

St. George's Vestry Minutes
October 21, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m. (Remote Meeting)

ATTENDANCE:

- *Present:* Sean Albert, Jon Ewbank, Sandee Hughes, David Kennison, Debbie Lambeth, Lynn Paska, Paul Smigelski, Richard Unger, and Jeff Wengrovius
- *Excused Absence(s):* Carol Gaige and Meg Hughes. The Rector is on a medical leave of absence.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2021 MINUTES:

A motion to approve the September 2021 Vestry Minutes was made by Jeff Wengrovius, and was seconded by Lynn Paska. The motion was approved unanimously by the members present.

PRAYER: A PRAYER WAS OFFERED BY THE SENIOR WARDEN.

AMENDMENT OF THE AGENDA:

Without objection, the Vestry decided to amend the order of events outlined on the agenda. An Executive Session was followed by the Regular Meeting.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT: David Kennison

- **Eviction of Former Sextons**
 - November 3, 2021: A Warrant for Eviction of Sondra and Jeremy Kravetz is to be issued on that date.
 - The Sherriff's Department is to execute the warrant within 2 weeks of that date.
 - **November 17, 2021, 12:01 am.:** "Lock Out" date.
 - Jon added that a Hardship Declaration Application is possible.
 - David agreed and said that the Sherriff's Department routinely gives evicted tenants this information upon execution of a warrant.

- Joseph Villano, Esq. presented the following arguments in court on behalf of St George's Church:
 1. that NYS Religious Corporation Law gives churches latitude to make rules governing its tenants
 - *e.g.*, a rector who leaves a parish may not remain in the rectory.
 2. that the sextons' residence was a dormitory; not a freely rented apartment,
 3. housing ends upon termination of employment in accordance with the agreement, signed by St. George's and Jeremy and Sondra Kravetz.
- The judge mediated a departure date.
- The Kravetzes signed an agreement that the penalty for failure to meet the lock-out date is \$9,200 (10 months' rent at a rate of \$820/month rent plus \$100/month for utilities).

2021 Diocesan Convention (Virtual)

- On Saturday, October 23, 2021, the delegates Anne and David Kennison and Robert Paska will view the Diocesan Convention *via* Zoom from the Church Offices.
- David had to borrow the laptop designated for video streaming because the church does not own a second laptop.
- **October Wedding of Nathaniel Wisenburn and Angela Marion**
 - On October 30, 2021, Fr. Richard Lehmann will officiate at the wedding of Nathaniel and Angela.
 - Fr. Matt is precluded from officiating at this wedding by his medical leave of absence.
 - The details of the Rector's leave of absence were discussed in Executive Session.

● **Supply Clergy**

David stated that supply clergy are very difficult to secure. He has sought the advice of Mtr Elizabeth Papazoglakis, Diocesan Transition officer and member of the Standing Committee. Some Sundays circumstances may require that the parish employ the service of Matins. Other weeks, we might be able to secure a deacon to officiate at a Mass of the Presanctified. The Diocese of Albany's Canon

to the Ordinary, Robert Haskell can find no rubric for a Presanctified liturgy. David will draft a rubric and send it to Fr Haskell for approval and ongoing diocesan usage.

Jeff stated that his brother, Father John Wengrovius, has offered to return to St. George's as an officiant during Fr. Matt's medical leave of absence. Jeff said Fr. John "felt a call to help St. George's." David thanked Jeff. David and various members of the Vestry expressed feelings of extreme gratitude toward Fr. John for his past and ongoing kindness to the parish. David will explore mutually agreeable dates.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT: Jon Ewbank

Jon's written report records:

- Old Business
 - Reinstallation of Cranmer House stair railings.
 - Hallway retiling – project on hold pending funding.
 - Gutter strap on northeast corner of the church building has come unfastened. Chris Peters has indicated that he will reattach it when he completes roof repairs.
 - Repainting of the sanctuary ceiling.
 - Estimates on parking lot renovation.
 - Repairs to the rear door of Cranmer House.
 - Replacing office air conditioners.
 - Repairing rectory garage door opener.
 - Correcting light fixture/switch issues in Rectory downstairs bathroom and 2nd floor bedroom.

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- New Business:
 - Due to its advanced age, our floor polisher/buffer is not repairable. We are looking at rental/replacement options.
 - David said that rental could be \$50 per day.
 - With Jeff Wengrovius' help, we are looking into addressing a solution for routine maintenance of our five boiler systems with the assistance of Jack Guarneri at Indoor Weather Control. Depending on the price estimate, we may be looking at a rotating schedule of

- volunteers to perform the monthly requirements to keep our systems healthy.
- Probable leak in front of the bathtub in 2nd floor bathroom of Brian's apartment – causing ceiling damage on the first floor.
 - Probable steam radiator leak in the master bedroom of Brian's apartment – causing ceiling damage in 1st floor living room.
 - Jeff stated that Jack can address the radiator leak when he evaluates the boiler maintenance issues.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jeff Wengrovius

- Jeff's written reports stated his usual year-to-date statistics:
 - 81% of 2021 behind us.
 - 95% of anticipated pledge income received YTD (\$92,794/\$98,000).
 - 111% of budgeted expenses already spent (\$269,517/\$242,768).
 - 90% of expenses spent minus boiler money (\$219,517/\$242,768).

The report also records the TrustCo checking account balance of \$18,825 as of 10/21/21. Further, Jeff's report outlines positive and negative variances for both income items and expense items. Many of these items have been discussed at Vestry meetings throughout the year. The September Art Show income of \$1,000 profit is noteworthy. The expense of supply priests deserves special mention here due to Fr. Matt's leave of absence.

Jeff reiterated that no endowment principal has been taken from RBC since the last Vestry meeting and that \$12,000 of accumulated endowment interest from RBC taken in late September. He commented that we will need principal withdrawals from RBC soon.

Further, Jeff encouraged people to review the preliminary budget for 2022 which he submitted for the Vestry's consideration shortly before tonight's meeting. David asked why the budget for 2022 included money for a supply priest **and** the Rector's salary. Jeff replied that the upcoming year had many uncertainties due to Fr. Matt's leave of absence. A \$25,000 miscellaneous category in the 2022 budget is designed to leave space for the vagaries of the upcoming year due to the Rector's status.

- The 2022 budget highlights include:
 - >\$48,000 deficit budget.
 - Pledge income kept the same.
 - Endowment income will be updated with Jon P.
 - Diocesan pledge kept at \$8,000.
 - Salaries kept the same for the Rector and admin, \$1,000 raise for Dr. Taylor.
 - Rector auto lease down because lease ends mid-year.
 - Supply priest expense set at \$10,400.
 - Utilities kept the same, increase in gas price offset by the Kravetzes leaving.
 - Gardens ministry increased
 - \$25,000 misc. category created.
 - Boiler expense to be updated when quote received from Jack at Indoor Weather Control.

COMMUNITY LIAISON'S REPORT: Rich Unger-

Richard discussed three issues:

- The annual “Candlelight Tours” are going on every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday until the end of the month. St. George's is a stop, but it was decided this was not the year to open the church to visitors as we have done in past years.
- The annual “Stockade-athon” will be on Sunday, November 14th. This may disrupt access to the parking lot in the morning.

David mentioned that Bishop Smith was scheduled to be the officiant at Mass that day. Jon expressed concern that the Stockade-athon not disrupt church attendance. There was some discussion about the route of the race. Jeff suggested that parking in First Presbyterian parking lot might be possible if we sought permission.

- A neighbor has complained twice about trash piling up around the dumpster. There is a floor polisher behind the dumpster. Suzy Unger is willing to keep this area cleaned up but needs a key to the dumpster.

David and Rich discussed the possible need for a larger dumpster, but it was decided that the impending departure of the former sextons would alleviate the situation. David stated that the dumpster's location needs to be moved back to the shed.

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

No October report was submitted in Meg's absence.

