

REGIONAL BOARD MEETING
October 22, 2018
Merriam Christian Church

Present: James Vertrees, Jeff Hon, Casey Sigmon-Thornburg, Mary Lou Kegler, Rob Carr, Bill Rose-Heim, Gwen Brown, Erin Wathen, Veronica Fallah, Kristin Dow, and Jerry Jones, Bo Crowe, Deleslynn Kennebrew

Meeting called to order: 9:35AM

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as written. Jerry moved for the approval, Mary Lou seconded, and all others assented.

Budget & Finance Report: (See financial reports for full accounting information.) James noted that the Tall Oaks ledger was missing from the financial information that was distributed. Bill will ask Jessica to resend that information.

Our cash position is fairly low right now. Total assets remain good. Some of the reason for that is funds not yet collected for camps. That could provide another \$20,000. Vigorous discussion happened in the B&F meeting about where the problem lies in camp fee collection, but there is not yet resolution. Right now the Region is propping Tall Oaks up financially. This needs to be resolved.

DMF giving remains depressed. James suggests that some education with congregations might need to be done, but also recognized that churches are struggling too. The Stewardship and Development group will hopefully be working to help increase DMF giving.

Bill noted that the amount spent to host Regional Assembly will be higher than the financial documents suggest.

Tall Oaks financial page shows that the cash position is considerably lower than the end of the year and also a year ago in September. The receivables remain very, very high. James has hopes these receivables can still be collected.

Jerry asked about disbursement of the Gala profits. Kristin responded that the Gala Planning Committee has been asked and indicated that they want to continue to see the profits from the Gala go to support the General Operating Budget of Tall Oaks.

Mary Lou asked James to make a comparison between the Region's financial health today as it compares to five years ago. James said, "We are not broke yet, but we aren't breaking even." The DMF giving remains down, and reserves continue to be depleted. Bill noted that tithes and offerings are no longer underwrite the church budget. He said one answer that is doing a better job telling story to get large donors to contribute. The Gift Acceptance policy is necessary for this to happen. We also have to cultivate trust among the large group donors. Mary Lou noted how important it is to be proactive both in solving the problem before it is too late and in communicating the situation to local congregations within the Region.

The Action Item: (See meeting agenda for full verbiage on the motion.) Jerry wondered if the proposed financial management study would help everyone understand what assets belongs to the camp versus the Region. James and Bill clarified that there is no disagreement between who owns assets and liabilities. Bill explained that the financial review would help clarify the processes for financial separation. Deleslynn wondered if all the important partners will be included in the process for the financial management study. Jeff answered that yes, the financial officers at Tall Oaks will be a part of it and also he and James will be involved. James

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suggests that Kassie Smith McKee and Lara Blackwood-Pickrel need to be included as well as the chairs of the Camp & Conference Team. Erin called for a vote to accept the motion. None were opposed.

By-Laws Task Group: Jerry noted that the bylaws will be updated to include the possibility for electronic conferencing as a way to achieve a quorum. They also added a clause that each standing committee and commission must maintain an operating manual specific to their function. In the mode for editing now, and hope to have the final draft available for the Regional Board for the November meeting.

Stewardship & Development Group: No report. Jeff and Erin will discuss later.

New & Transforming Church Commission: Casey reported that Deleslynn was installed. They are preparing to release the applications for new church planters and transforming churches who would like support and assistance. She added a reminder that the Mission Insight information that New Church paid for will expire in February. That information likely will not be paid for beyond that.

Tall Oaks Commission: Please attend the Gala.

Bill brought his Regional Minister's report. (See online report for more information.) Terry Horde Owens is going to be here in January, presenting at the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on January 13th. Bill wonders if Terry could be invited to do a review of our Region and offer feedback to us about the health of our Region, offering a systems approach and honest constructive criticism as well as vision for us moving forward.

The Board invited Deleslynn to bring a report once she begins working in the field with new churches and churches engaged in the transforming process.

Veronica reported on her Prayer Retreat. She noted that the event finished in the black. The participants really enjoyed it and it was well received.

Erin noted that we might need to offer names of people for the anti-racism group. Rob noted that we are promising that to clergy with standing we will have Regional training for anti-racism/pro-reconciliation training. Bill, Mary Lou, and Kristin will sit down before the November meeting and create a list of names of people to sit on a Regional Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Task Force, who will in turn create a list of standards for selecting trainers for our Region. The Board will have an opportunity to review those names at the November board meeting.

The board provided general review of the Regional Assembly. Conversation focused on whether or not we need to bring in a "big name" speaker for the next event. Several mentioned that a specific task force needs to be established to plan the next Regional Assembly. The Regional Board should not be the planners next time. Also, planning needs to begin much further out in advance of the event. Deleslynn noted that multi-church participation is essential in worship leadership and other activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

The next meeting will be at: Monday, November 26th, 9:30 AM, at Merriam Christian Church.