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St Margaret’s Episcopal Church Vestry

Subject: Minutes for 19 July 2022

Attending: Patti Sachs (Associate Rector) Kristen Berthelotte (Senior Warden), Paul Shurke (Junior Warden), Elizabeth Radley (Director of Operations), Katherine Wiernicki (Treasurer), David Allen, Austin Canuel, Matt Chasse, Alden Gross, Elizabeth Kopack, Kathy Lang, Chris Prender, Susan Roberts, Ernie Tucker, and Jim Barnett (Clerk).

Not Attending: Peter Mayer+ (Rector), Marti Engstrom, Janice John, Dan Tootle.

This meeting was conducted in Zoom.

A Quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting.

1. **Opening prayer was given at 7:04 pm by Patti Sachs.**

**2. The meeting was called to order by the Senior Warden (Rector is on sabbatical).**  **The June 2022 Vestry minutes were not approved lacking a quorum.**

**3. Establishing a Security Committee:**

It was suggested that in the absence of Alden Gross, the Associate Rector read the proposed draft motion for the establishment of this Committee by the Vestry.

The Clerk opined that according to the SMC Bylaws, only Vestry members could present motions to the Vestry for vote. (The Clerk was wrong in this regard; the Bylaws do not preclude anyone from presenting a motion to the Vestry for a vote.) This put the motion in abeyance pending arrival of one additional Vestry member to establish a quorum and read the motion into the proceedings.

In the meantime, relevant discussion continued. Local police had visited the campus during the last review of campus security about 3 years ago. The Associate Rector again asked them to return to campus to observe changes that have been made and make further recommendations. They indicated that SMC cannot do much more than what is in place now but there are some other options that can be considered.

It was mentioned that the Maryland governor signed an Executive Order affecting the carrying of a firearm in the state. This Executive Order was signed to bring the state statutes in line with recent Supreme Court rulings on this subject. It was remarked that another church asked parishioners to inform the minister regarding their intentions to carry weapons into church. Some churches have gone with “gun free zones” and that the Vestry could consider a policy to not allow open carry on the SMC campus. In that this was not consistent with state or national law, it probably was not enforceable. The Assistant Rector indicated she would talk to the Rector upon his return.

At this point, Alden Gross joined the Zoom session, and a quorum was noted. The motion was then read:

**MOTION: I HEREBY MOVE, in accordance with Article Four, Section 8(j) of the SMC Bylaws, that the Vestry establish a committee to examine, evaluate, and recommend possible actions to be taken to enhance the security of the SMC campus and safety of parishioners. The committee shall make use of information previously obtained from security professionals and may further consult with additional security professionals, as deemed necessary.**

Discussion of the question then ensued. The Committee could talk to professionals and attempt to reduce any inconsistencies. The motion empowers discussion and discernment and to determine potential ways to proceed. It was widely observed by the members of the Vestry that the Committee would be making recommendations to the Vestry for issues involving costs. The Committee does not have a budget line, but they can make recommendations based on cost estimates as appropriate. To wit the additional lines were added to the motion:

**I further move that our Senior Warden will as soon as practicable identify those persons who will serve on this committee, for the approval of the Vestry, and that, our associate rector be a member of that committee, given her prior work in this area. Recommended actions of the Committee will require approval of the Vestry prior to implementation.**

Committee members thus far include Jim Reising, Molly Owens, Vera Torrence, Patti Sachs, and Dan Tootle as the Committee Chairman.

**The Motion was seconded and approved by hand vote on Zoom unanimously.**

It was reiterated that it was important that all actions considered by the Committee as potentially viable would be forwarded to the Vestry for consideration and approval. The Director of Operations reminded the Vestry that it can take 30-60 days to order and receive items as required.

The question came up regarding others attending Committee meetings. Can a parishioner, for instance, come to a meeting if they have relevant issues to address to the Committee? The determination was made that meetings would be closed but others could introduce issues as desired.

Will the Committee be responsible for training of volunteers and staff as has happened in the past? The Assistant Rector has a record of available training websites and will make that available.

It was noted that several SMC Sunday School teachers are also teaching in local schools and have received significant relevant training.

Dan Tootle can proceed with scheduling and conducting meetings with all due alacrity and diligence.

**3. Submitted reports:**

**A. The Treasurer’s report (posted).**

We continue to report revenues in excess of expenses at $18,507. This amount is ahead of the year-to-date budget for the same period by $59,694. Pledges for last month were about $20,000 but for this month about $6,000. Over all, we are in a good place right now. Market fluctuations have resulted in an cumulative unrealized loss to the Endowment of $976,743 since January.

**B. Parish Life Report (posted).**

There has been a suggestion that Vestry host a monthly Coffee Hour and that food be reintroduced at this event. For the past couple of years, the Pandemic has obviated the allowance for shared food and as such, the Coffee Hour Committee suspended all attendant food items. Some of the young parents with resultant younger kids have asked if sweets can be returned at this point, the kids would appreciate that. The Coffee Hour Committee will discuss the return of food and see if it is feasible beginning in September. For consideration, different SMC Groups could host Coffee Hour and take some of the burden off the same Committee members over the course of time.

Foyers chair Webb Chamberlain will be stepping down when Foyers again ramps up. Foyers remain an important source of community at SMC and needs to be reinstated given Pandemic allowances. Lesal Kilcrease will assume chairman/coordinator functions for the Foyers Group.

Jim Knorr is stepping away from head of the Brotherhood and the group is no longer active.

**C. Trust, Reconciliation and Reparations Task Force (posted).**

Beth Kopack submitted a proposed budget line request as a follow up to the discussion last month. During the June Vestry meeting, the Vestry requested a more detailed expenditure roadmap to support the possible inclusion of a budget line in the 2023 budget build. This detailed submission was provided as that information and is presented for consideration. More detailed discussion will be conducted in the September/October timeframe consistent with the budget build. The Task Force hopes it can be officially considered at the September Vestry meeting.

**E. Junior Warden’s Report (posted).**

The roof leak in the Administration Building is being addressed.

We will have another Workday Saturday this Saturday, July 23rd.

**F. Senior Warden’s Report (posted).**

The recently concluded Vacation Bible School was wonderful. Emily did a great job. We had some regulars and some new children in the classes. It was a great way to wrap up the year.

Stewardship will be shortened but more intense this year. We anticipate Vestry support in reaching out to people. It is difficult but it is part of the Vestry job. The Stewardship Campaign will run 26 September-30 October. We can’t discuss the 2023 budget until we have some income information. The budget doesn’t close until the end of the calendar year. There will be more Vestry discussion in this regard during the September and October meetings. We anticipate having Stewardship Committee members speaking at each service during the Campaign.

The Episcopal Church Convention took place earlier this month. Austin Canuel, Izzy Winn and Mike Winn attended and helped make it a successful event. There is a link that is attached in the Senior Wardens Report for all those who want to view the proceedings.

There has been a suggestion that maybe a group email address can be created for the Vestry. The Director of Operations will look into this and report back to vestry. No one was opposed to that idea.

**4. For the Good of the Order**

It has been observed that with the addition of a Vestry member greeter on Sunday morning, it can get a little congested in the entry area with the regular greeters. Perhaps the Vestry greeter should be positioned outside with the regular team inside.

The next meeting will be September 20th with details before.

5. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM