

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Council Members Present: Pam Lange, Jane Dykowski, Marjorie Barnard, Tim Ruffner, Dan Case, Sue Mrowka, Mark Ennis, Teri Staffeld, Toni Hill, Michael Isaacs, Louise Stanek, and Rev. Linda Anderson.

Excused: Jeannette Wackro and Fred Miller

Guests: Church Building and Grounds/Security Ministries: Harold Fick, and Gary Staffeld , Also, guest by request, Tracy Hoffman.

Meeting was called to order by President, Sue Mrowka, at 7:00 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Rev. Anderson.

Council guests then began reporting. Tracy Hoffman announced that John Joannette would not be available during the summer months. He will be here through the 2nd Sunday in June and return in the fall. The fall date probably will be after Rally Day which should be negotiated. Sue Mrowka asked Tracy to see if John Joannette would be available for funerals and weddings in the summer. Without an accompanist, it may be necessary to purchase recorded CD's. These cost approximately \$30. Tracy also related that he did receive a \$20 bill with the song request: "Make me a channel of your peace." The money will be added to the Music Fund. Rev. Anderson gave Tracy a secondary hymnal used in some churches.

Gary Staffeld, representing Building and Grounds, reported that the garage roof is not leaking yet, but needs replacement. (Roof is too steep for members to manage—professional help is needed.) Another concern is the dish washer. It is aging (repair parts are unavailable) and the temperature requirement is difficult to maintain. This is always part of the city inspection. Replacement would be \$35,000 - \$40,000 because of health department requirements. Dan Case added that on Monday, February 12, 2024, Building and Grounds would be determining the 2024 maintenance priorities. The Wild Game Dinner netted \$10,200 which goes toward the maintenance projects.

Harold Fick, Sexton and Groundskeeper, was given notice that one of the lawn mowers has been recalled. (It has been working well.) He will follow up on that. He now has a credit card to make gas purchases easier.

Dan Case, for Safety and Security, reported that at their March meeting they would be discussing any changes needed in security measures.

Erick Poet, Snow Removal, was not present.

The guests were thanked and excused and the meeting returned to regular order.

Approval of the Minutes: Before approval, there was a lively discussion regarding payment for carpeting in Pastor Schalm's office. Jane Dykowski did not include this information in the January 9, 2024 minutes about such payment. Marjie Barnard understood there was money for this available. Dan Case related that was not the case. Christian Education has paid for the carpeting. The discussion continued about the need for chairs for the renovated office. Louise Stanek asked the type of chairs needed. Marjie Barnard reported them to be similar to the ones in the pastor's office.

At this point, there was a motion by Tim Ruffner, seconded by Marjie Barnard, that the request for the chair purchase be directed to the Memorial Committee Chairperson. Motion carried.

Following the discussion and the record stated here, there was a motion by Tim Ruffner, seconded by Marjie Barnard, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2024 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: Add to New Business: Council Information Correction

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Dan Case reported that in January we are approximately \$3500 negative. However, there was no service on one Sunday in January. A credit from DTE helped with income. We continue to monitor the budget remembering that our operating account started January, 2024 with a smaller balance than on January, 2023. The stewardship campaign netted \$99,160 from 26 members. At a cost of \$99 there will be a QR Code in the bulletin which can be used to make a donation. This may be useful for visitors. This cost has an endless period of use. Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Rev. Linda Anderson: Rev. Anderson reported 6 – 8 people are attending Bible Study. Things are going well. Since she has been here, she has done one funeral. (For our information, she noted Martenson's provided very low compensation.) She would have done the service for nothing. She will be gone for two weeks because of a prior commitment.

Pastor Cheryl Schalm: Written Report.

Trustee/Building and Grounds: Marjie Barnard reported on the renovation in Pastor Schalm's office. The wiring is fixed and the painting is done except for touch up. Charlie Barnard has put the parsonage hot water heater on "vacation" setting. There was something hanging in the Court Yard. While investigating this, a roof problem was noticed. This is being monitored.

Deacons: Teri Staffeld reported that 248 in person attended in January with one worship cancellation due to weather. She had question about reporting the Facebook number. Michael Isaacs helped her with that. Jennifer Ruffner will assist when Jeannette Wackro is out for knee surgery. At present, one must be on Facebook in order to view our services—a change by Facebook.

Elders: Pam Lange reported that communicants is between 50 and 65. She requested guidance as to the number of trays to continue to be prepared —2 with 40 and 1 with 15. Although too many, the decision was to continue with the same at least through Lent.

Search Team Update: Mark Ennis reported that at present only one candidate is under consideration. One has withdrawn for an unknown reason. Another has withdrawn because of our compensation package. Rev. Anderson again emphasized the need for our members to acknowledge and mourn Rev. Drutchas's retirement. This is normal. Jane Dykowski asked about allowing some leeway in compensation. We are at our limits—health care and housing allowance (if not using the parsonage) are much larger than we previously required.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Council Retreat: February 17, 2024 was confirmed for the Council Retreat at the Church – 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 pm. Tim Ruffner will bring the donuts.

OLD BUSINESS (continued)

2. Council Dinner: Tentatively, the Council dinner will be at Baldo's Restaurant on March 10, 2024. Sue Mrowka will finalize and notify the retiring council members. Spouses are included and everyone will pay for themselves and their guests.

3. Council Meeting Time: Beginning with the March 12, 2024 meeting the time will be 6:30 p.m.

4. Acolyte Volunteers: Tim Ruffner will do March. A request for volunteers will be made in the bulletin. Also, it was suggested that Pastor Schalm may wish to have some young people participate.

5. Organist Search Update: Sue Mrowka has encouraged Tracy Hoffman to seek out possible candidates.

6. Revised Office Closure Policy: Motion by Tim Ruffner, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the revised policy. Motion Carried. (The new policy allows some leeway to be open even when the schools are closed.)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Parsonage Alarm Continuance: Jim Poet asked at the Annual Congregational Meeting if the parsonage alarm system was still active. It is, at a cost of \$440 per year, as a necessary protection.

2. Approve New Employee Handbook: There is a change in not offering flex spending accounts. The current employees are okay without it. The discontinuance is due to many additional reporting requirements. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to approve the New Employee Handbook. Motion carried.

3. Mission Sunday Outreach Plan: Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Toni Hill, to approve the "Monthly Mission Outreach" prepared by Pastor Schalm. Motion carried. This plan has some outreach event every month in which everyone can participate. For instance, the March outreach is bringing food for Fish and Loaves.

4. Council Pictures: Rev. Anderson related that pictures are especially helpful to newcomers. We will reach out to Patrick Ferguson and Gary Peters to see if they can take the pictures.

5. Council Information Packet: Marjie Barnard pointed out a discrepancy in number of months council members are required to be Council Representative at worship. Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Toni Hill, to have it read 2 months in both places in the packet.

ROUNDTABLE

The need to have someone remain in the narthex while collection is taken up can be solved if a choir/council member goes with the deacon to deposit the offering. Then the council representative can remain in the narthex. There was question about how long someone is an auxiliary person. That term is for as long as the person wishes. At this point, there was a motion by Dan Case, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve Jennifer Ruffner (deacon) and David Lange (elder) as auxiliary council members. Motion carried. There were two abstentions. Marjie Barnard asked for permission to post event posters for Fish and Loaves. Dan Case asked that elders review the membership rolls for non-contributors and/or participants to update the rolls. Tim Ruffner reiterated that the request for money for Pastor Schalm's office chairs was to be referred to the Memorial Committee Chairperson

Motion to adjourn by Michael Isaacs, seconded by Tim Ruffner. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane L. Dykowski, Recording Secretary.