

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting of the Church of the Holy Trinity

January 13, 2015

Present: Fr. Mark Collins, Warden Jean Geater, Warden John Hatheway, Bill Ambler, Lydia Colón, Inez Lambert, Theresa Paolucci, Susan Walker and Wendy Wright. *A quorum was present.*

Absent: Jeanne Blazina, Fabio Mejia, Judith Jones, and Yvonne O'Neal

Fr. Mark opened the meeting with a prayer

Review of Agenda: the Agenda was approved as amended; Nominating Committee Report was added.

Minutes: The minutes of the December 2014 meeting were approved.

Finance and Budget Committee: Presentation of the 2015 Budget by Fr. Mark.

A note about the 2014 Projected Actuals: Bruce Sternemann the consultant we hired to get our bookkeeping and finance procedures in order compiled the projected actuals for 2014. The projected actuals submitted for discussion at our meeting are not final as the books had not been closed for 2014. Bruce will also submit recommendations for practices to follow in 2015.

Overview: The 2015 budget compares quite favorably to the 2014 budget and projected actuals in large part due to increases budgeted for building use, and decreases in expenses for utilities from replacing the oil boilers with gas boilers. With these changes in expenses, we are ahead of last year's budgeted figures by nearly \$15,000, even when search expenses and 6 months' salary for a new rector are included.

Details: Income - Item 4117 Income from the General Fund: We are due funds from the General Fund to cover operations costs, and yet those funds are not included on the budget under income. That was the policy instituted by John Ewing during years of chronic overspending due to clergy salaries. We are not in that situation now, nor do we expect to be in the future. The income from the General Fund is for the operations of the church – that is its purpose. With lowered expenses during the Interim period, we are now in good stead with our General Fund and have withdrawn a prudent amount of funds over the past several years, including the last few years of the most recent rectorship.

It should be and is the Vestry's decision to use or not use these funds for repairs, programs, or other expenses – or to leave them untouched in a good year to help the General Fund grow. The Vestry should be aware of this income and determine whether and how to use these funds.

Total Pledge/Plate Income: We expect pledges to come in slightly below last year's budget figure. However, you'll note in the actuals for 2014, we were some \$28,000 ahead of the budget in terms of actual contributions received. We will need to do some cleaning up of our bookkeeping to figure out exactly where this extra income is coming from and how to accurately budget for it in 2016. Comparing the 2015 to 2014 budget figures shows an increase of \$55,000, which is determined by the \$65,000 expected from the General Fund (see above) less the projected decrease (\$10,000) in pledge income.

Item 4130 Building Use: The increase in income is from building rentals by choral groups, film shoots and other entities. Since 2012, we've been increasing in this area of income, and each year, we've increased the budgeted income in accordance with these increases. This year's figure for Other Building Use reflects that continuing confidence in this income source. (NB: The figure presented for Building Use actuals includes apartment rentals.)

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Item 5112 Rector's Salary: All the figures for rector's salary, benefits, SECA reimbursement, etc. are based on six months of the interim's salary and six months of a rector's salary and benefits based on a cash stipend of \$70,000, per our discussions.

Item 5130, 5132 Organist's Salary and Benefits: As you can see, our interim organist is more cost effective than the prior one. However, the current individual is owed health benefits which were not used by the prior organist. This budget includes health benefits for the organist at the "Employee Only/HMO Plan" rate.

Item 5160 and following: Staff Salaries and Benefits: All staff salaries are calculated based on a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment going into effect in January pending approval by the Vestry. Also, health costs are going up in 2015 at an 8-9% rate depending on the plan covering individual employees. The budget figures reflect these increases. FYI: "Health and Life" includes health coverage, dental coverage, life insurance and mental health services.

Item 5220 Music Program: The Organist's proposed budget for 2015 represents a 14% decrease over the 2014 budget. It represents a continuation of the current program, more or less, with a more prudent scheduling of singers and decrease in other expenses. When salaries and health benefits are added in, the cost of our organist and the music program for 2015 represents a 13% savings over the cost of these items in 2014. Overall, the music program represents 5.2% of our entire expense budget. It is the F&B Committee's recommendation that CHT continue to fund its current music program in 2015.

Item 5300 Physical Plant: Here we see the savings from replacing the SCH and church boilers.

Item 5510 Rector's Travel: \$10,000 has been included here in travel expenses for the Search Committee in 2015. Note that it is current practice to make use of Skype and other online video conferencing tools, thereby minimizing these expenses in contemporary searches. Also, the Search Committee is planning to solicit donations of frequent flyer miles for use for their travel as well (which may also be used to move a new rector's family here if needed.)

Item 5521 Clergy Expenses: \$5,000 for moving expenses for the new rector is included in this figure. (Fr. Mark was given \$3,000 for an in-town move. It seems prudent to bump that up in case the new rector is from further afield.)

