

# St. Mark United Methodist Church

## Church Council Meeting Minutes

---

**Date:** June 26, 2022    **Time:** 12:30 pm    **Location:** Room 111

---

The May 2022 meeting of the **Church Council** was held in person in Room 111 on June 26, 2022. Mitch Foster, Council Vice- Chair, Presided.

### **In Attendance**

(In Person)

1. Mitch Foster
2. Eric Steverson
3. Greg Washington
4. Jeff Collins-Smythe
5. Darrell Card Harper
6. Joel Black
7. Mark Woods
8. Deana Hilton
9. Belva White
10. Kathy Fazenbaker
11. Robert Gileo
12. Noey Barrerra
13. Frank Wren

### **In Attendance**

(Virtually)

1. Lilly Berrios
2. Mary Abbott Waite

The meeting was Called to Order at 12:38pm by Mitch Foster.

Jeff Collins-Smythe led the council in prayer.

Darrell Card Harper - Motion to approve the May 2022 minutes. Mitch Foster seconded

- Accepted and approved

## **REPORTS**

### **Vision**

- Mitch, – update, loving, accepting, serving – all committees are working on that mission.

*Connectivity, Endurability, Solidarity*

### **Endurability**

- Addressing allocation and spending of \$10M as part of property sale

- Total Value: Approximately \$10,000,000 broken down as follows
- Parking: \$3,000,000 +/- for 150 cars
- Gross Price: \$6,100,000 (Paid Long property).
- After expenses, Net to SMUMC: \$3,600,000 +/-5-year plan for projects

### **Areas of Need**

- Exterior – Walls and Roof
- Connect to deck
- Interior – Restrooms, Sanctuary, Education; Systems and Finishes
- Grants that Belva and the Trustees are looking at

### **Need:**

- Over 3 to 5 Years
- Being prioritized

### **Sources of Funds:**

- Sale Proceeds
- Grants
- Trustees (Chapel)
- Campaign

### ***Discussion on topic:***

- Mitch Foster - are we interested as a council to borrow money on capital work?
- Darrel Card Harper advised we are premature to even think about that and we should wait until we have the data.
- Greg Washington commented that we need to be on a good trajectory before we consider borrowing money.
- Still in fact-finding status
- Darrell Card Harper advised that Council that borrowing money is not a Council decision but a Charge Conference decision.
- Space on Church website to update on what we know about work that that has been done and what is being done?
- Mary Abbott Waite updated the council that Chapel Updates should be every two weeks or once a week.
- Reminder to Lily of what we think the congregation would want to hear/read on this new microsite.
- Address from Pulpit
- Ask a question on website
- Noey Barerra advised that we need to educate the congregants on what is being addressed.
- Darrell Card Harper invited the Council to take a tour of the campus with the Endurability Committee.

**Action Item:** Endurability to come back to the committee with guiding principles.

**Action Item:** Schedule Council tour of the Campus with the Endurability Committee.

**Action Item:** Communications and updates to the congregation, update website every two weeks with status.

### **Ministries – Wiggins House Task Force Update**

- Frank Wren reported
  - Wiggins house was trashed, lack of control and management by PAD.
  - Terminated agreement with PAD
  - Compiled list of damages and expenses sent to PAD for reimbursement, \$2,450.
  - Trying to get back to point where we can rebuild.
  - Inventory is on list of items on **Make Your Mark Day**.
- If PAD is not tenant, who is going to be our benefactor.
- What has been presented,
  - The need of GA Tech students, who cannot continue at Tech without assistance, LGBTQIA, due to family withdrawing support.
- Chris180 is also being considered for support of kids who have aged out of foster care?
- Council, please show up for Make Your Mark Day to support this on the list of items as well.

### **Questions/Comments on topic**

- Belva White asked regarding, Wiggins Trust Money – would it stop?
  - *We could put the focus on assisting women, which completely falls in line with our mission*
- Ribbons of Hope grant requires that Wiggins House be used for women, including transgendered women.
- Can the church charge rent for Wiggins House? Covering costs, not a profit.

### **Social Justice**

- Response regarding gun violence
- Committees brainstormed, what are the changing needs of the church.

### **Comments/Discussion**

- Discussion ensued about posting position statements to bring to the Church Council and leadership.

*\*\*For complete recorded conversation, refer to the meeting transcript or recording. \*\**

**Action Item:** Define process to get message out that represents the view and position of the church.

- Position statements: bring to the Church Council and leadership.

