

MINUTES
Trinity Church on the Green Vestry Meeting
Monday, August 17, 2015

Present: The Rev. Dr. Luk DeVolder; The Rev. Rowena Kemp, Lisa Omark, Junior Warden; David Soper, Treasurer; David Assis, Ellen Freiler, Marge Eichler; Karen Issacs, David Jenkins, Peter Jongbloed; Charles Kaywood; Richard Mammana; Mary Ellen Savage; Glen Seeger

Guest: Mr. Russell Schimmer (From Christian Science Membership)

Quick View:

Decisions made:

- **Minutes of our June 15, 2015 Vestry meeting were unanimously approved.**

The Rector opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

The Rev. Dr. Luk DeVolder offered an Opening Prayer.

Approval of the minutes of the June 15, 2015 Vestry Meeting:

The minutes of our June meeting were unanimously approved. Attending Vestry members conducted a brief discussion as to the best month, July or August, to hold our summer meeting. A future discussion will be held when most Vestry members are present.

Ministry Teams:

- **Music for Music:** Tom Chapin will perform a concert Sunday, September 27, 2015. Vestry members received posters and cards promoting the concert and were asked to post/distribute them in local stores, restaurants, and public spaces. Luk congratulated the committee on the excellent organization of this and the Livingston Taylor concert.
- **Bicentennial Committee:** Luk designed a logo for our upcoming bicentennial celebrations and shared this logo with the Vestry. His logo combines the “traditional” image of our 200 year old parish with a “modern” hashtag message of #NHV Green.
- **Lighting:** We continue to seek funding to improve the lighting in the church.
- **Church Office Security Measures:** Russell F. Schimmer, from the Christian Science Membership, presented a report on two proposed security improvements at our Church Office. The first is a metal gate that would limit access to the open air foyer on Chapel Street during non-working hours. There are several possible designs for the gate, but all designs permit our ability to

have evening meetings in the office. They will be finished in a color that closely matches the current green trim. Mr. Schimmer will meet with the contractor hired for the job, American Ironworks, from East Haven and develop a construction time line. He hopes that the Vestry will collaborate on the project and contribute to its final design. Secondly, he would like to place window grilles over the six second-floor windows. Currently there are no grilles and people have broken into the church office twice through these windows. The current plan is to cover the windows with a three-foot wide and six-foot high design as this size will best cover the windows. The CS Membership will defer the choice of a final design to our Vestry as we will be most affected by the grilles. He is asking for some financial support for these projects and it is a Vestry decision as to how much we will contribute.

Mr. Schimmer also discussed two projects at our church office of interest to Trinity Church parishioners. The first is a chair-lift to the second floor office; he reported that he presented the idea of a chair lift to his Membership and it was well received. It is our responsibility to decide the details of this lift and report them to Mr. Schimmer. The second is signage; the Membership is happy to discuss concepts for signage either on the front façade or within the open air foyer. A follow-up discussion on these items will be held at our September Vestry meeting.

Administrative Operations:

- **Governance:** Submission of Bylaws amendments proposed by the Bylaws Committee
David Assis introduced a series of proposed changes to the Bylaws of Trinity Church on the Green. Every three years the committee is charged with reviewing and proposing changes to our Bylaws. The last revision was approved by our parishioners during our Annual General Meeting in January 2012. For this revision cycle, the Committee focused upon these five areas:
 - Clarification of the language that specifies who is a member of the Parish
 - Proposal of changes to the process of nominating new Vestry members
 - Proposal of changes to the number of new Vestry members
 - Incorporation of an updated list of Ministry Teams and Committees in our Bylaws document
 - Clarification of the process for re-election of a Treasurer and the process for filling a Warden vacancy

A discussion regarding these proposed revisions ensued. The proposal for changing the process of nominating new Vestry members was discussed extensively. Some Vestry members highlighted the advantages of electing a slate of new Vestry members determined by a Nominating Committee while others stressed the import of electing members by individual votes by the whole parish. We agreed that a reliable list of Parish members is needed, there were a variety of ideas as to what details constituted that membership. Among the ideas discussed were pledging, baptism, and church involvement. Luk recommended that Vestry members consider these proposals prayerfully and to discuss them with each other. All Vestry members are asked to come prepared to continue our discussion on by-law changes at the September Vestry meeting. The goal will be to have a parish-wide vote on these proposed changes at the January 2016 Annual General Meeting.

Luk concluded this discussion by reminding all Vestry members that they are able to attend any committee meeting they chose if they would like more information about a particular topic. He is currently in the process of organizing a calendar that will list all committee meetings for the year; this calendar will be ready in September.

- **Treasurer's Report:**

David Soper distributed and explained our 2016 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets. This report detailed our 2014 budget, our current 2015 budget through June, and a proposed budget for 2016. For the current proposal our net deficit between income and operating expenses for 2016 is \$125,374. The projected total income is \$1,250,788 and the proposed total operating expenses are \$1,343,112. Switching our endowment management company from USB to Vanguard has been helpful in terms consulting costs: USB cost us \$100,000 annually for management while Vanguard is costing us \$5,000 a quarter. Less money is, therefore, coming out of the endowment on an annual basis. We are looking at fundraising projects through our Music Endowment and a possible project through our bicentennial celebration. Luk will meet with Louise Packert, of Trinity Church, Boston, on September 2nd to gather information regarding fundraising ideas.

Attached to our Vestry agenda were the minutes from the Finance Committee which was held August 4th. The goal of the meeting was for all attendees to learn from represented committees of their financial efforts in support of Trinity. Reports from the Stewardship Committee, the Investment Committee, the Home Board, our Music Endowment, and our current proposal for the 2016 budget were all discussed in depth.

Rector's Report:

- Luk reviewed the Outreach discussion of our June Vestry meeting. Represented Outreach committees presented proposals for the upcoming year. He noted that no committee presented any change in budget or program. To guide all of us through the necessary changes in the coming years, Luk presented the Four Motors of Ministry: members, money, motivation, and mission. This template can guide us to meaningful discussions of current policies and help us to best evaluate those changes needed to give our parish a strong and vibrant presence in the New Haven community.

The Rev. Dr. Luk DeVolder offered a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Lisa Omark

Upcoming Information:

Next Vestry Meeting: Monday, September 21, 2015

Opening and Closing Prayers: Jack Tebes

Snacks: Cris Sigovitch, Jack Tebes, and Robert Orr