

**St. Francis Episcopal Church
Potomac Parish
January 16, 2024 Vestry Meeting**

The Vestry convened in person and online via Zoom on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 7:30 p.m., Fr. Mark presiding. Members attending: Ms. Tendall, senior warden, Ms. Bahar, junior warden, Ms. Byam, Mr. Feagles, Ms. Hurdle, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Jannotta, Mr. Maroulis, Ms. Oleson, Mr. Ruf, Dr. Schneider, and Mr. Whitlock. Also attending: Mr. Smith.

Invocation

Fr. Mark led the invocation.

Bible Study

Ms. Byam led the Bible Study with Psalm 46, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...” She asked the Vestry three questions: 1. How easy or difficult is it to be still and listen to God, who is in charge of our lives. She said that when things like medical issues worry us, we need to let God take control, which is not always easy for us as we want to be in control. 2. This Psalm says “though the waters thereof roar and be troubled.... The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge....” When events in our lives make us fearful, how should we let God take control? She said she and her family started to have weekly Zoom meeting to keep in contact during Covid. 3. Why is it important to remember the Lord Almighty is with us? Fr. Mark said God is stronger and wiser than we are, and we should let him be in control of our lives.

December 19, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes

Fr. Mark asked if there were any edits to the December 19, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes, and it was noted there was a small amendment to the budget item.

Motion to Approve the December 19, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes

Ms. Tendall made a motion, seconded by Dr. Schneider, to approve the Vestry Minutes with the small amendment. The motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Motion to Approve the Action Items on the Consent Agenda

Mr. Ruf made a motion, seconded by Ms. Oleson, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. The motion carried.

Executive Session

Motion to Conduct an Executive Session

Ms. Tendall made a motion, seconded by Ms. Oleson, to conduct an Executive Session. The motion carried.

Motion to End the Executive Session

Ms. Byam made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jannotta, to conclude the Executive Session and return to the regular order. The motion carried.

Property Updates

Mr. Whitlock said Mr. Chris Stanton is working on the design for Phase 2 of the HVAC project. The present plan is to use two sets of boilers for each building (the church and the school/hall). Mr. Whitlock expects Mr. Stanton's company to have the documents ready for review between the end of January and the middle of February 2024. He said the HVAC system maintenance transition from NAC to RSC is going smoothly.

Church Organ

Mr. Widmann said that the organ company is finalizing delivery of the organ stops he has ordered.

Budget

The Finance Committee approved the grounds maintenance two-year contract for 2024 –2025 for Francis Lawn Service for \$14,900. (The final cost will be slightly lower because the re-seeding cost for the rectory will be removed).

Motion to Approve the Two-Year Contract for Francis Lawn Service

Mr. Ruf made a motion, seconded by Ms. Oleson, to approve the Francis Lawn Service's two-year contract. The motion carried.

Nominating Committee

Ms. Bahar, Junior Warden, and the Nominating Committee have prepared a list of three candidates to serve on the Vestry and as Junior Warden, with two positions still open. Ms. Byam has agreed to continue for another three-year term, and Mr. Feagles has agreed to serve as Junior Warden. The Nominating Committee said it is having trouble finding people who will serve, which may require the Vestry. Fr. Mark said that the current Vestry's size reflects a time when St. Francis was a larger parish, and reducing the Vestry's size may be appropriate with a smaller congregation. The committee is hopeful that it will find candidates to fill the open positions at a later date.

Financial Report

Mr. Maroulis said the December Financial Report showed a \$54,000 loss at the end of 2023. This was due to hiring Your Part-time Controller (YPTC) for \$64,000 and to the HVAC project. Pledges for 2023 came in under budget. The church's stock market investment portfolio, however, grew by \$74,000 in unrealized gains. The Finance Committee has taken several steps to make sure we will not see such a deficit in 2024, especially by reducing Ms. Krajcik's hours (Fr. Mark will assume some of her duties), and hiring a YPCT bookkeeper at a lower hourly cost. Ms. Krajcik will provide periodic, supervisory oversight. The Finance Committee wants to maintain current funding for the church's mission and church properties. These 2024 budget does project a small surplus.

Mr. Ruf said the stock market gains are in restricted funds (the majority of these funds) – 20% of these were legacy funding, which the church can draw down at 5% per year.

Motion to Approve the Finance Committee Report

Mr. Ruf made a motion, seconded by Dr. Schneider, to approve the Finance Committee's Report. The motion carried.

Swan Songs

Mr. Jannotta said serving on the Vestry has been a real pleasure. He encouraged the Vestry to stay the course on the financial issues. He said that the church may want to seek professional advice on the financial situation. He remains ready to help in the future.

Ms. Bahar said that serving as Junior Warden has been a truly pleasurable experience and a wonderful opportunity working with the Vestry members, and she wished the Vestry a good future going forward. She also offered her help in any way where it is needed.

Other Business

Mr. Schneider said he and his family are hosting a young couples family get-together at their house on Saturday, January 20th. Ms. Oleson offered her help with this gathering. Mr. Schneider asked the Vestry to consider ideas to foster fellowship and gatherings to strengthen parishioners' ties to St. Francis.

Vestry's Appreciation for Service

Fr. Mark asked the minutes reflect the Vestry's appreciation for the service that Ms. Bahar and Mr. Jannotta have given as Junior Warden and a member of the Vestry.

Motion to Adjourn the Vestry Meeting

Ms. Oleson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jannotta to adjourn the Vestry Meeting. The motion carried.

Adjournment

Fr. Mark led the Vestry in the closing prayer:

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Les Smith
Clerk