



Saint John's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting Minutes
October 29, 2024

Present: Anne Brand (Clerk), Ben Bricken, George Gully, Harvey Kay IV, Susan Mays (Jr. Warden), Maggie Murff, John Peeples, Pam Pierce, Erin Racciah (Sr. Warden), Brad Trammell

Absent: Oscar Adams, Madeleine Bradley, Lauren Carr, Abbay Curtis, Randy Jefferson

Ex Officio Absent: Joel Smith (Treasurer)

Staff Present: Jay Biedenharn (Rector), Antoinette Cheney (Parish Administrator), Donna Gerold (Associate Rector), Debbie McCanless (Deacon), Penny Vincent (Financial Manager)

Staff Absent:

1. 5:35 Jay Biedenharn opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. Jay introduced Debbie McCanless, who was present to give a report on Outreach. Refer to Outreach report in the Vestry packet for details about the outreach initiatives and grant disbursements. Anne Brand asked how it was determined who received a grant and the amount given. Per Debbie, each committee member is given grants to review. The grants are then presented and discussed at outreach meetings. The committee uses a formula to assign a priority to each request - low, medium and high. The committee takes into consideration the impact a grant has for an organization. \$4,000 for the Carpenter Art Garden has a bigger impact than \$4,000 for the Church Health Center. John Peeples recommended that next year's report include the number of St. John's volunteers involved with the programs. Donna Gerold mentioned that the Thursday Bible Study makes and freezes casseroles at St. John's on a regular basis. Those casseroles could be used when needed for the Binghampton dorm meals. In December from 3p-5p there will be a Holiday Open House and parishioners can bring presents for the Angel Tree. The grant application is on the website. The deadline to apply for a grant is March 15, 2025, committee will meet in April to discuss the applications, and the disbursements will be given by the end of May. Ben Bricken asked if all the money was distributed each year or if they retain a balance. Outreach keeps a balance to use for emergency situations. The amount of money received each year is a percentage of an endowment over a 3-year period. The number of grants given last year was 19, 3 to 4 organizations were turned down.
3. Financial Report: Penny Vincent
Not pledged support YTD is \$73,619 which is \$23,350 under budget. The Not pledged support was increased by \$90,000 in 2024 to account for parishioners that normally pledge and had not but were giving as if they had made a pledge. YTD support actual is \$903,173, which is \$25,283 under budget. Penny does expect this number to decrease with year-end giving. YTD expenses are under budget \$392. Admin expenses YTD are over budget \$9,269.

Conferences and long-range planning line item is over budget by \$4,227 due to Stewardship expenses; network expenses YTD over budget \$4,768 due to aging electronic equipment; janitorial, kitchen supplies, and children's ministry over budget due to increase activities in the parish; grounds and maintenance over budget \$8,242 due to HVAC and plumbing problems; and on-line giving costs are over budget due to more people giving on-line but now that we pass along the cost to give on-line we should see the costs decrease.

Personnel, music and the PLC are under budget. YTD support over expenses is a net loss of \$363,328, which is 7% over budget \$24,980. This has caused a short-term cash flow issue. We borrowed \$60,000 on our \$500k line of credit at FinFed. This will be paid off with year-end giving. Total giving in September was \$94,326 and in October total giving to date is \$148,355.

To date we have paid Catmur Development \$604,030, approximately \$255,000 is remaining on the contract. Future Funds draws a total of \$606,962 and the remaining balance is \$419,494.

4. Fouts & Morgan Auditors Letter 2023: Penny Vincent

The church is audited every year by Fouts & Morgan and a report is in the form of a letter is sent to the vestry. In the letter this year, it states our current segregation of duties is considered a deficiency in internal control. This statement is made every year. Our set-up is due to the size of the staff and what Fouts & Morgan is recommending additional staff would need to be hired. This year the letter discussed our record keeping and made a recommendation to completely transition to electronic record keeping for efficiency and to keep a back-up off-site. When we converted to ShelbyNext, our financials went to the cloud, and it is backed up nightly. Penny converted data back to 1996. However, we do still maintain paper records, specifically check requests. Question asked who approved invoices to be paid, Antoinette. Per Penny the check request and the invoice are attached to the check for the check signer to review before signing. The check signers are Joel Smith, Treasurer, Elizabeth West, Assistant Treasurer, and Leigh Robinson, Financial Assistant. Another accounting control is Penny cannot release payroll, only a check signer can release it. John Peeples asked how often the system was updated when inputting new data, the update is immediate. Jay stated that the report overall was positive as it has been in the past. Ben asked if this report had to be shared with the diocese, no it is for internal purposes only.

5. The Property Committee and F&A recommend the Vestry approve the motion to hire Shield for the removal of the mold for \$31,814 and to replace the ceiling tile for \$6,674 in the PLC and the purchase of a dehumidifier for \$8,200.

Antoinette explained the PLC has mold due to raccoons making a hole in the ceiling and water got in when it rained. The raccoons were captured, and the roof was replaced but our current HVAC did not remove all the moisture from the leak and mold started to grow. Jay stated the mold is visible on the ceiling tiles over the walking track. The property committee did get another quote that was less than Shield's quote. The difference was the containment of the mold; Shield was better. Susan pointed out when reviewing the two proposals it was not apples to apples, which has been encountered before. Discussion to create a Request for a Proposal (RFP) for consistency in the quotes we receive. The mold removal and ceiling tile replacement would be paid with property reserve funds which would take the balance to almost \$0. However, in February the property reserves would get a disbursement from the endowment for approximately \$42,000. If an emergency happened

before then we can borrow against our \$500k line of credit. Erin recommended asking Shield if they had a payment plant.

