

Vestry Minutes

Final

Jan. 16, 2005
Adams Room

Present: Clergy and staff: Paul Abernathy, Shearon Williams, Susan Block
Wardens: Penny Hansen, Jack Burton
Vestry Members: Stewart Andrews, David Dill, Rod Lawrence, Julie Murphy, Burton Reist, Susan Thigpen, Nancy Van Scoyoc.
Officers: Pete Carlson, Hank Donnelly, Charles Rupp

The meeting began at 1:15 p.m. with an opening prayer offered by Julie Murphy.

Action Items and Discussion

1. Charter of Dance Council

Arts Council Chair Vicki Street, along with St. Mark's Dance Studio Artistic Director Rosie Brooks, presented a proposal for a charter for a new Dance Studio Council. The panel, with from seven to nine members, would advise on policy, manage finances and choose scholarship students. They explained that they had already lined up five St. Mark's members and four students to be on the board, but added that the charter would require a minimum of four St. Mark's members.

After reviewing the history of Dance Studio governance, members discussed a number of possible changes in the proposed charter. Paul suggested that the rector should be an ex officio member of the board, and urged a few changes in the way the committee would function.

Penny moved to approve the proposed charter in principle, with a vote on a final version incorporating suggested changes to be held at the next meeting. Her motion, which also confirmed the proposed membership slate on the new board, was approved unanimously.

After the vote, members held an informal discussion with Rosie about the current state of the Dance Studio. Noting that her involvement with the studio had begun in 1964, she explained some of its history and outlined her vision of the future, which currently focuses on growing the adult and teen programs. She reported that the Saturday morning children's classes are quite full, while the adult program is slowly rebuilding. Total enrollment is 160-170 participants,

of which about two-thirds are children. At least 10 children receive financial assistance for studio tuition.

2. Fund-Raising Concert

Vicki Street asked for Vestry approval of holding a fund-raising concert at St. Mark's on April 22. Held on behalf of the University of Maryland Center for International Development and Conflict Management, the concert will feature folk singers who have taken great spiritual poems from all over the world and set them to music.

After discussing the issue of building expenses, members agreed to let Vicki put the proposal in writing, with specific information about finances, and submit it electronically for e-mail approval.

3. Role of Arts Council

Stewart presented a proposal providing that all arts-related events be considered for approval by the Vestry only if it had already been considered and approved by the Arts Council.

Members raised concerns about the wording of the proposal. Rod questioned whether the language appeared to require that all arts-related issues be brought directly to the Vestry. Paul suggested that the proposal make clear that all arts-related issues should be reviewed by the Arts Council, and then referred to the Vestry only in certain cases, such as fundraising or controversy.

In response to Julie's comment that some groups might be bothered by having to go through the Arts Council to get approval for a project, Paul observed that the parish in general is moving to a more centralized "discernment" process than in the past. He urged parish leaders to be sensitive to the perspective of those concerned with protecting the more free-ranging approach.

The Vestry asked Stewart to rewrite the proposal and submit for final approval on-line, emphasizing the key point that there be no bypassing the Arts Council to go directly to the Vestry for an arts-related issue.

4. Diocesan Delegates

Doris Burton, one of the three parish delegates to the upcoming Diocese of Washington convention, explained the convention process and noted that several St. Mark's members were candidates for diocesan office. She emphasized St. Mark's stance as an out-in-front and viable member of the diocese.

Delegates explained a group of resolutions on diocesan issues, which they said they intended to vote for. The resolutions provided for:

- Elimination of parish boundaries and parochial membership.
- Welcome to Anglicans from all parts of the world.
- Call for a diocesan conversation about marriage.
- Urge careful reading of Windsor report on same-sex marriage.

5. 2005 Nominating Committee

The Vestry approved the establishment of the 2005 Nominating Committee, composed of outgoing Vestry members David Dill, Nancy Van Scoyoc and Dick Rumpf, the outgoing wardens and two other members of the parish.

6. Budget

Alternatives to the Finance Committee's proposed budget were discussed at length. Considerable discussion focused around the Diocesan pledge and whether or not to cut that, and the allocation of \$24,000 as Building Replacement Reserve and the proposed "new income" figure of \$20,000 as carryover from 2003. Also considered was the possibility of spreading cuts over a number of budget categories.

A vote was taken on a motion that the Vestry accept the Finance Committee's proposed budget, as amended to restore the \$2,000 cut to Outreach. It passed by a 6 to 3 vote, with a show of hands.

Due to the late hour, the Vestry agreed that the remainder of the agenda could be dealt with via e-mail.

The Vestry adjourned after a closing prayer by Stewart Andrews.

Respectfully submitted,
Hank Donnelly
Nancy Van Scoyoc

Approved by the Vestry, Feb. 20, 2005