

St. George's Vestry Minutes

September 16, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m. (Remote Meeting)

ATTENDANCE:

- *Present:*
 - Sean Albert, Jon Ewbank, Carol Gaige, Sandee Hughes, David Kennison, Debbie Lambeth, Lynn Paska, Paul Smigelski, Fr. Matt Stromberg, Jeff Wengrovius
- *Excused Absence(s):*
 - Meg Hughes, Rich Unger

PRAYER:

- *Collect:*
 - The Holy Cross (September 14 Feast Day)

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2021 MINUTES:

A motion to approve the August 2021 Vestry Minutes made by David Kennison was seconded by Sandee Hughes. The motion was approved unanimously by the members who were present.

RECTOR'S REPORT: Father Matt-

The following diocesan events were discussed:

- *The Feast of Michaelmas* - September 29th at 7 p.m.:
 - Fr. Matt has been invited to preach at the Cathedral of All Saints.
- *Diocesan Convention* - October 23rd.
 - Held remotely from the church,
 - All are welcome to attend,
 - St. George's parish delegates are:
 - David Kennison,
 - Anne Kennison, and
 - Robert Paska

- Announcement of the presence of new Assisting Bishop: Michael Smith, retired bishop from North Dakota.
 - Bishop Smith has known Fr. Matt for over 10 years.

N.B. ~ In his Senior Warden's Report, David commented that:

1. Bishop Smith will:
 - a. Care for the pastoral needs of the diocese normally reserved to a bishop and
 - b. Will not have authority over the diocese.
2. The Diocesan Standing Committee has authority over the diocese until a new bishop is appointed.

The following parish events were discussed:

- *Theology on Tap* - September 30th at 7 p.m.
 - Held at the VanDyke
 - All are welcome to attend a discussion of questions about angels.
- *St. Francis Day Blessing of the Animals* - October 10th at 3 p.m.
 - Held in the Garden,
 - All are welcome to attend,
 - Bring a pet.
- *Wedding of Nathaniel Wisenburn and Angela Marion* - October 30th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- David Kennison made motion to convene an Executive Session of the Vestry.
- The motion was seconded by Sandee Hughes.
- At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the regular Vestry Meeting reconvened.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jeff Wengrovius –

Jeff reported that we are doing well generally and are ahead on pledges. We have had expenses and are over budget due to some unexpected situations. In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic we have not spent money for 2021 line items such as music miscellaneous, child/youth ministries, St. George's Day, and adult education.

As of September 16, 2021, the Trustco checking account balance is \$17,053 and no endowment interest or principal has been taken from RBC since last month's Vestry meeting. Jeff discussed several positive variances in parish income. His written report states, "Endowment income at RBC is building, but will be taken next week." The amount of interest to be transferred from RBC to Trustco is approximately \$10,000. Since this action was budgeted, no vestry action was required.

An additional upcoming transfer from RBC to Trustco will come from the Education and Howe Lecture Series monies. In June the Vestry unanimously approved a motion made by Jeff "to take \$10,000 of accumulated interest from the Whittingham-Howe Lecture Series restricted fund

to reimburse the church budget for unexpected boiler replacement costs, enabling us to delay having to take principal monies from the general endowment fund.”

Parish expenses had several negative variances, the largest of which was boiler service over budget by \$42,887 for total year due to the need for an emergency replacement of the Great Hall boiler. David made the point that this expense does not put our annual budget out of balance since this amount was taken from our general endowment and brought into the 2021 budget as Income but will adversely impact our endowment principal.

David also inquired about a discretionary fund expenditure by the Rector in the amount of \$1,041 -- noting this was far out of normal in 2021 -- and asking if this amount was accurate. The amount was confirmed to be accurate.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: Jeff Wengrovius

The Parish Finance Committee approved a re-structuring of the endowments at RBC. We are moving to active management of our investments for a small fee in return for a higher return. No action by the Vestry is needed to effectuate this change.

SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT: David Kennison-

- *Former Sextons:*

David reported that on Thursday, September 9th, he attended a court hearing with Joseph Villano, Esq., the lawyer working with Ideal Legal to evict of our former sextons, Sondra and Jeremy Kravatz, from the apartment they currently occupy on the St. George’s campus.

Sondra made an appearance, but Jeremy did not attend, and the court was not pleased.

Mr. Villano St G’s attorney based his argument before the court on the *NYS Religious Corporations Law*. This line of reasoning puzzled David.

The judge favored mediation process rather than eviction. He offered Sondra 3 weeks to move. Sondra said doing so was not possible and asked for additional time.

In response, the judge recommended that Sondra file a *NYS Hardship Declaration*, to stop the eviction process.

Sondra was unable to read or couldn’t understand the Declaration. So, the judge assigned a court staffer to help her. When Sondra returned, she told the court that: a. she understood that there is money available for tenants and b. if she had some money, she might be able to move out.