### **Finance**

- Mark Woods reviewed the financial statements
- There haven't been any unusual changes in cash or investment balances or fixed assets relative to what we saw at the end of April.
- In the liability section there's an item labeled excess cash receipt with amount of - \$86,000. That represents our year-to-date deficit that the church has generated, and it's gone up by a little bit more than expected in the month of May, but by \$36,000.
- Scheduled withdrawal from the trust funds at the end of June in the amount of \$39,000 to help cover that operating deficit.
- Revenues, total giving income, which is a sum of pledge contributions, non-pledge contributions and plate offerings, have come in at just over \$325,000 on a year-to-date basis.
  - \$7,000 higher than the same point last year, or 2% better.
- Total revenues for the month came in at \$69,202
- For conference apportionments - there's \$5,200 of expense for the month. That corresponds to designated giving from one or more church members this month. That this is almost 60% towards the \$9,000
- Building and Grounds, we had unusually high expense in account 55030. Grounds General came in at \$8,649 in one month, but that was driven by two larger expense amounts.
  - \$4,200 expense to remove the chapel organ pipes to leave some chapel roof repairs,
  - \$3,500 HVAC repair bill.
- One other expense category with much higher cash outlay this month was multi-peril insurance shown a few rows down, \$8,080. That was driven by a larger quarterly payment for the churches package insurance policy as well as a smaller expenditure on the annual Directors and Officers insurance policy, which covers all of us. Those amounts were expected from an annual expense projection standpoint, and the timing of those payments just have to fit this particular month a little bit harder. So total church expenses shown at the bottom of that page came in at \$105,452 for the month of May.
  - Represents an increase in expenses over \$20,000. Over May 2021 expenses, that's 24% higher.
  - It's still higher. It's about \$51,000 higher than where we were at the same point with May of 2021 year-to-date expenses, we're about 11%.
- Special Offerings Restricted for Youth Minister Discretionary Fund, you can see that that account has \$15,000 in year to day revenue and year to day expense of \$9,491. All of justice fundraising income for the two mission trips are running through this fund, and some of that surplus will soon be moved into the church's operating budget to cover expenses for those trips that have been accounted for.
- Miscellaneous Restricted Section - we've had some durability committing expenses come through at around \$106,000 for the month of May and captured an account \$86.

#### Audit of Church's Books

- Conducted research and found two potential audit firms who are familiar with our ACS accounting software and who specialize in church audits. A small group, Deana, Mark, Joel Greg, interviewed those firms and had a good opportunity to hear from the

engagement partner in each firm that would supervise the audit and to have the opportunity to ask questions on the scope, timing, and cost of the process.

- The first takeaway from those discussions is that both firms contradicted what we've been told by our previous audit person, Jefferson, regarding our ability to even have an audit. They could perform an audit even though we use what's currently modified cash basis accounting, and even if we haven't adopted all recent gap accounting standards. I think it's fair to say we were impressed with both firms.
- One firm stood out. Newnan firm, James P Jordan CPA, Accounting firm performs audits for churches. This seems to be as much as mission work as a business pursuit. His quoted price for the audit is \$8500, plus an estimated \$400 for travel expenses. And his firm's quote was lower than the competing firms quote, which was \$15,000 less out of pocket expenses. That other quote came from a CPA firm called Ridge CPA. So the first firm that I mentioned in which we want to go with it, compares favorably to the \$20,000 that we have built into the budget for audit service. So we'll be able to realize some savings there. A copy of his audit engagement was distributed in today's meeting materials, and we're recommending that the church council authorized the waitlist.
- Audit to start soon.
- Wrapped up by the end of summer

**MOTION** from Finance, to use James B. Jordan CPA to conduct Church audit.

- Belva White seconded
- Passed Unanimously

## **Trustees**

### **Make Your Mark Day**

- Belva solicited support from the council to support
- Sweat equity, green equity,
- Get the word out
- Approach of taking full inventory, start in the Narthex, Crying Room,
  - List from Belva
- Catch all room, old paint cleaned out and removed from room.
  - Front Doors are slated to be restored.
- Deana advised that 7 rooms will be painted in the administrative area. To begin the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Lease with Street Lights**

- Received the lease extension for Street Lights. They are leasing the end of the hall, second floor, and they were originally to be out at the end of July. And they have asked, and we have agreed to extend that until October 31.
- And since we have nothing else going on and we could use the rent income, I would like permission to sign.
- Extend lease with Street Lights to October 31, 2022.

**MOTION** by Darrell Card Harper to sign lease extension with Street Lights to extend lease to October 31, 2022.

- Seconded by Mitch Foster.
- Passed Unanimously

Moved to Executive Session at 2:10pm