

**St. Matthew's Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Meeting Minutes - May 25, 2023 @ 6:30pm**  
**Location: Hybrid in-person in B-14 (Wilson Room) and on Zoom**

**Vestry Members in Attendance:** Joyce Statz (Senior Warden), Bob Ascott (Junior Warden), Natalie Lynch (Clerk), Ann O'Connell, Christopher Hansen, Gary McNeil, David Kennedy, Carole Taxis, Jenny Watson, Jason Bagshaw, Blythe Wilson, Steve Ryder, and Armando Ruiz

**Vestry Members Absent** Stephanie McCollum, Anne Webster

**Clergy in Attendance:** Rev. Katie Wright (Rector)

**Business Manager:** Chris Schumacher

**Treasurer:** Jack Robertson

**Guests:** None

**Observers:** None

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The May 25, 2023, meeting of the Vestry of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church was called to order by the Rector Katie Wright at 6:29 pm who determined that a quorum of members was present. A devotional was read sequentially paragraph by paragraph by each member.

**Approve Consent Agenda Items:**

The first order of business was to approve the consent agenda items provided in the pre-read folder, including Vestry Budget Meeting Minutes and Commission/Committee/ Council Reports. **A motion was made by Joyce, seconded by Jenny, and passed unanimously.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Strategic Plan - Jenny displayed the updated progress from the strategic plan and led us through the following next steps:
  - a. The Outreach work has revealed that we have a lot of varied interests but that poverty was, by far, the most popular area in response to the question 'Where is God's Love Needed?'
  - b. In Discipleship, we are most interested in comparative religion by far.
  - c. The factors of measurement for congregational engagement are the focus of this vestry meeting and input. The vestry was also called upon to think about what we are willing to do ourselves.
2. The Vestry did an exercise related to congregational engagement during our meeting. Jenny will tabulate the results.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Joanne Swahn and Armando introduced the idea of a scholarship to be awarded out of endowment funds. She explained that, in addition to the proposal included with the meeting documents. The Endowment Committee is chartered with spending this money that is annually between \$30,000-\$35,000. There was clarification that the motion offered is to create the process of approval, not to approve the award recipients.

2. **Proposed Motion:** The Endowment Committee is approved to follow the offered process for awarding a scholarship to a high school graduate and set the amount to be distributed. Chris so moved, and Jason seconded. The discussion was as follows:
  - a. During the discussion, a concern was raised about the situation where there is no
  - b. graduating senior (or for some other reason) money moves over to the next year. There is a suggestion by Joyce and Jack that the element related to rollover of funds should be removed. Ann explained that sometimes the committee elects to spend all their money to relieve some catastrophic need, and there are no scholarship funds.
  - c. Joyce explained that, in the first block of the policy, there is a portion about the vestry approving the candidate. Jason and others agreed that the vestry should not second-guess the committee if the vestry approves the process.
  - d. The provision regarding multiple gifts is not necessary because there is only one year in which a candidate is eligible.
  - e. Under qualifications, there is a suggestion to clarify that volunteerism may or may not be on the church campus.
  - f. In the portion regarding the administrator, it could be improved such that the candidate could go to the website for that information.
  - g. In the grant approval and award process, the check should go to the school rather than the student.
  - h. The end-of-year "check-in" provision seemed odd to some. David prefers to leave this provision in because it says it is "desired," not required.
  - i. Ann wondered about making this "competitive" and had concerns about any youth's home church voting against them. She encouraged the committee to consider splitting the award equally amongst applicants. Jack also stated examples of the interest in avoiding conflicts within the committee. In the past, it was only used for seminary students and there was no competition.
  - j. Blythe requested that the criteria be particular. For example, stating that you are an acolyte versus being an acolyte often.
  - k. Bob has concerns about giving money to scholarships outside of seminary activity.
3. **The vestry voted against a single competitive scholarship.** The vestry asks the committee to consider some of the discussions here and bring a new motion.
4. The next business item was the Bylaws' approval for the Finance Commission. One change the Commission made to the draft they considered was to allow for the appointment of a chair, if there is a need for a new chair. **There was a motion to approve the Finance Commission's bylaws as submitted by the Commission. Gary moved and Jason seconded and it was unanimously approved.**

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Jack Robertson

Jack passed out information indicating that we received \$154,000 in unexpected and unrestricted funds that was placed towards a \$258,123 available for the operating deficits. The vestry has already decided to spend more than is budgeted so that these funds will realize that. Except for the pledges, our budget has come out as a wash. So far, in the first three weeks of May, we received \$60,600 more pledges than expected, a significant improvement over the January-April result. However, if history repeats this year, we might end December \$58,000 short on pledge collections, which could increase the planned \$73,000 spending deficit to \$131,000.

Some parishioners who were behind because they did not realize their monthly pledge fell off, made their full-year pledge in May. There are approximately 14 people who previously had monthly pledges that have yet to renew in any way.

**BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT:** Chris Schumacher

Damon Bro, the electrician, submitted a new proposal recognizing the post-storm environmental changes. Chris asked Damon to put together a presentation for the committees. That proposal will also include security concern remedies. According to David, the memorial garden committee aesthetically liked the plan but had questions about uniformity throughout the campus.

The FEMA grant still needs final approval from the governor's office. We got the RFPs out to competitive vendors, including HUBs.

The first bid for IT improvements came back at \$2700, after they did an assessment. So we took the assessment and are working through the remedies. This is not a complete solution for IT security.

The FEMA infrastructure requirements require fiber infrastructure. We now signed a Spectrum contract to get 20mbps up/down, and it is slightly more expensive, but the free months cover that. We will have guest wifi in addition to the existing wifi used by staff.

The Memorial Garden's terra cotta tile was made only by one company, which went out of business. The granite etching is significantly delayed because there are no more stencils; this is an issue for the supplier to handle, not for us, though it causes delays.

We expect the audit to be presented to the vestry in the next few weeks.

**CLERGY AND WARDEN COMMENTS:**

- Katie explained Jeffy Jury agreed to head the Safety Guild and is very qualified and enthusiastic.
- Josh Purl is a proposed member of the day school board. Riley Purl, his wife, has also been volunteering. Katie called on us to let her know if there were any concerns about his nomination.
- Nooshin attended a retreat for Episcopal Communicators at Camp Allen.
- The curate was named, and he is Allen Juneke. He will join in the beginning of July and announcements will be made. This will cause some shuffling of the clergy offices, and all offices will be full.
- In September, a Seminarian- Deborah Brown- will join us, and there will be announcements. She is with us only 5 hours a week until next year when she will have ten hours per week.
- See the Day School Board meeting notes regarding a school safety assessment that was done for them.
- As we get into summer, we will integrate the children's chapel into service without family service in Huffman Hall. It was noted that we need more trained ushers as we are short.
- We had another great kindergarten graduation.
- Lise's position as Assistant to the Rector, which had been entered into as an interim position, has been offered and accepted as a permanent position.
- Joyce reminded us that there is autism training in about a week.
- Bob reported that VOMs are only responsible for the 10:30 service; no longer the 8:00 or Family Service.

Katie closed the meeting with a prayer. The meeting Adjourned at 8:30 pm

Submitted by Natalie Lynch, Clerk of the Vestry