

**First Congregational Church United Church of Christ (FCCUCC) of Colorado Springs
Minutes of the Council Meeting**

Sept. 19, 2019 Gregg Library

Council Members in Attendance:

Connie Brachtenbach (Moderator)
Paul McNeill (Vice Moderator)
Adam Gibbs (Worship & Spiritual Life)
Lisa Mason (Secretary)
Wayne Bland (Outreach)
Laura Pfender (Education)

Council Members Absent:

Polly Strovink (Treasurer)
Lynne Stefonik (Care & Fellowship)

Ex Officio in Attendance:

Rev. Heather Haginduff
(Lead Minister)
Ruth Roland
(Director of Financial Ministry)

Rev. Jacque Franklin
(Minister of Pastoral Care)

Ex Officio Absent:

Guests:

Julia Nace (Leadership Cultivation
Committee-LCC)
Rich Law (Just Peace-JP)
Del Hokansen-staff
Deb Buenting (LCC)
Emily Bond- staff
Pam Shockley-Zalabak (LCC)
Jill Cameron (LCC)
Nancy Henjum-guest
David Acton- staff

Meeting called to order - 6:15 pm

Dinner provided by FCC Staff. Prayer thanks to Pastor Heather.

JULY & AUGUST COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Adam Gibbs provided the motion to approve the July Council Meeting Minutes. Wayne seconded. Approved via voice vote.

Laura Pfender provided the motion to approve the August Council Meeting Minutes. Adam seconded. Approved via voice vote.

CORE RESOURCE AREA AND MINISTRY AREA REPORTS: none

MODERATOR (CONNIE BRACHTENBACH):

- Connie announced that Safety Committee chair John Stefonik was not able to be present at this time so Connie suggested we delay that content until the end of this meeting and Council may address that information at that time or may delay reviewing this information until a later meeting.
- Due to the scheduled attendance of members of LCC and JP whereby these two committees would like to present proposals, Connie also voiced that Council would cover the financial information from Ruth Roland and Polly Strovink at the end of tonight's meeting.

LEAD PASTOR (HEATHER HAGINDUFF):

- Two members of Pastor Heather's Clergy Congregation Relations Committee (CCRC), Lynne Young and Marsha Garrett, have stepped down from that position and so Pastor Heather would like to replace those positions with Charles Kiskiras and Jane Gazal.

MOTION: Wayne provided the motion to approve Charles Kiskiras and Jane Gazal as new members of Pastor Heather's CCRC. Adam seconded. Approved via voice vote.

- Pastor Heather reported that on September 29 FCC will hold a Ministry Fair. Emily Bond will be coordinating it.
- Pastor Heather encouraged LCC to plan on being present at the Fair as well as Council members should plan to attend at their ministry booths to spread support.
- ESM will be holding their fundraiser dinner at the Antlers Hotel. Anyone interested in attending should contact Blake Pelton.
- Pastor Heather announced that she has crafted a letter and had Hokanson has reviewed it; it was sent out to the congregation regarding a change to Del's job.
- Pastor Heather also updated information about the De'Von Bailey shooting: Pastor Heather attended City Council and has been creating good relationships with the African-American community in order to give them support.

JUST PEACE (RICH LAW):

- Rich Law, representing the Just Peace (JP) Team, reported that this team has had regular and ongoing conversations relating to what they had observed in the church's atmosphere regarding the recent budget challenges and subsequent staff reorganization changes.
- The JP Team decided to compile their thoughts and suggestions subsequent to their discussions. (See attached document)
- Rich continued to describe how we, as a church, have emotions that we don't always communicate well.
- We have had unkind conversations which shows that we need to practice intentional conversations to get better at them. These human skills require practice. We can ask the question: does our skill set reflect our values?
- Rich explained that the test shouldn't be that the path is or is not going "well" nor can it be based solely on whether the "right" moderator is leading the meeting - it should be inherent in all of us. OUR MEETINGS MUST BE SAFE.
- There was such vitriol that there were those who didn't feel safe expressing themselves even though they were not in the "line of fire".

LEADERSHIP CULTIVATION COMMITTEE (LCC):

- Pam Shockley-Zalabak, representing the LCC presented written proposed recommendations from LCC. (see document)
- The proposal suggested that there is a misalignment between the church's culture vs. its governance processes.

