

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, June 11, 2024

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

Guests:

Women's Ministry: Women's Fellowship, President; Sew 'n Sews, President

Meeting was called to order by President, Sue Mrowka, at 6:30 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Jane Dykowski.

Beginning with the guests, Toni Hill, representing Women's Fellowship reported that the Rummage Sale was well attended and raised \$6,500. More recently they prepared and served a funeral luncheon with approximately 120 in attendance. That event also provided a \$450 profit.

Janet Staffeld, representing the Sew 'n Sews, began her report. This group makes blankets that are distributed to Southshore Hospital and a Veterans Group. The group meets the 3rd Thursday of the month and there are 6 regular members. In January they were able to meet a request for blankets by donating 104 blankets at that time. Many of the group (members/non-members) work from home. Rev. Anderson suggested they place articles in the Tidings, Bulletin, etc. to get the word out about all they do. This may encourage others to participate. (There was a short interruption in the meeting while Tim Ruffner, Michael Isaacs, and Dan Case met with a homeless person outside the building.) After they returned to the meeting, there was discussion regarding the repercussions of giving to homeless at the church and it becoming a place where asking for donations becomes habitual. Also, the peril which Christnet is now facing with Wayne Metro and the neighborhood complaints about the center could happen here.

The guests were thanked for their work and reports. Janet Staffeld was excused to return home.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2024 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: Add to New Business: 6. Request of parsonage use by the Youth Mission Group and 7. Request by Square Dance group for building usage.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Written report. Dan Case expanded on his report that the May income was \$15,297 and the budgeted item is for \$24,000. For the month, expenses were actually \$4,000 more than was received in income. The general fund is still positive by \$26,810 for the year. Sue Mrowka expressed concern over paying the Music Director more when the pianist/organist is not here as he is doing both jobs. Mark Ennis related that he was not even offered the stipend when he substituted as in both positions. He just did it. There then was discussion of being an employee and being a volunteer. Rev. Anderson suggested that one should take the pay and then return it to the church. This keeps the item in the budget when payment is necessary. Louise Stanek requested clarification on who approves the bills and who pays them. Dan Case approves items and Lori Kuhn actually prepares the payments. We cannot change the Music Director payment in mid-stream, but it can be re-negotiated in a new contract.

Treasurer's Report (Continued)

Tim Ruffner and Dan Case related information on grants that may be available regarding solar energy to save money. Also, the suggestions that "givers" increase their donations by \$5 or \$10. This has been done in the past. Motion by Michael Isaacs, seconded by Jeannette Wackro, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Rev. Linda Anderson: Rev. Anderson feels operation of the church is going well. She met with the search committee and offered help as they see a need. Also, again, her office door is always open. There have been some new people attending worship and Bible Study. (Bible Study will continue through the summer.) People are in need of fellowship and worship in unsettled lives. There is a need for us to be reaching out. Within our church we need to be working as a family. Some important members have been lost. If a family member becomes angry or upset should we be reaching out to mend the grievance?

Pastor Cheryl Schalm: Written report. Sue Mrowka shared a text from Pastor Schalm requesting use of the parsonage during the mission trip. The air conditioners are removed. (The decision was to leave them removed for now.) Also, the hot water heater will be turned up. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill to allow use of the parsonage by the youth for the mission trip. Motion carried.

Trustee/Building and Grounds: Toni Hill reported that there is not much going on at the moment. A new grate has been purchased for the west drive and shall be installed. The leak in the family room appears to have been fixed, but continues to be monitored. Dan Case reported that the parking lot needs re-sealing. The cost is approximately \$15,000. There was discussion about donations to have parking spaces marked for a person or a "food truck" fundraiser to be held to defer the cost. Clarification was given that the quarterly Fund Report (sent to council members later) was part of the Treasurer's report.

Deacons: Teri Staffeld very appreciatively welcomed Jeannette Wackro back after her surgery. She reported specific numbers for in-person and Facebook for May. Those numbers continue to hover around 100 per week.

Elders: Fred Miller also reported specific communion numbers. Those numbers are approximately 60-70 participants each time communion is offered. Pew communion went well on Pentecost.

