? Who Needs Acknowledgment?

- a) Christine Farrell reported that a comfort team still needs to be recruited for Shrine Mont.
- b) Christine Farrell offered a special thanks to all those who attended the St. Mark's most recent play "A Lion in Winter".
- c) Cecilia Monahan suggested that Vestry members try to remember to wear their nametags and also urge other parishioners to do so. She noted that the practice of wearing nametags was important to our hospitality effort.
- d) Doris Burton reported that city parking meter requirements have changed – they are now in effect until 10 PM, with two hour parking limitations. D.C. Police have a new mandate to be more aggressive in ticketing expired meters on Capitol Hill and this may prove burdensome and problematic for St. Mark's members attending a variety of meetings throughout the week. Kenn Allen suggested that he and/or the Rector consult with other churches or clergy to see if there could be a coordinated effort to approach elected officials to establish a more reasonable policy in Hill neighborhoods where churches are located.

11. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn.

12. Greg Niblett offered a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted.

Gregory R. Niblett
Register

Attachments

1. Overview of Shower Project prepared by Ed Corr and the Junior Warden.
2. A memo to the Vestry from Stephanie Deutsch and Elizabeth Becker describing fundraising approach for bathroom/shower project.
3. Original fundraising application for the shower project.
4. Revised and approved fundraising application for the shower project.
5. Budget Memo from the Rector, Senior Warden and Treasurer explaining budget decisions and input for proposed 2010 budget.
6. Proposed Comprehensive 2010 Budget with line items.

7. A memo from the Rector and Senior Warden outlining a proposal for a Discernment Phase of a possible capital campaign.
8. A background paper from the Building Task Force.
9. The "scope of work" document prepared by Ed Corr to obtain initial cost estimates for the preliminary renovation and construction feasibility studies.
10. Proposal sent to the Endowment Board requesting funding for preliminary studies.