

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes
26 February 2024
6:00 p.m.

Present: Rod Hall, Kyle Dice Seage, Karl Belgum, Chris Brent,
Janice Dalzell-Piper, Karen Gullett, Gina Hector, Andrew Purvis, Marjorie
Sennett, Dawn Vroegop, Rick Waterman, Leslie Cohl

Absent: Miles Woodlief, Bob McCaskill

1. Opening Prayer and Check-In
2. Finance Report: Bob Mc Caskill is out of town, so there will be no report tonight. The finance report will be sent to vestry members later this week. No issues are expected.
3. Vestry Discussion (Rod Hall - Senior Warden)
 - a. Mechanics of vestry meetings.
 - Do Mondays continue to be the best time for meetings? Vestry discussed a number of options and determined that Mondays continue to be the best option to continue for the time being.
 - Should we consider an alternate day/time? Vestry concluded 6pm is most optimal.
 - Is there a need for discussion on length and content of meetings? Vestry determined that the agenda should drive the length of the meeting, which should be 75 to 90 minutes to be most effective. We will block 90 minutes on our calendars, but only take the full time if needed. This way the meeting allows time for deeper discussion (big ideas/deep dives) that 60 minutes does not allow. A motion was made by Rod Hall on the day and length of meetings, seconded by Marjorie, and unanimously approved.
 - b. Determining discussion items (The Big Idea)
 - As elected representatives of the congregation, what topics are members of the vestry interested in discussing? What is essential? Kyle Seage gave several examples to get us started: neighborhood involvement, the effort to engage

children from Hilarita, including Christmas gifts and camp this summer. She also told us about the Vestry Papers, which shares the work of other vestry groups. Kyle will send out the link to everyone.

Vestry Comments:

Karl Belgum- use the vestry to draw in the involvement of others. Identify if topics are a brainstorm or decision.

Chris Brent- use the Vestry retreat and community meetings to get input.

Rick Waterman- Try to identify facility problems sooner, before they get worse.

Gina Hector-Big ideas may need to be broken down into smaller pieces.

Karen Gullett- Have a parking lot chart for topics we want to address.

Marjorie Sennett's controversial idea- We have such a big election this year. We are avoided politics, but many are anxious. Can we bridge the divide? Focus on the anxiety.

Church is also a respite from politics. Others chimed in with concerns about getting too political and losing members or being in conflict. It is better to address the anxiety without the politics.

Rod Hall- brought up an article from the Atlantic on isolation which he had shared with Kyle.

Andrew Purvis- Let us know about ideas ahead of time so vestry members can do research before Vestry meetings.

Agreement: Big ideas are important.

Rod Hall- What are we all about? We are all isolated. Lots of conspiracy ideas out there. We have an opportunity to get more people together.

Marjorie Sennett: Grace Cathedral has done this, with 400 for yoga.

Big topic for next month- What we are and weave in outreach, and what it is.

Chris Brent- We fill ourselves on Sundays and then go out into the world to serve others.

4. Convention Delegates/Deanery Delegates - Nominations (Kyle Seage). The convention meets one Saturday each year in November from 9-4 at Grace Cathedral. We can have four delegates.

Marin Deanery- Kyle will circulate more information.

Tamalpais Pacific- Three churches from Southern Marin are involved: Christ Church, Saint Stephen's, and Westminster Presbyterian. Information about this group whose mission is the creation, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable and supportive housing in Marin and the North Bay was shared. Chris Brent is one of the two St. Stephen's representatives on the Board of Directors. The recommendation was to appoint Karl Belgum as our representative replacing Bill Brinkman, who is retiring after many years. All were unanimously in favor.

5. Minutes: January minutes were approved unanimously.
6. Closing Prayer