Totals: As you can see, expenses for 2015 are down by \$15,000 due to three main cost reductions: organists' lower salary and reduction in music program costs, and decreased energy costs. Increased expenses come from the costs of the search for and compensation of a new rector. But all told, we seem to be not far from where we were in 2014 at this point. We'll continue our review of 2014 and our overall F&B procedures to help give us accurate financial reports and budgeting information for 2015 and the 2016 budgeting process.

Motion was made to raise staff salaries by a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment and approved unanimously.

Motion was made to accept the 2015 budget as submitted by the Finance & Budget Committee and approved unanimously.

Building & Grounds John Hatheway reported for the committee - The Department of Buildings is scheduled to come for an inspection of the new boiler in St. Christopher's House next week.

New drawings are finally done to issue to contractors for estimates for the new boiler in the church.

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Asbestos abatement needs to be done and estimates should also include chopping and carting of the old boiler. Within the next two weeks we should have an idea of the cost of this work.

General maintenance – the walls in the altar area are peeling and the paint is falling down. St. Christopher's House repairs need to be made – legalize the 3rd floor gym and clean up the basement.

The National Mechanical bill becomes due once the boiler starts up in St. Christopher's House (after the inspection.) \$100,000 has been set aside from the Property and Preservation Trust Fund for this payment,

The Buildings and Grounds Committee needs to have a set meeting date going forward, in order to get all the work that needs to be done completed. Members of the committee need to meet with the Finance and Budget Committee in order to determine what funds have been used, paid and budgeted.

Nominating Committee There was a discussion about what guidelines are in the by-laws for the Nominating Committee and whether it would be prudent to develop a process for nominations in the future. Since we did not have the by-laws present, the discussion was tabled for a future meeting.

Approximately 30+ nominations were submitted from which the Nominating Committee chose 9 parishioners for the slate for regular vestry members; six to be elected. One parishioner was chosen to run for Junior Warden.

The nominees are:

Robert Cruz, James Daubs, Nancy Fessenden, Leona Fredericks, Chris Knight, Sarah Montgomery, Jackie Price, Leo Tiburcio, and Susan Valdés-Dapena.

For warden: Inez Lambert

Other Important Information:

Vestry members are elected at the Annual Meeting of the parish, held on the last Sunday of January each year. This year, the Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 25th. It commences with the 10:30 AM service and continues following worship. (The 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM services are not held on Annual Meeting day.) The results of the Vestry election are announced by the end of the Annual Meeting.

Voting members of the parish are those who have been contributing members of the parish for one year prior to the date of the Annual Meeting. (Generally speaking, that means “those who pledged the previous year.” At a minimum, it means those who have made at least one attributable financial gift to the parish on or before January 25, 2014. By attributable, we mean, check, credit card, or cash via an envelope with a name on it.)

New and continuing Vestry members will be (re) commissioned on Sunday, February 1st at all of the Sunday services.

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The Vestry retreat will be on Saturday, February 7th at 9:00 AM until mid-afternoon, depending upon the agenda. Location TBD. The Vestry retreat will also serve as the Vestry meeting for February. Vestry meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month. The Vestry meeting dates for the remainder of the year are:

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| March 10 | (August 11, if necessary) |
| April 14 | September 8 |
| May 12 | October 13 |
| June 9 | November 10 |
| July 14 | December 8 |

Please note: The Vestry will call the next rector sometime this Summer. There will be more about that in coming months. But it's likely that the interviewing and possibly the voting will take place in the summer months. It will be important for all Vestry members to be available for those events and deliberations. So please, plan now to make your summer plans as flexible as possible in order to fulfill your duty as Vestry members in calling the seventh rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity.

Search Committee Update: Inez Lambert reported for the Committee – The parish profile and the 2013 Annual Report have been posted on the Diocesan website and Holy Trinity's website along with all pertinent documents. February 28th is the deadline for submission of all applications for the position of Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity. So far we have received 10 applications which will be copied and sent to the Search Committee members for review. One candidate retracted his/her application.

The committee hopes to meet once in February and twice in March to discuss the applicants. Deb Tammearu expects to receive 12 candidate applications by the end of March. Alden Prouty, Chairperson of the committee keeps in close contact with Deb.

Warden's Report Jean Geater addressed the members of the vestry. She has enjoyed almost every minute of her tenure as Warden of CHT. She will continue as a member of the Investment and Finance committee. She thanked the outgoing vestry members and noted that their leadership has been exemplary. It should be noted that this year there were more applicants for vestry members than ever before.

John Hatheway thanked Jean for her unwavering and exemplary leadership especially during very difficult times when we did not have a rector and during the years of a national recession. Her dedication and commitment to the church is an inspiration to all.

Fr. Mark also thanked Jean for her tireless and dedicated work as Warden. He also thanked the outgoing members of the Vestry for their commitment to Holy Trinity.

The next Vestry meeting will be on Saturday, February 7, 2015 which will include our annual retreat. Location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM after the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lydia M. Colón,
Vestry member