



December Vestry Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 6:00 p.m.
Diocesan House Council Room

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

Vestry Members Present

Tina Blondino, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
Carmen Brady
The Rev. Canon Arienne Davison, Bishop's Representative
Wayne Duncan
Greg Hamm, Junior Warden
Scott Hulet, Senior Warden
Becky Kacel, Diocesan Member (Zoom)
Kristen Kelly (Zoom)
Scott Kovacs, Junior Warden (Zoom)
Kathy Minsch
Chris Rigos, Junior Warden
Peter Snyder
Alexandra Thompson
The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean
Doug Thorpe

Vestry Members Absent

Justin Mills
Katie Prettyman, Diocesan Member

Officers Present

Lynne Cobb, Treasurer
Barbara Erickson, Clerk

Officers Absent

Re Knack, Chancellor

Staff Members Present

Erik Donner, Cathedral Administrator

Dean Thomason opened the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement and a prayer at 6:00 PM. Thank you to Barbara, Doug, and Kristen for providing the dinner.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mutual Ministry Review Scott

Scott Hulet led the review of the three Mutual Ministry Goals – Creation Care & Carbon Reduction, Intergenerational & Innovative Community, and Restorative Justice & Systematic Change. The vestry was asked to reflect on the following questions for each ministry goal and to identify when successes, challenges, and/or opportunities overlapped all three goals.

1. What successes have we seen? What shall we celebrate?
2. What challenges did we encounter? Blocked? Barriers?
3. What opportunities exist? Possibilities? Vision?

With scribes Canon Davison and Dean Thomason, responses from the Vestry were documented. Scott requested any additional thoughts be emailed to him at rshjourney2@gmail.com. A draft of the review will be sent to the Vestry.

FINANCE REPORT

2024 Stewardship Update

Greg Hamm reported 412 households pledged \$1.7 million to date. 71 households have not renewed their pledges which is about \$151,000 in contributions. Dean Thomason and Erik Donner are working on contacting these remaining households.

2024 Budget

Dean Thomason prefaced his remarks with the acknowledgment that the Finance Committee recommends the Vestry adopt the 2024 Budget as presented. This is a \$60,000 deficit, but a realistic budget where expenses can be managed, so we live within our means. Pledges are essentially flat from this current year to next year, which is a sign of the times for a lot of parishioners who face anxiety and challenges within their own households. Saint Mark's is in a much better position than many churches. Staffing will not change, and there may be an opportunity for additional staffing in mid-year 2024 if it can be financially justified. The biggest changes to the Operating Income, \$100,000 less for 2024, are in the pledges. The Dean then reviewed the details of the Expenses, \$2.5 million, to reflect the Operating Revenue deficit of \$57,622, which is a manageable number.

Discussion turned toward when will the parish be made aware of the deficit budget and thus, providing the parish an opportunity to rethink their current pledge. The wardens and the dean will work on narratives that begin in January through emails, newsletters, perhaps a forum along with sharing at the Annual Meeting.

Motion was made, and based on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the 2024 Budget was adopted as proposed.

OLD BUSINESS

Affordable Housing Update

Dean Thomason reported there is continued good work but anticipates a recommendation to the Vestry would be forthcoming at the Vestry Retreat or in March. Grant applications are being prepared for a \$150,000 grant request through Trinity Church Wall Street to carry the project through the pre-development work of selecting the developer if the Vestry approves moving forward.

Strategic Planning Update

The all-parish survey completed with 15% of the average Sunday attendance responding which is in line with previous surveys conducted. The interviews with the ministry groups are halfway complete. Parish updates with a preview of recommendations will occur on January 28 and 31.

NEW BUSINESS

Year-end Appeal for Benefit of AFEDJ

Dean Thomason announced that because of a conversation at a Holyland Pilgrimage meeting and in the wake of the war in Gaza, an optional opt-in invitation year-end appeal message will be sent the week of December 18. The American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem supports schools, hospitals, and social agencies for Palestinians.

Motion was made, seconded, and approved to support this optional year-end appeal for the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

Leffler Garden Fence Replacement

Dean Thomason reported that the reworking of the Carriage House, Leffler House and the garden with the goal of repurposing the garden as community garden. The current privacy fence along 10th Avenue E needs repair. The Wardens are recommending a hog wire fence along the front and the backside looking back to the greenbelt. The quote is \$16,600. A grant for \$3,000 and another anticipated grant for \$3,700, leaves just under \$11,000 left to cover.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to replace the privacy fence around the Carriage House, Leffler House and the garden with a hog wire fence with a cost of up to \$11,000.

Staff Bonuses

Scott Hulet proposed a modest bonus to staff of \$200 for full-time employees and \$100 to part-time employees. Erik Donner and Dean Thomason left the room when the question arose about whether the amount could be more. The Vestry discussed the amount of the bonus as well as the use of the term “bonus.” After discussion, the Vestry requested that it would be more appropriate to rename the “Staff Bonuses” to a “Thank You Gift” or “Year End Appreciation Gift.”

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to increase the “Thank You Gift” to \$250 for full-time employees and \$125 for part-time employees.

As the Dean is not included in the “Year End Appreciation Gift” a separate vote was taken.

Motion was made, seconded, and carried for the Dean to receive the full-time Thank You Gift of \$250.

LEADERSHIP REPORT

Senior Warden

- Vestry members Carmen Brady, Chris Rigos, Scott Kovacs, Kathy Minsch, and Katie Prettyman will be leaving at the end of this vestry term February 2024.
- Request made of continuing vestry members to discern a call to be a Junior Warden.

Dean

- Photos of the Cathedral vandalism that occurred in November.
- Ray Miller’s truck was stolen in the middle of the night. Found relatively undamaged. Reminder that if vehicles are left overnight in the parking lot, park under a light.
- Review of highlights dates in December and February dates
 - 12/20 Pageant of the Nativity
 - 12/24 Services at 8:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 7:30 p.m., and 11:00 p.m.
 - 12/25 10am Eucharist
 - 12/31 Labyrinth Walk and Midnight Eucharist
 - 2/4/24 Annual Parish Meeting and Vestry Elections
 - 2/10/24 Vestry Retreat
- Departing later Christmas Day to see Ila and family.
- Adam Conley, former Service Corps director, and Kelly Moody, who are both attending seminary at the University of the South (Sewanee), are invited to preach at Saint Mark’s this coming summer when they are in town.
- A gift of a water/coffee container with the Saint Mark’s logo to the Vestry
- Files of Note

- Graffiti Nov 2023
- Ember Day Letter Kelly Moody – obligated to send message to the bishop but shares with Steve and internship.

Approval of November 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to adopt, seconded, and was carried to adopt the November 28, 2023 minutes.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was given by Lynne Cobb. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Erickson
Clerk

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note:

12/20	Pageant of the Nativity
12/24	Services at 8am, 9am, 11am, 4pm, 7:30pm, 11pm
12/25	10am Eucharist
12/31	Labyrinth Walk and Midnight Eucharist
2/4/24	Annual Parish Meeting and Vestry Elections
2/10/24	Vestry Retreat