

St. Mark's EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Capitol Hill

3rd & A Sts SE,
Washington, DC



Minutes of Vestry Meeting
December 20, 2015
12:45p.m.

Present:

Clergy: The Rev. Michele Morgan, Interim Rector

Wardens: Peter Sherer, Senior Warden
Doris Muller-Burton, Junior Warden

Vestry Members: Stephen Dalzell, Gwen Dillard, Fritz Henn, Nora Howell, Martha Huizenga,
Doug Jackson, Mary Thuell, Christina White, Karen Wiedemann

Officers: Andrew Stafford, Treasurer; Penny Hansen, Assistant Treasurer, Michael
Knipe, Counsel

Staff: Caroline McReynolds-Adams, Director of Youth & Family Ministries

Absent: Vestry Member Christina White; Mary Anderson Cooper, Register; The
Rev. Justi Schunior, Associate Rector

Visitors: Raiford Gaffney, Temporary Register

- I. The meeting was called to order by the Senior Warden.
- II. The opening prayer was offered by Penny Hansen.
- III. The Senior Warden reported that Christina White is on a two month detail in Florida with the VA. Karen Wiedemann reported that she is going to Germany for Christmas and will be back on 12/28. The Junior Warden reported that Fabric Committee members Charlie Rupp and Fritz Henn will be away for Christmas so asked for prayers for the St. Mark's plumbing.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved electronically.

- IV. The Treasurer's report was distributed electronically in advance of the meeting. Treasurer Stafford reported that the auditor has completed the 2013 and 2014 audits and issued an auditor's management letter. The Auditor has asked for a St. Mark's response to this letter. One item was the excessive number of designated funds. Andrew reported

the Finance Committee will work to reduce the number of designated funds, and perhaps use budget lines in lieu of designated funds. The Senior Warden said the Vestry will look forward to a Finance plan on how to deal with this issue in 2016.

The other auditor issue was about inconsistencies on possible tax and insurance liabilities for St. Mark's organizations such as the Dance Studio, Yoga Center, and Players. This issue had already been identified by the Goldin Group prior to the audits. The senior Warden reported that he and Interim Rector Morgan met with the Goldin Group and Finance Manager Patricia Schans. The group recommended that St. Mark's has 2016 to come into compliance. One consideration is to spin off some of our organizations like the Players to create their own 501 (c)(3). We would still rent space to them, but shift liability to them on liability for employees, etc. Vestry member Henn said that St. Mark's wants to keep connections with these organizations but we're carrying liability without good stewardship. They don't have their own liability insurance, but operate under our umbrella contract.

- V. Motion to accept the 2013 and 2014 audits as recommended by the Finance Committee. Mary Thuell moved, seconded by Karen Wiedemann, the Vestry concurring unanimously, that proposal be **APPROVED.**

The Vestry thanked the Finance Committee, Senior Warden Sherer and Interim Rector Morgan for their hard work.

- VI. Canvass Update. Vestry member and Canvass Co-Chair Nora Howell reported that we currently have 244 pledges for \$736,000, is significantly lower than the proposed 2016 budget. Thus the Finance Committee and Vestry must make hard decisions in 2016.

- VII. Suella Henn Bequest. The Senior Warden said that the Junior Warden has received an updated estimate of \$28,000 to construct the rain garden on the 3rd Street side of the Nave, against the \$60,000 bequest from Suella.

- VIII. Motion to accept Suella Henn's Bequest. Gwen Dillard moved, Mary Thuell seconded, the Vestry concurring, with Fritz Henn abstaining. **APPROVED.**

- IX. Update on Otis Gaddis. The Senior Warden reported that the Diocese has notified St. Mark's that former parishioner Ottis Gaddis has decided he doesn't want to be an Episcopal Priest anymore. St. Mark's has no legal requirements.

- X. Junior Warden's report. Doris Burton suggested the Vestry refer to the most recent Gospel report on the Junior Warden status. We are moving ahead on the extremely generous gift from the estate of Bert Cooper to restore all of the Nave windows in the spring.

The Junior Warden is working with the National Capital Bank accessor on the physical building for our current building loan.

She also reported the final dinner for outgoing Vestry members will on March 5th, the Saturday night before the March 11 Annual Meeting.

- XI. The Senior Warden reported that he and others are negotiating with the bank to extend our current \$1 million building loan.
- XII. Youth & Family Ministries Report. Director Caroline McReynolds-Adams said there was no new report. The e news has current information. The Teens will be going to New York City this summer in lieu of a foreign retreat.
- XIII. Membership Report. Mary Thuell said she will have a report at the January meeting.
- XIV. Communications Report. Martha Huizenga reported the website consultant has been to visit the church and they are working on the first phase of a new website. They have worked with other churches and have a good awareness of our needs.
- XV. New business. The Senior Warden reported two new issues which he is following up on:
 - 1. the taking of pictures in the Nave and other space without permission. Some are being uploaded to social media without prior approval. The taking of pictures can also be distracting during a spiritual moment. .
 - 2. Sermon Seminar. There are complaints that the same people speak each week, perhaps discouraging others from sharing.
 - 3. Policy on Vigils. Vestry member Gwen Dillard remarked on the recent successful anti-gun violence vigil and suggested we need to follow-up to establish a policy on this and similar vigils.
- XVI. What's Working?/What's Not?
 - 1. The Vestry thanked Interim Rector Morgan for her excellent sermons.
 - 2. Vestry member Stephen Dalzell asked for clarification of the procedures for electronic review and approval of draft minutes. Consensus for plan going forward: Minutes are distributed shortly after the meeting for comments. Corrections are requested and incorporated, and then the revised minutes are posted on the Google Drive with a request for approval. A majority vote is required for approval.
- XVIII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
B Raiford Gaffney