

St James Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting

October 22, 2024

Present:

Barbara Bateman, Ryan Collins, Sarah Deacle, Gene Goff, Sharon Hansen, Marilyn Hastings, Kathy Hutchinson, Sue Rice, Rob Samtmann, Mark Schultz, Fr. Mike Sowards, Francois Springuel, Phil Tatem

Absent:

Janice Tabbut

The Meeting was opened with a prayer by Father Mike.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. September minutes were unanimously approved as written.
2. No e-votes were taken since the last meeting.
3. Fr. Mike reminded the vestry that we still have an open vestry position and to think about people to nominate. Additionally, a diocesan representative is needed. Sara volunteered to lead the replacement effort. Options floated:
 - a. Name an interim member until April elections,
 - b. Pass a one-time waiver to allow a parishioner to serve until April without meeting the one-year membership requirement,
 - c. Continue as is without one vestry member.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. New Treasurer – Mark Schultz was introduced as the new treasurer effective next year. A **motion** was unanimously passed to provide Mark with an interim voice in the meetings with no voting rights.
2. Diocesan Convention
 - a. Father Mike attended without a parish representative, as one needs to be named.
 - b. The diocese wanted to raise assessment rates, but questions were raised on the equitable payments by parishes. For 2025, the assessment will remain at the 2024 level, which for St. James is \$31K.
 - c. The diocese is forming a team to look at the budgets and assessment. Father Mike has been asked to participate.
3. Diocesan transformation team and Glebe House Update
 - a. A new offer was received from a neighbor for the purchase of the house and land. The offer would not provide the perpetual income stream St. James and the diocese are looking to generate. Additionally, any sale of land would need to go thru standing committee and be approved by the Bishop. This neighbor also turned down the offer to develop their adjoining land with St. James.
 - b. Father informed the vestry that one of parishioners will be submitting an architectural sketch next week for potential development of the property. The initial estimate is that 48 units

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- with parking for 1.7 cars could be rendered. Gene mentioned that any final plans need to address drainage issues with the land.
- c. Once the preliminary drawing is received, it will be forwarded to the diocesan transition team for review. The vestry will also receive a copy. Father Mike will try to get a better understanding of proposed timelines and the next steps from the transition team. This is a multi-year project, guessing that the earliest completion would be 2028.
 - d. This drawing is not a by-right plan. Any drawing accepted and signed on to by the diocese and St. James will need to go thru zoning and potential modifications. This would be the responsibility of the diocesan team at their expense.
 - e. The vestry discussed the difficulty in assessing the recommendation when no alternative proposals are available to compare. Even if there was an independent alternative to compare, any proposal would need to go thru standing committee and be approved by the Bishop. In the end, the diocesan transition team was created to assist parishes, but also to provide an income stream for the diocese to fund additional projects.
4. Member Ministry – Homebound Visitation
- a. Father had 7 people volunteer, all of whom completed training, and are licensed as Eucharistic Ministers.
 - b. Beginning on 11/3, each person will take one week and visit 4 scheduled parishioners and be responsible for the green card prayer list. Business cards and books were ordered to facilitate their ministry.
 - c. Father has more people interested. Once he gets 2 more, he will schedule another training session.
5. Financial
- a. The August and September statements are not available yet.
 - i. There is a small reconciliation issue with allocation of dollars between general and dedicated funds. There is a meeting next week with the accountant to resolve it. If the issue remains, he will release the drafts to the vestry.
 - ii. They are also working on a small payroll issue with Father Mike and Lauren and need to correct to ensure their tax statements are correct.
 - iii. August collections were on target, September collections were above target.
 - b. Phil presented the draft budget for 2025. He asked each committee member to review and if additional funds are needed, to advise him prior to the next meeting. The budget will be reviewed and voted on at the November meeting.
 - c. When asked what cash position in the checking account balance makes Phil nervous, he indicated \$30K. To help normalize monthly cash flow, Mark had suggested to Phil making 12 monthly payments to the diocese for their assessment, rather than paying all in one month. Phil will follow up with the diocese to set up.

Committee Updates:

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6. Fellowship
 - a. A veteran's coffee hour is scheduled for 11/10 following 8am and 10am services to honor all who served.
 - b. A veteran's in Recovery Dinner has been scheduled for 11/6 to thank them for all they do in support of the Outreach House and St James.
7. Building and Grounds
 - a. A cemetery clean-up was completed as part of an Eagle Scout project. The scout was from Visitation parish.
 - b. Francois maintains an active list of potential Eagle Scout projects.
8. Outreach House
 - a. About ½ the volunteer hours are performed by St. James' members, the other ½ are community members.
 - b. A **motion** was made and unanimously approved to accept the Outreach House Report as is.
 - c. Father spoke with a woman at the convention who mentioned the need for socks in Kensington and wondered if St. James could help. An organization called Joy of Socks helps the Outreach House. Father asked us to consider doing a drive to help as well.
9. Religious Education
 - a. Lauren submitted a report to Father Mike. She expressed concern with church school attendance. While kids are registered, attendance so far is below average.

Next Vestry Meeting will be held November 19, 2024.

A **motion** was unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting.

The Meeting was closed with a prayer by Father Mike.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Hutchinson

Vestry Secretary