Search Team Update: Mark Ennis reported that currently there are no candidates under consideration. Rev. Anderson met with the group. She has been on search committees and shared how committees should be structured and function. Reviewing functioning to this point, the committee is working to re-do our profile—streamlining it. They are correcting items to more realistic expectations and reaching out to other places for candidates—not just via the UCC. The new conference minister, Rev. Lawrence Richardson, has been more forthcoming than Rev. Burke who has been handling two positions. The committee is looking at their pursuit of a new pastor with fresh eyes and ears—a fresh start. Sue Mrowka offered the Council's help if needed.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Council candidates (Trustee and Deacon): Dan Case reported that he was in discussion with a possible candidate. The issue of reliable phone numbers was also discussed. We will have a new directory in September.

2. Organist Search Update: Jane Dykowski reported that she has not had any responses to her mailing at this date. Sue Mrowka and Rev Anderson expressed concern that the Music Director was not engaging in the search process.

3. Status of Membership Roles: Mark Ennis reported that they are still in discussion about the list of non-participants. Again, the emphasis was on the delicateness of dropping members. There are approximately 100 members about whom there are questions. Ideas put forth included focus on those 50 years and older, what to do about non-participation by active member children, seeking input from others than just the elders, relating the cost of keeping on the rolls, and having them become associate members. The work shall continue

4. Church Re-decorating Tabled on May 14, 2024: Jane Dykowski read the following statement prepared by Tim Ruffner regarding the church re-decorating: “The issue of church redecorating which was discussed in council on May 14, 2024 and tabled at said meeting has been referred to the Building and Grounds Committee (BAGC) with no further council action required. This issue was discussed at a previous meeting of the Trustees and the BAGC and has been resolved. The policy of church property cannot be permanently removed (donated, sold, etc.) from church grounds without approval from the Trustees remains in effect.” After the reading, motion by Dan Case, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to consider this issue resolved. Motion carried.

5. Council Representatives clarification for November and December: Dan Case will be council representative for November and Sue Mrowka and Toni Hill will cover December.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Building Use Protocol: Sue Mrowka was concerned about the rooms not being left in good order after use. Toni Hill and Michael Isaacs regularly do a walk-through check to keep things in order. This is not a new issue; but, if the check off sheet is used, all should be done. This will also be addressed at the upcoming Cabinet Meeting.

2. Approval of Christmas Gift Sale Proposal: Jane Dykowski distributed an outline of a gift sale she and Peggy Staten are planning for December 5, 6, 7, and 8. They are requesting it be open to the public as well as to the congregation and after the Advent by Candlelight event. This will be addressed at the upcoming Cabinet meeting on June 18, 2024. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, that the gift sale proposal be approved. Motion carried.

3. Agenda for Semi-Annual Meeting: Each council member received a copy of the proposed agenda for the Annual Meeting in July. There will be voting on some by-law changes.

4. Appointment of parliamentarian for Semi-Annual Meeting: Fred Miller agreed to be parliamentarian for the Semi-Annual Meeting on July 14, 2024.

5. Staff Annual Reviews: Rev. Anderson and Sue Mrowka will begin these with Cindy Romas on Thursday, July 13, 2024. There was a request to know who reviews whom.

6. Parsonage Use by Mission Trip Group: This item was covered earlier in the meeting with the Ministry Department reports.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

7. Square Dance Group Building Use: Rev. Anderson and Cindy Romas met with Ray Wilde (square dance caller) regarding the use of Fellowship Hall for a square dance benefit on July 26, 2024. Light refreshments will be served. Some tables and chairs are also needed. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Tim Ruffner, to authorize square dance event with a \$50 use charge, \$75 Sexton charge (plus an extra hour), and providing a reciprocal event for our congregation in the future. Motion carried. Tim Ruffner suggested we get permission to take pictures for Facebook.

ROUNDTABLE

There was no roundtable discussion.

Motion to adjourn by Toni Hill, seconded by Tim Ruffner. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski, Recording Secretary.