

St Stephen Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2021

Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

Present: Pastor Jim Woodruff, Betsy Clark, Paul Colaizy, Kristen Duffy,

Marta Hohnstadt, Ted Schaff, Chris Sheldon, Ken Smith, Mira Stearns, Abby Ternus

Guests: Anne Jackson, Jill Sandvik

Devotions – Pastor Jim Woodruff – Psalm 27:1,4-5 ‘One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.’ As our metro communities and nation continue to be in peril, may we stand together, support one another, be accountable and seek God’s reconciliation.

Prayer Concerns: Lenny - Marta Hohnstadt’s mother’s friend

Julian Duffy Mahnke – newborn step-grandson of Kristen Duffy

Jordan – pregnant mother of Chris Sheldon’s daughters’ friend

John Lovold family

Jean Sawyer

Approval of Minutes – Revise under ‘New Business’ to read “PCCL rather than PICKLE.”

A motion was made by Marta Hohnstadt; 2nd by Paul Colaizy to approve the April 2021 council meeting minutes with the above stated revision. Voted on & carried.

Adjustments to the Agenda – Ken Smith

Add to New Business – Proposal to disband COVID Response Team.

Treasurer’s Report – Patsy Olson

Reports received.

Current Fund: \$6530.91 Capital Fund: \$126,771.72 Benevolence Fund: \$1258.07

Special Designated Fund: \$77,958.48 Cash Reserve Fund: \$21,300.87

All Funds are strong. Special Designated Fund shows separate entry at 800.30, for Audio/Visual/Sound System that will be tracked.

A motion was made to approve the Treasurers report by Betsy Clark; 2nd by Ken Smith.

Voted on & approved.

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Pastor’s Reports – Pastor Jim Woodruff

Report received. Small group activities continue, in-person worship has resumed, Online Sunday Morning Services & Live Streaming all continue. Holy Week-Easter Worship went as anticipated with Easter Sunday showing a larger viewing audience between in-person & on-line worship. The Audio-Video Task Force have a proposal to make at the next council meeting so that installation of the new

system can move forward quickly. The Covid Response Team (CRT) was asked if they supported disbanding since they have completed recommendations & guidelines for the church.

Pastor Juli Thompson

No report received. Pastor Jim Woodruff gave update that very soon Pastor Juli will have received her 2nd vaccine and will be in a position to return safely to her role as Visitation Pastor.

A motion was made to approve the April 2021 Pastor's report by Ted Field; 2nd by Patsy Olson.

Voted on & approved.

Ministry Team Reports – Ken Smith

Finance Committee has an upcoming April 22nd meeting scheduled. Worship & Music have been meeting regularly in focusing on the search for a Sunday worship service vocalist.

New Business

Covid Statistics – Ken Smith

Stats chart presented. Ken continues watching & following Ramsey County & neighboring counties numbers. The last 2 weeks have shown an increase in cases. If this trend continues, the consideration of closing may once again be necessary. Hopefully, this will not be necessary with the increase in availability & administering of the Covid vaccine.

Agenda Added-Adjustment – Disband Covid Team – Chris Sheldon

Letter of proposal to disband the Covid Team received.

A motion was made by Ken Smith; 2nd by Mira Stearns to disband the Covid Team.

Discussion ensued...team believes the church council appointed the team to create documentation of guidelines to be followed at St Stephen with no determined disband date. They have been inactive for months as their appointed task has been fulfilled & completed. This expert team are to be commended for their time, dedication & diligence. Others expressed concerns of the unpredictability of Covid. Should the team continue until all Covid risks are gone? Should Church Council then make those decisions & recommendations were the team dissolved?

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The question was placed before Council members by Ken Smith to vote on whether to disband the Covid Team or keep in place. A roll call vote was taken of 10 voting council members:

Duffy – Aye	Clark - No
Hohnstadt – Aye	Colaizy - No
Sheldon – Aye	Schaff - No
Stearns – Aye	Smith - No
Ternus – Aye	Woodruff - No

The motion is tied with 5 “Aye” votes and 5 “No” votes. The motion does not carry.

Ken Smith & Chris Sheldon will plan a time to further discuss this. Suggestion made to appropriate a Sunday worship service to introduce the Covid Team & honor them for their time & efforts to this matter.

Wednesday Night Take-Home Meals – Pastor Jim Woodruff

Wednesday night take-home meals will continue to be served “prepackaged,” following Minnesota State guidelines, until all Covid risks are clear.

A motion was made by Ken Smith; 2nd by Chris Sheldon to continue distributing Wednesday night prepackaged take-home meals following Minnesota State guidelines. Motion carries.

Video System Proposal – Anne Jackson, Chair of Music & Worship

PowerPoint presented. The AV Club (Anne Jackson, Jill Sandvik, Paige Carter, Randy Amborn, Pastor Jim Woodruff) have been meeting & planning.

They request council approval of up to \$23,000. to purchase & upgrade audio equipment and \$6,000.00 in 2021 to hire a “Digital Ministry Director”.

Discussion ensued. There are two vendors to consider. Both vendors can provide new cameras. KSG Systems also offers “used” cameras that allows a price break of \$2500. Should this be considered? Most favor the option of “new” cameras/equipment. Note that for any system under consideration the Comcast bill would increase approximately \$1200. annually or \$100. a month. To secure this project, down payment is needed immediately additionally with a signed contract.

Goal of the Project: Provide equipment to live-stream from the sanctuary

Funding strategy - \$3500. in Memorial accounts currently designated to this project

\$19,500. remaining will be from Congregational Appeal, Capital Fund & Cruiser Challenge gift (will match 50% of contributions up to \$5000. if contribution made before May XX

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Digital Ministry Director – New Position

- ~ Expand online presence: move beyond “bulletin board” to *doing* ministry online
- ~ Technical skills
- ~ Recruit volunteers for other tasks: sound board, “slide shows” etc
- ~ Train volunteers
- ~ Develop “AV” team
- ~ 10 hours/ week

A motion was made by Betsy Clark; 2nd by Marta Hohnstadt to approve up to \$23,000. for the purchase & upgrade of a video/audio system AND \$6,000. in 2021 for the salary of the new position of Digital Ministry Director. Voted on & approved.

Amendment to motion was made by Betsy Clark; 2nd by Marta Honstadt to authorize immediate down payment in the amount required by the vendor of choice from the Capital Fund, to be replaced as soon as possible with fund raiser proceeds. Voted on & approved.

A timeline & vendor choice will be provided to council within 10 days.

Old Business

Synod Assembly (May 14-15) – Betsy Clark

The deadline to register is this Friday April 16.

Furnace #1 Replacement - Ted Schaff

This project is expected to begin in the next couple weeks. Ted reminded the council of the next scheduled Furnace #2 project & the involved cost of about \$25,000.

Review Meeting Highlights

The proposal of Disbanding the Covid Team will further reside in council.

Ken Smith adjourned the meeting at 9:25 pm.

Pastor Jim Woodruff closed & led the council with The Lord's Prayer.

Next council meeting is Monday, May 10th, 2021.

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Future 2021 council meetings:

June 14

July 12

August 16

Sept 13

Oct 11 (Ken traveling)

Nov 15

Dec 12 (Ken traveling)

Respectfully submitted,

Teri Cinis