

Minutes of the Church Council Meeting
October 20, 2020, 6 p.m.
Conducted via Zoom

Council Members Present: Daniel Russo (moderator), Margaret Baldwin (vice-moderator), Anne Sullivan (past moderator), Edward Eggleston, Paris Hancock, Phil Owen, Kathy Sheibley

Non-voting attendees: Rev. Janet Parker, Cara Rothe

Also present at opening: Ted Heid,

Attending later in the meeting: Grant Helbley, Frank Baldwin

6:05 The meeting opened with comments from Rev. Janet: This is a time of change. Things will shift and people will, “step out and in.”

6:13 Review of the meeting guidelines by all present

6:15 **Vote on Whether to Hire Joseph West to Represent the Church on the Matter of the Metro Ground Lease**

Ted Heid gave a short review of the Ground Lease with Portland 5:

The lease with the City of Portland was initiated in 1984 to be reviewed every five years. From 2014 through 2019, the annual net rent was \$200,000. The review completed in 2019 resulted in an annual net payment of \$313,000 to the church.

Due to problems arising from Covid 19, a temporary reduction in rent was negotiated in spring, 2020, reducing monthly rent by \$6,684. This will continue through the end of 2020.

Ted Heid suggested it would be advisable to hire an attorney to review the lease and current real estate situation and represent the church in further lease negotiations. His suggestion is Joseph West. West estimates it will take him five to ten hours to complete his initial review and to present his legal opinion on the church’s strategy for restoring the rent to the full amount. He charges \$476 per hour.

Anne Sullivan asked what West’s final aim would be. Due to the variables involved, it is impossible to be more precise at this time.

Anne moved: FCUCC hire Joseph West to review and advise on our Land Lease with Metro and Portland 5. The initial authorization of 10 hours at \$476 / hour.

Second by Margaret Baldwin.

Vote: 7 aye; 0 nay; 0 abstentions. Passed.

Ted Heid volunteered to act as the church’s agent to coordinate with Joseph west. The council accepted this offer.

6:38 Ted Heid left the meeting.

Follow-up Ted Heid will contact Joseph West and provide him with needed documentation.

6:38 **Review of announcements**

•The mini-retreat with Cameron Trimble for Council members and select church leaders will be on December 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cameron will be leading worship on November 15.

Follow-up Daniel will contact Cameron about the Nov 15 service and possible congregational interaction with her (perhaps at coffee hour.)

•Rev. Janet’s exit interview is scheduled for Thursday, October 29 at 6 p.m. via Zoom. All council members are invited.

Follow-up Rev. Janet will send a template for the meeting.

- 6:45 •Update from Grant Helbley
Grant Helbley joined the meeting to explain their decision to leave FCUCC. Grant read a letter previously sent to the council. The letter is in the Council Google Drive folder for October 2020. Comments from those present expressed appreciation for Grant's service to FCUCC and good wishes for, and interest in, their future.
- 7:04 Grant left the meeting.
- 7:05 •Report from the Christian Education Meeting on October 4 by Anne Sullivan:
Godly Play teachers and parents of the younger children in the congregation met on Zoom after worship on October 4 to discuss the status of Christian education and the participation of children in the life of the church. There was no representation from the junior- or senior-high aged youth or families. Though no concrete plans for active Christian Ed or Godly Play came out of the meeting, the idea of the Godly Play teachers or other adults "adopting" a child to continue connecting online was proposed. A possible out-door activity was also discussed.
- 7:10 •Selection Committee Vacancies:
There are currently two vacancies on the Selection Committee. Suggestion to fill the vacancies include Jim McPartland to serve for 2020 and to continue in 2021. The second vacancy will likely go unfilled. Phil Oliver and either Ron or Cheryl Clevenger were suggested for the committee in 2021. The Selection Committee's job is to nominate members to the Nomination Committee. Deadlines for the work by these committees need to be established so that congregational votes can be taken on time.
- Follow-up Anne will contact Jim to ascertain his interest.
An e-vote will be held when a full slate is provided.
- 7:29 **Vote on Pastoral Relations Committee Nominees**
We have a list of nine suggested members for this committee, five of whom are aware of this and have signaled their willingness to serve.
- 7:35 Frank Baldwin joins the meeting. He reviews the current situation and the process so far with Eric Elnes around the PRC.
The church by-laws prescribe a PRC of 5 members serving rotating terms of five years each. Rev. Eric suggests a committee of six, each serving three-year terms. It is decided by general agreement to progress with the assumption of a committee of six, serving three-year terms. This will require a by-law change at the next Congregational Meeting.
- 7:47 Frank Baldwin leaves the meeting.
Margaret Baldwin and Paris Hancock leave the meeting due to conflicts of interest.
- 7:47 Discussion of the suggested names.
Paris and Margaret re-enter the meeting for the vote. The vote is held via personal chat or email to Daniel, who compiles the results.
- 8:04 Results are announced after the Business Manager's Report. Selected are (in order of preference): Nan Wagner, Ted Heid, Lesley Sepetosky, Jessica or Denise Denniston,
- 8:35 Paris Hancock, Karen Horn, Daniel Hunter, Frank Baldwin.
- Follow-up Daniel will email Nan Wagner, Ted Heid, and Lesley Sepetosky.
Rev. Janet will contact the Dennistons, Karen Horn, and Daniel Hunter if needed to fill the committee.
A by-law change will need to be drafted and presented to the congregation.
- 8:19 **Business Manager's Report**
The report is in the Council Google Drive folder. Additionally, Cara reported working with Eric to facilitate his entry into the church. Someone tried to start a fire on the

portico during the October 12 demonstrations, though his intentions are not known. Thanks to the security cameras installed, Cara could see this happening and alerted authorities. No damage was done. There is an issue with replacing the window of the Fellowship Hall due to problems with matching the stained glass. Cara also mentioned efforts to limit the numbers of people gathering on the porch at night and concern for the mentally ill folks who sometimes gather there. The concern is for their safety and health. She mentioned that because of various contacts, she could facilitate work with the mentally ill.

8:45 Treasurer's Report by Ed Eggleston

November 5 is the projected date on which we can ask for forgiveness on the CARES Act loan. Will know the final cash status at the end of December, but feel the news will be positive. Considering Kyle Roy and Bill Sweeney as next treasurer, not settled yet. Ed has several recommendations for changes, but did not share them at this time.

8:51 Minister's Report by Rev. Janet

Besides the submitted report in the Church Council Google Drive folder, Janet reported the expected baptism of Eileen Deerdock (her health permitting) and several deaths within the congregational family. Sunday, October 25 will be her last Sunday with us and will include a service of leaving for both her and for Avena Ward, who is leaving the staff. As noted, Cameron Trimble will be leading worship on November 15. Rev. Elnes may be preaching or available to preach on November 29. If not, Sheldon Hurst will preach. Janet is preparing letters of introduction of the staff to help Eric as he takes up the pastorate.

As a final thought, Janet read the last paragraph of her final pastoral report, reminding us to "Never put a period where God has placed a comma," and not to be afraid to take "leaps of faith as you move ahead."

In the discussion of the pastor's report, it was noted that we expect the contract with Eric Elnes to be finalized by October 23.

About 9:00 Ed Eggleston left the meeting.

9:08 A general round of thanks for Rev. Janet's presence and leadership, and well-wishing for her future endeavors.

A reminder for members of the Council who can, to participate in the Farwell drive-by on Saturday.

9:19 Meeting ended.

Respectfully Submitted,



phil Owen