- Debbie noted that the mums planted by the parking lot were a great improvement.
- David mentioned that the front of Crammer House was also an improvement worthy of special recognition.
- Jeff noted that the gardening ministry budget had been increased in 2022.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE: Sandra Hughes

Sandee stated that:

- A sign-up sheet for parishioners to cover Sunday coffee hour treats has been available after Mass on Sundays. Dates are still open.
- November 2 - All Souls Mass at 7 p.m. Reception afterwards is being planned. Cider, fruit, cheese, and crackers. Keeping it simple.
- November 14 - Assisting Bishop saying Mass with town hall meeting to follow. A more substantial menu is warranted.
 - Upon discussion, it was decided that cooking should be avoided, and Jeff indicated that a \$100 budget seemed reasonable but indicated that Sandee should not worry about going over that amount in order to make the event a success.
 - The fact that the stove is currently taken apart was raised.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Lynn Paska

Lynn announced that:

- the pictures are up for the Blessing of the Animals and
- the newsletter deadline for the Georgian Report is Friday, December 3, 2021.

ARCHIVES – Sean Albert

Sean reported that with the help of Debbie and Laura Lee, a certified archivist, all of the rolled items had been flattened and itemized.

Debbie asked when the group would be getting together again. The date was “To Be Announced.” {After the Vestry Meeting, the date of November 11, 2021 was selected as an Archive Work Day.}

PASTORAL CARE- Jim Wingate

Jim Wingate advised that he and Ann Duff have visited with parishioners Aileen Caruso-Smith, Homer Kerr, Dr. Charles Stamm, and Helen Parker, and made two phone calls to check in with Stella Schultz. They took Nancy Angus to lunch. She recently moved to Guilderland. The church office has her amended contact information.

At the request of Fr. Larry Civale, they visited his mother Carole in Scotia, and will continue with future visits.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Zoom Meetings or In Person? - It was the consensus of those present that we continue to meet *via* Zoom as we will be entering the winter season with the travel difficulties that may entail.
- Ministry Sign-ups- locate lists, send thank-you cards, distribute to ministry leaders-
 - The sign-up sheets are thought to be in Brian’s office.
 - Jon mentioned that Meredith has signed up to be a lector since 2018 and has never been contacted.

- Jeff stated that he had resigned as Stewardship Chairman and that Fr. Matt has not done anything about the lack of a Stewardship Chairman.
- Jon mentioned something about the need for a Stewardship Campaign.
- Status of Keyholders
 - David stated that it has been brought to his attention that Tommy has a key to the church and that the church was left unlocked with the side door ajar on a recent Saturday.
 - Debbie confirmed that Sean and Debbie observed that Liz (the cleaning woman) had left the door open, and that Tommy had offered to lock it.
 - It was decided that David needs to get the key from Tommy and that Liz needs to be told to lock the church upon entry for her protection and upon exiting the building for security reasons.
- Supervision of Sextons and Cleaner
 - David stated that in Fr. Matt's absence, there is no one available to supervise the sextons and cleaner when they are on church property.
 - Sean asked if it would be possible to schedule the sextons and cleaner for days and hours that coincide with the posted office hours of the parish offices. More specifically, would it be possible for the parish administrative assistant to supervise the sextons and cleaner at times when he is scheduled to be on campus. Unfortunately, Mr. McCloskey refuses to keep regular hours, an ongoing source of concern for Vestry. The lack of standard business practices is plainly apparent and this situation places St. George's Church in a vulnerable position. Sandee inquired about making timesheet submissions mandatory for all staff. Vestry should consider it, along with other managerial procedures.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- Sandee Hughes made a motion to convene an Executive Session of the Vestry. The motion was seconded by Lynn Paska.
- At the conclusion of the Executive Session, Jeff Wengrovius made a motion to end the Executive Session and conclude Vestry business for the evening. Sandee Hughes seconded the motion.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:

There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Vestry meeting will be Thursday, November 18th at 7 p.m.

Signed,
Sean Albert
Vestry Member