6. Vestry business:

- a. Approval of Vestry Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2024. Motion to approve, Harvey Kay IV, second Erin Raccah. So, moved.
- b. Strategic Plan Wrap-up: Susan Mays. Please refer to the Strategic Planning Committee Wrap-up document in the Vestry packet. Per Susan the stats on page 3 have been updated. One of the primary goals of the committee was to write a Mission statement which is found on page 6. The statement was approved at the March 26, 2024, vestry meeting and presented to the parish on May 5 at the Cinco de Mayo lunch followed by the Parish Update. In 2023 and 2024 a lot was accomplished. St. John's had 3 assessments in 2023 by Epic Pivot, Hord Architects and Strategic Planning committee; Donna started as the Associate Rector May 2023; we celebrated the 75th anniversary April 2024; the Festivities committee was formed, and their first big event Burgers & Bingo was a huge success; and the outside renovation began. Items to note the children's wing is not ADA compliant, we have numerous old HVAC systems that will need to be replaced and need to determine why attendance is down. Live stream has a consistent number of participants each week but last Sunday it was not working. Decision made that the Live Stream team would be trained by Jay on how to start the Live Stream in addition to their current duty of managing it during the service. Parishioners like the texting and it has had a positive impact. Next step is for Susan, Mike Keeney, the Capital Campaign Chair and Jay to discuss transition and next steps. Brad asked that three met prior to the December meeting.
- c. Construction Update: Property committee has received from John Catmur change orders that total \$80,641.17. Technically since the change orders are part of the overall outside renovation project that has been approved by the vestry, a second approval is not required. However, for full transparency and the cost, the Property Committee would like the vestry's stamp of approval. The change orders are:
 - i. #4: \$61,525.37 Repair 3 gables over the sacristy
 - ii. #5: \$7,048.80 Repair southwest courtyard ceiling
 - iii. #6: \$6,338.20 Miscellaneous other repairs
 - iv. #7: \$1,650 Creasy Garden Roof
 - v. #8: \$4,078.80 Awning over basement steps on Overland sideThe wood rot on the three gables was discovered when the building was power washed. Erin showed a piece of the gable that was damaged. Harvey asked if the gables could be seen and was this a cosmetic problem. Per Antoinette, the damaged gables are directly over the sacristy and visible from the parking lot. Jay said if you look up at the ceiling in the Holy Spirit chapel there is water damage due to the wood rot. The work would be paid for by the Future Fund which would leave a balance of approximately \$80,000. F&A would like the capital campaign to replenish the fund with \$500k. Penny stated there are four life insurance policies totaling \$700k attached to the Future Fund. Susan Mays made the motion to approve the change orders #4-#8 totaling \$80,641.17 from Catmur Development, Erin Raccah second. So, moved.
- d. Vestry Guidelines approval: Erin Raccah. Included in the vestry packet are the edited guidelines that were presented at the May 21, 2024, vestry meeting. There are changes located on page 3 and page 4. Also, the guidelines were merged with the St. John's vestry job description provided by Antoinette. The purpose of the guidelines is

to help vestry members, especially the new class, have a better understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of serving on the vestry. Erin thanked John Pepples for providing Calvary's guidelines which were used as a model. Brad made a motion to approve the new vestry guidelines, Harvey Kay IV second. So, moved.

- e. Vestry Nominating Committee Roster: Erin Raccah. Discussion of who to include on the vestry nominating committee in addition to the five outgoing vestry class members. Having other parishioners may alleviate concerns the parish could have with this change. There could be standing committee members like the DOK chair, Acolyte Director, Head Usher, etc. A concern if the committee wants to nominate one of the standing committee members. A concern if designate the head of a committee to serve on nominating then it would be the same person year after year. Brad pointed out that whoever is selected for the committee is for this year only and if this method does not work then can change it next year. Donna recommended picking two parishioners from each of the five pillars in the strategic plan and rotating them each year. Ben suggested that the two parishioners are selected at the discretion of the outgoing vestry class. Vestry class broke for dinner and continued discussion. After a lengthy discussion Erin made the motion to have the vestry nominating committee comprised of the five outgoing vestry members with the Sr. Warden as ex officio and the facilitator and adding the Jr. Warden. Motion to approve John Peeples, Harvey Kay IV second. So, moved. Erin will make announcements from the pulpit and hold meetings in Parish Hall from 10a-10:30a on Sundays.
7. Rectors report: Jay is encouraged by the turnout for the Wednesday night event with Mayor Paul Young and Ford Canale. Delicious food was provided by Randy Jefferson and Donna was a good MC. He liked the Mayor's message. Since joining the staff Maggie Murff has become an asset to the team. Currently working on a sermon based on the psalms to submit for the Iowa Preaching Project. The family is good, but his knee is not. He is encouraged but what the stewardship committee has done and again thanked the chairs. He appreciates Brad reminders about the Capital Campaign.
8. Please attend as a vestry member the upcoming events in November and December. The Adult Formation series Donna has done about Spirituality and various stages in life have been good. More people need to attend. Last week's session when you find yourself single by divorce or death was powerful. Each of the presenters did a wonderful job and the widows that spoke offered to be a resource to those parishioners that find themselves in the same situation. Erin said it is good to see that St. John's is not only going from the front of the church to the back, clergy to parishioners, but also side to side, parishioner to parishioner.
9. Jay motion to adjourn. Brad Trammell, Harvey Kay IV second. So, moved.