The court assigned Mr. Villano to help Sondra and adjourned the case until Thursday, Sept 23rd to give Sondra time to find financial assistance.

- *Archive:*

On August 26th, David, Sean, and Rich Unger met to examine the parish archives. They located a list of archive contents from a prior organizing effort in 2012. That team had only 1 member - Gene DeLong.

Sean is taking the lead on this and has met with Lara Lee Linder, archivist at First Reformed for assistance. Sean tracked down a TEC Archives Manual:

https://www.episcopalarchives.org/sites/default/files/RecManManual_rev_07-2017.pdf

- *Liz Catalan:*

David commented that Liz Catalan, the woman hired to do parish cleaning is doing a noticeably good job. Sandee asked if she had been asked to clean the Great Hall Kitchen. Evidently, this work will be on Liz's agenda soon.

A conversation about the need for Liz to empty the rainbow vacuum into the garden or the great outdoors to save the aging kitchen drainage system.

- *Commendations:*

David ended his report by reading four Commendations into the record:

Commendation for Dr. Brian Taylor:

The Vestry thanks and commends Brian Taylor for his work at organizing and managing the St George's Café at the Stockade Art Show and for his cleaning of the Great Hall kitchen and for his oversight of necessary repairs of the malfunctioning ovens.

Commendation for Robert McCloskey:

The Vestry thanks and commends Bob McCloskey for his donation and preparation of much of the food for the St George's Café at the Stockade Art Show, in addition to arranging and picking up the mums that were offered for sale at the Art Show.

Commendation for Jim Wingate:

The Vestry thanks and commends Jim Wingate for his donation and on-site cooking of Hot dogs, Hamburgers, and Sausages for the St George's Café at the Stockade Art Show.

Commendation for All Volunteers:

The Vestry thanks and commends all the parish volunteers (too many to list all names) for their indefatigable efforts in setting up, serving, and cleaning up and to Joan, Jeff & Brian for their

organ recitals, for the St George's Café at the Stockade Art Show. Their efforts ensured our success.

Jeff commented that the St. George's Café held on September 11th, had a net income of \$1,300. This figure is the sum of \$800 from food net sales and \$500 net mum sales.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT: Jon Ewbank-

Jon's written report contained a litany of outstanding old business.

Jon highlighted several items of new business from his report:

- The front doors of the Sanctuary and the Great Hall have been repainted (Thanks to Gene DeLong)
- An emergency repair to the convection oven portion of the (GH) kitchen range was affected to allow food preparation for the Art Show Café.
- The refrigerator in the (GH) kitchen stopped cooling on Sunday after the Art Festival. Perishables were moved to the freezer, and the refrigerator was unplugged. On Tuesday, it was plugged back in, and as of Wednesday evening appeared to be working. It is suspected that frequent opening/closing of the unit during the Festival resulted in the coils freezing up. Normal operation returned once they had an opportunity to thaw.

In addition, he noted that the Rectory refrigerator was replaced on an emergency basis.

David commented that the Rectory refrigerator had outlived planned obsolescence for residential appliance.

COMMUNITY LIAISON'S REPORT: Rich Unger Excused)

- No report submitted.

ALM LIAISON, BOOK CLUB, AND GARDEN MINISTRY ALM: Meg Hughes (Excused)

A few highlights from Meg's written report include:

- *Garden Ministry*
 - Private donations from Meg, Kevin Decker, Jeff and Barb Wengrovius facilitated the removal of an overgrown cluster of evergreen shrubs adjacent to Cranmer Hall and the planting of a PG Hydrangea (tree variety). Barb and Meg will be planting a few preliminary replacement shrubs.
- *All on the Same Page*
 - On October 17th after church, club members will discuss books they have been reading independently and begin planning our reading roster for next year.
 - Date TBA: "*This is Happiness*," by Niall Williams.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE: Sandra Hughes

Sandee reported that:

- There is a new sign-up sheet for coffee hour treats for October, November, and December. It is on display in the entrance to the church. If vestry members can bring it to parishioner's attention and encourage signing up that would be very helpful.
- Bob McCloskey informed Sandee that the parish coffee supplies have been depleted completely. Bob is going to go to the restaurant supply store for the purpose replenishing our coffee and creamers for Sunday coffee hour. Brian Taylor has been shown how to use the new coffee maker and dishwasher. More of us will be "trained" to use the equipment going forward.
- The kitchen was cleaned by Brian for use by the volunteers for the Café. It is on the list for a thorough cleaning by our newly hired cleaner at some point soon.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Lynn Paska

Lynn announced that:

- the next issue of *The Georgian* would appear soon and
- pictures of the Art Show festivities at St. George's would be on the website soon.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Eugene Delong painted the Great Hall doors as a gesture of good will toward the parish.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None.

NEXT MEETING:

- Thursday, October 21st at 7 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

- 8:00 p.m.