

Colonial UCC

2021 Town Hall Executive Summary

Section 1: Summary

Town Halls Conducted by Mark R. Holland and the Leadership Council from May 19 to June 13, 2021

Nine (9) Town Halls were held with 82 attendees (75 in person + 7 online). This does not include the members of the council who attended multiple events. Names of all attendees are attached.

1. Sunday, May 23, 11:30 am—Fellowship Hall--9
2. Wednesday, May 26, 9:30 am—Einstein's --5
3. Saturday, June 5 6:30 pm—Youth Group--13
4. Sunday, June 6, 9:30 am—Fellowship Hall--15
5. Sunday, June 6, 11:15 am—Fellowship Hall--14
6. Monday, June 7, 9:30 am--Big Biscuit Group in Fellowship Hall--14
7. Tuesday, June 8, 1:00 pm—Virtual--6
8. Thursday, June 10, 7:00 pm—Virtual—Mark's internet failed.--1
9. Sunday, June 13, 11:30 am—Fellowship Hall--5

The agenda for the Town Halls:

- Welcome/Introduction
- Prayers of the People
- Pastoral Prayer
- Hear from Leadership Council Team Member
- Review highlights of Survey
 - Feedback on Greatest Needs
 - Feedback on Other Items
- Share Possible Timeline
- Building Tour (We did not do a virtual tour)
- Closing Prayer

Section 2: Feedback

Overall, the feedback was very positive. People were interested and engaged. There was a sense of agreement that there is legitimate work that needs to be done. The number one issue that was not specifically listed on the survey was the kitchen. There is widespread support for adding it into the plan. There was some pushback about why it was not included in the first place, but that pushback was easily diffused.

The Downstairs refinish needed clarification on the current vision. There was quite a bit of memory about partnering with the YMCA. This was an opportunity to make clear that the refinish would not be to turn it over contractually to a third party. This was a relief to some who prefer the facility to remain multi-use without a single, large user. Completing the renovation from the water damage on the south end remains a high concern. There were mixed thoughts about it being one room or two with no real push either way.

There was a clear desire to update the Social Hall to the level of finish seen in the Chapel and Heritage rooms. There was not much interest in remodeling the youth and Sunday School rooms in what I would call the “middle” part of the

downstairs. Upgrading the bathrooms was mentioned multiple times, especially the men's. And there was a suggestion to possibly add a unisex bathroom.

Interest in redoing the kitchen ranged from updating and a facelift to completely renovating. There was no clear consensus about what all needed to be done, but widespread agreement that something significant be done.

Support for an associate pastor remains strong. There was no strong push to put this in the capital campaign. In fact, several pointed out that it should be budget instead, in other words, keep the capital campaign about capital projects.

The roof repair has wide support. Additional solar was not opposed, but not strongly sought out.

There is strong support for really updating the sanctuary. Widespread agreement to replace the pew cushions and carpet and "clean up" the pews. Every group supported this except the youth who thought it all seemed fine.

The support for outdoor work like landscaping, signage, and additional parking lot work was predictably lowkey but present. There was widespread belief that the church should look good. Many brought up the location in Prairie Village as a good reason to keep it to a high standard.

The organ updates received similar support as was shown in the survey. Most did not see it as necessary.

Other comments:

- Add an ice machine in the kitchen
- Do something with the partitions in the Social Hall and Youth room
- Replace floor in Social Hall
- Re-organize kitchen
- Social Hall décor is old
- Improve Signage
- Associate Pastor for Aaron
- More water mitigation
- Roof is urgent
- Test for Radon
- Glass block in window well in south room
- Publish minutes of all meetings
- Clarify how Pemberton money is used
- Clean carpet in nursery

From the Youth:

- Invest in Bitcoin
- Add art to the Social Hall and building to make it more inviting and give it more personality.
- Make the library open to the public
- Fix electrical circuitry—(This was the night their microwave shut off the power to their room!)

Section 3: Recommendations for Next Steps

There is support for a capital campaign in principle. Most who attended agree that there is work to be done that is overdue. It should be noted that this feedback may be self-selected by those who chose to come to the Town Halls. Those who are opposed or are uninterested may have skipped them. The survey had feedback from 126 adults (no youth took the survey.) The Town Halls had about 70 adults which closely skews with the 48% in the survey who were ready to go already. Overall, there was no vocal opposition. There were lots of questions and a desire for clarification.

Key feedback from each Town Hall was “how much are we talking about?” There is agreement on the items, now we need scope and cost. The lower level remains too vague and has four different areas being discussed, south end, bathrooms, Social Hall, and Kitchen. Clarity of vision is needed, and the funding will follow.

I recommend that the Leadership Council move quickly to activate the congregation and find costs associated with the various projects. There may need to be multiple task forces of 3-5 people each to accomplish this. A “Kitchen” team came up several times. It might not hurt to have a “Social Hall” team and a “Lower Level Remodel” team (for the bathrooms and the south classroom) and a “Sanctuary Update” team. Much of this work has already been done by the leadership, so it would not be necessary to reinvent the wheel. But, adding a few people from the congregation to each group could really give it momentum and visibility. Also, it takes a few people to really look at the scope desired. Members of the Council could chair and facilitate the teams which would all report back. A thirty-day deadline would really push things forward. I could staff the teams to keep Aaron focused on ministry.

Once there is a ballpark figure, whether it is \$200,000, \$500,000, or whatever, a feasibility study could be conducted quickly to confirm the investment is present. Without a clearer number, it would be difficult to ask how much individuals would give.

Section 4: Summary

A capital campaign is on the near horizon for Colonial UCC. The vision is mostly there, the scope and costs need to accompany it. There is reason to believe that this could come together just right for this Fall of 2021. The Leadership Council has done enough groundwork over the last year, that even with a big push right now, a campaign would not feel rushed.

The window is narrow on getting costs. I do not think it is necessary to have exact bids on everything before going to a capital campaign, but there does need to be an idea of scope and a budget. For instance, the Kitchen team could come back with literally any number between \$50,000 and \$200,000. Either number could be raised. But it would not be popular to ask for \$50,000 and then have the scope creep up to \$200,000. The same is true for the Social Hall and Sanctuary. A larger scope is often more inspiring and can feel like a real generational investment. Too low of scope and the church loses its ripe opportunity for deep investment. This is the balance we need to strike as soon as possible.

If this balance is not struck soon, it would make sense to push the campaign launch until after the first of the year. If the teams are really going well and they said, “we need more time to get this right,” then the congregation would embrace that. The process of pulling vision and costs together can be a great momentum builder that would easily carry into the new year. Just postponing for no reason, on the other hand, would likely hurt momentum. Follow the process.

It is important to keep an eye on the calendar. A successful, well-run campaign takes about 10 weeks. There are natural times to avoid, like Christmas and Summer, unless there is some structural catastrophe that must be addressed—which there is not. So, flowing nicely into this Fall and kicking off in September is great. If we cannot kick off until October, it starts to make sense to wait. A January kick-off would be fine or anytime thereafter that wraps up no later than Fathers’ Day. If we cannot finish by Fathers’ Day, then the next Fall. Based on what I have seen, the church is close, and a January kick off could be seen as the latest necessary. The worst-case scenario is not missing the launch this Fall. The worst-case scenario is not being ready and not maximizing your full potential.