

Asbury United Methodist Church Council

Minutes of November 19, 2020 Meeting

7:30 PM via Zoom

In Attendance: Elizabeth Tawil, Dan Haas, Anne Haas, Nancy Cody, Nancy Beers, Karen Beer, Scott Karsner, and Pastor Jen Karsner (Terri Dotterer, our new Children's Ministry Coordinator joined us for the first few minutes of the meeting so that we could be introduced and welcome her.)

Open in Prayer – Nancy Beers opened us in prayer.

Minutes

We approved the minutes from the October 15 meeting.

Finance Report

Nancy reported that we have an operating surplus of \$11,000 at 10-31 and that projections show an operating surplus of \$2,000 for the year 2020.

We have sent out the Stewardship mailing and Nancy has sent out requests for input to the 2021 budget. Budget submissions are due December 1.

Nancy plans to submit the PPP forgiveness application soon. (Submitted on November 21.) She is close to resolving the administrative issues with the grant for church Zoom licenses so those should be purchased through TechSoup in the next month.

Trustees

The air handler is being built and plans call for installation mid-December. We have made a down payment of \$12,000 on the \$37,000 total cost of the new air handler. Dan doesn't yet know the "net" cost (net of rebates and any preschool contribution.)

Work has started on the sidewalk repair. No details are yet available on what will be required to fix the sinkhole in the cemetery.

Dan reported gas leaks in the parsonage and outside of Sherika's office were repaired. He also reported a problem with an electrical circuit out in the Sanctuary. We need an electrician to take a look and see what is required to fix it. He is concerned that the old wiring may be a fire hazard and we may need to make some upgrades.

God's Garage

Scott mentioned the Monday night Zoom call to discuss COVID 19 and the holidays. All are invited to participate.

He has several indoor activities including Project Linus Blankets and a movie planned for November and December. If the building is still closed, those activities may need to shift to virtual or outdoors if permitted.

Building Closing

We discussed the two week building closing effective November 7. The county school system had set a criteria recommending virtual school for grades K-5 when the case rate exceeds 15. The case rate was 16 when Pastor Jen, Dan Haas, and Elizabeth Tawil made the decision to close the church (including the preschool) for in person activities. (Since that time the case rate has climbed to 33.2 as of 11/20/20.)

We discussed various metrics to use as a basis for our decisions and we agreed that the case rate ([New Cases per 100,000, 7-Day Moving Average](#)) seemed to make the most sense as a metric to measure the rate of transmission. We discussed the fact that the preschool is a day care and that day care is subject to different guidelines - the [Maryland COVID 19 Guidance for Childcare Facilities](#). Those guidelines are based on specific circumstances at the individual child care and not on statewide or county case rates.

We discussed the need to include Vickie Whitley in future decisions, the need to set a criteria that includes a buffer to avoid a whipsaw effect, and the need to better communicate our criteria for closing down in person activities.

Regarding the decision as to what to do at the end of the two week period, we have set a special Council meeting to include Vickie Whitley, for Tuesday November 24 at 7:30. We will also decide our criteria at that meeting.

Preschool Payments to the Church

Nancy brought up the issue of Vickie's request to lower the preschool monthly payments to the church. Looking at Trustee expenses, Nancy reported a \$5,000 YTD 10/31 favorable variance in the BGE bill which works out to a total savings of about \$500 per month. If we split that with the preschool, it would lower their payment by \$250 a month. (Other trustee costs such as copier, telephone, building insurance, and fire alarm maintenance are fixed and can't be reduced.)

We talked about other semi-fixed expenses (cleaning and trash) that could possibly be reduced if we were going to be closed for an extended period of time. We decided to table that discussion until the Tuesday meeting once we better know our longer term plan.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 24th.

Dan Haas closed us in prayer and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Cody

