

Council Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2022 at 6 pm Via Zoom

Attending: Janice Koppenhaver, Beth Reavis, Wayne Powell, Mary Ballard, Martha Krezock, Pastor Steve Troisi, Charlie Wallin, Morgan Wright, Carol Norris, and Kristie Evans.

Absent: Alan Hauser, Emory Maiden, Jesse Lutabingwa, and Vicar Randy Rothchild

1. Call to Order -Charlie called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Devotion – Morgan provided a devotion. He talked about a church that was always afraid, in particular, of having to close down. Because of this, it left no energy for anything but trying to keep the doors open. He referenced Romans 8:14 – 17.

3. Review Updated Council Ground Rules – Charlie reviewed the ground rules.

- Please raise your hand to indicate that you would like to speak.
- Please give your name and state your views on the matter under discussion, including any questions or concerns you may have.
- In order to allow others ample opportunity to join in the conversation, please keep any subsequent comments by you on this issue/motion succinct and to the point.
- Please remain quiet when others have the floor so everyone can hear.
- Please be respectful of those voicing differing opinions.

4. Congregational Input – Charlie asked if anyone had congregational input.

- Carol Norris says she doesn't like setting 6
- Lizzie Estelle was discussing how to bring people together. Perhaps someone outside to greet people other than Ushers. Pastor stated that we are having trouble getting volunteers for Ushers as is. However, we used to have 4 Ushers/service. Maybe we can split these 4 Usher positions into Greeters and Ushers. It's possible, though, Greeters may become Ushers by default.
- There was an idea to have Council call church members to touch base, check-in, etc. Perhaps with a new Council in August it will be a task to call church members.
- Beth said there are currently not many volunteers for Altar Guild. Should they search for new volunteers? Pre-Covid, some members didn't participate.
- Mary said the sound is asynchronous to online sermons.

5. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes – Charlie

- Martha Kreszock said her name was misspelled name in the May minutes. It said "Krensock" instead of "Kreszock"
- Martha voted to approve the minutes, Wayne seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Strategic Visioning – Charlie reminded people to keep up with any changes to contact info

a. Review Organizational Chart and Liaison Assignments

7. Policy – Charlie reminded members of the upcoming August Congregational Meeting. At the meeting we will ratify the updated Constitution and Bylaws.

8. Monitoring and Oversight

a. Reports:

i. Senior Pastor Report – no questions

1. Engagement Report - May outperformed monthly average for attendance. There's a balance between online and in-person worship (if less online worship attendance there is more in person worship and vice versa).

ii. Campus Ministry Coordinator Report

- Deacon Stacey visited Lutheridge staff
- Steve is going to deliver care packages to LutherRock counselors

vii. Treasurer Report

- The General Fund continues to underperform. Are there issues with inflation causing a decrease in donations?

b. Old Business:

i. Security Protocol Group (Carol) - No update

ii. Fire Alarm System (Pastor Steve) - No Update

iii. Property Task Force Update (Pastor Steve) – discussion on The Council House

- A contractor is scheduled to come to the Council House June 25th.
- We are holding off on fixing the plumbing. It will cost 14K for a containment system and a pump to the road. The electrical system needs a complete overhaul.
- Should we do a renovation? Should we paint? Ceilings need redone.
- Want to get cost for such. Probably a 100 – 175K renovation.
- Thoughts on property usage:
 - Should the house be split into a duplex? P. Steve less optimistic with this approach.
 - Should we rent to college students?? This could be most lucrative option.
 - It could house 5 interns or perhaps a choir scholar?
 - We could extend the parking lot.
 - Cost would be about 200K. We could get a 10-year loan. It would generate 25K annually until paid off then 50k annually thereafter.
 - We would get rid of the Carriage House.
 - We could host LSA on the main level and rent the remainder.
- We could build an affordable housing building. But then we would lose kid green space and overall lose use of the property.
- P. Steve asked for thoughts on real estate development

- Mary would hate to lose green space. Always envisioned church use of space (a basketball court, picnic shelter, etc.).
- Carol agreed with Mary. She said we should get rid of the Carriage House for added space. She has concerns over the cost of a renovation.
- How would we fund this?
 - Possibly sell the Wilkes property trees? We could leverage them to fund the Council House project
 - Can we obtain the Bell South property? Build a parking deck?

iv. Updates on adjustments to schedule related to COVID-19 (Charlie)

- Counties in NC are 3/4 orange (medium transmission), 1/4 yellow (low transmission). Watauga is yellow. Orange counties surround us.

c. New Business

i. Sabbatical Request and Applications Update

- Harold and Grace builders received 12.5K
- Stacey was approved for 5K
- Steve was approved for 5K
- Lilly Grant expected until Friday, June 24.

ii. 100th Anniversary of Grace

- Volunteers are coming forward
- P. Steve has 50th, 75th, and 90th anniversary packets. Elaine Testerman is interested in updating them.

iii. Facility Use Request: Blue Ridge Fiber Guild

- Beth. The guild has monthly meetings. They have a Christmas in July meeting. They request a 1 time use for gathering and a business meeting. Motion was made by Janice, seconded by Carol. Motion was approved unanimously.

v. Budget Process (Goal to finalize at June meeting)

- P. Steve pointed out line items of interest. In particular, staff monies.
 - There is a 25K deficit. Not sure where monies will come from to cover. Should we reduce Staffing? Make a plea to congregation?
 - Should we get rid of admin assistant role? Not really a sustainable option.
 - Should we cut back on music funds?
 - We can't cut anymore from budget (bare bones). Either increase giving or cut staff.
 - We think we can't increase the price for parking spaces, ours is already higher than others. It would be difficult to add spots.
 - Could we increase the cost of the spots from \$600 to \$650/spot/year?
- Could we bring the budget as is to the congregation (with 20K shortfall)?
 - Wayne stated that, if this was work, if someone brought in a budget like this, they'd be expected to bring solutions

- Could we bring the price of spaces to \$700/space? Baptist church was \$600/space 5+ years ago. Should we call to find out their current rate? Should we consider full year options?
- Could we provide rental space for offices?
 - It was decided to move approval of budget to July in order to investigate raising the price for parking spots.

vi. Administrative Assistant Update

- The salary may be low but the benefit in flexibility is good
- A motion was made to post the position. Janice approved; Wayne seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

vii. Congregational Meeting - Aug 21, 2022

- Time will be 11am. It will be in Hi Flex style (live online and in-person)
- Proposed agenda is:
 - Elect church leaders
 - Approve budget
 - Ratify constitution
- Motion made to approve agenda. Beth approved; Steve seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.
- Reminders to be sent out to relevant parties to draft committee annual reports

Pastor Laura – there is interest in bringing an Afghan refugee family here.

10. Next Meeting: July 18, 2022

- i. Devotion: Janice

11. Adjourn Meeting with the Lord's Prayer – Morgan, at 7:55

Devotion List:

Aug - Martha