- The proposal goes on to recommend steps to realign the culture with the governance processes.
- The LCC proposal had features that were complimentary and similar to the Just Peace presentation though both proposals were developed independent of each other.
- LCC offered to help facilitate the recommended steps but expressed that they believed they shouldn't do all the work that is needed to find a clearer perception of the issues still facing FCC.
- In order to determine those issues, there was discussion about forming a group from Just Peace and other FCC members who have professional experience in culture alignment and conflict resolution. This designated group (described in the LCC proposal as the Alignment group) would do the work in determining what should be FCC's guiding principles at this time, in determining what are the core values of FCC at this time. This group would coordinate data collection, and would then report back to Council to find consensus on which of these pieces is genuinely agreeable by all parties. At that time, one appointed Alignment member would work directly with Pastor Heather to support enactment of next steps in addition to the full Alignment group also assisting with next steps.
- Discussion ensued from Council members with Rich and Pam interjecting at points. There was general agreement from Council that these proposals are caring and helpful. The consensus of Council was that the two proposals should be merged into a single plan crafted in coordination by Pam and Rich in order for them to find common philosophical agreement and manageable and implementable proposed steps.
- Various Council members suggested there should be a clean task list and timeline. The Council would then like to codify that work but that we should also feel a sense of urgency to turn this around within approximately two weeks time. Pastor Heather prioritized the guiding principles for alignment and a cultural survey as being the most urgent needs at this time.
- Rich recommended that the Council or Pastor Heather should craft and communicate to the congregation the rationale for why these processes are important. Both Pam and Rich emphasized that this rationale has to be very clear and very acknowledging of the proposal.
- Pastor Heather stated she believes the ministry part of this proposal should be handed over to Council.
- Council members stated that they appreciated these two committees' efforts. Various Council members talked about trust also being an important next step. Council collectively supported the notion of the two proposals continuing to be worked on and moved forward collectively.
- Pam says the Council must endorse the process, acknowledge the data that is collected, own the proposal by making decisions on the information presented. Rich explained that Just Peace uses the term "being engaged" with the proposals.
- Rich believed a simple endorsement would be sufficient.

MOTION: Wayne provided the motion that Council accept the two respective

proposals, one from Leadership Cultivation Committee and one from Just Peace, to be merged together to make a joint proposal, and along with that proposal also set guiding principles for the work that these two committees believe needs to be done, especially work to be done by Council. This proposal will also include suggested timelines for the work to be done. Paul seconded.

- Discussion: Ruth suggested that it be included in the minutes that the Council has agreed with the recommended processes brought forward by these two committees from these original documents and that these original documents should be part of the minutes.
- Heather asked where Jesus was in this. She offered that Jesus is there for the spiritual health and well-being of this congregation as illustrated by the incredible story of Jesus coming through the mist.
Approved by voice vote. This motion passed unanimously by those Council members present.

Gratitude was expressed by Council to the guests and teams/committees present. It was agreed that for the congregation/ for people to move forward in the process, it has to be done in a loving way. Simultaneously, there must be ongoing change.

NEW BUSINESS:

- *Safety Policy.*
 - The Safety Team wants approval of its Safety Policy Manual as written.
 - The other issue that they want to bring up is to revisit the idea of whether or not we should be arming any person or persons in the facility or congregation.
 - Council decided to invite David Wilson and Rich Law back to our next Council meeting to address a Safety proposal/ discussion regarding firearms at FCCUCC.
MOTION: Paul moved to adopt the Safety Manual as written. Adam seconded. Approved via voice vote.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL MINISTRY (RUTH ROLAND):

- Ruth Roland and Treasurer, Polly Strovink sent out information from Capin-Crouse, the accounting firm for FCC.
- Ruth reported that Capin-Crouse submitted 5 metrics that are also used with other churches. Capin-Crouse stated improvement was seen (through their reporting period of August) in two parameters regarding operating cash, and improvement in the parameter of debt ratio which was strong.
- One parameter, personnel, was still in the red because FCC is still at a 60% ratio whereas most churches are at 49%. The last parameter, Outreach expenses (grants) remain strong.

MEETING EVALUATION:

- The Library was very hot.
- The food provided was great.

- Various Council members were glad to have so many guests in attendance and sharing and giving opinions and support and information.
- The meeting had good substance to it, substance that feels like it may help us in moving forward.
- Thanks were given for asking gritty, hard questions.
- The incredible number of hours spent by Council was acknowledged and appreciated.
- One evaluation was that it was “past my bedtime!”

Thanks and closing prayer by Connie.

Adjourned 8:38 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lisa A Mason, Council Secretary

Lisa A Mason, *Council Secretary*

Connie Brachtenbach, *Council Moderator*