



Minutes from Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church Council Monday May 18, 2020

Members Present: Don Livingston, Rick Burnett, Pastor Fritz, Pastor Miriam, Kevin Hawkins, Bernice Huie, Mike Oliver, Robbi Martin, Molly Breckling, Lisa Manthey, Sue Byers, Eric Jakubowski, Mark Bunker

Members not present: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Council President Don Livingston. This meeting was conducted via Zoom video chat.

Devotional:

The devotional was given by Eric Jakubowski. He reviewed his previous testimony about how he has felt God's presence in his life even though some painful life-changing events. Building on that, he talked about how God hasn't just been present, but has actually Blessed us even during these unprecedented times. Several examples included the very timely addition of Bill Porter to our church staff, who has been instrumental in implementing our online worship capabilities, and other key volunteers behind the scenes whose work has been critical in the actual production of our various offerings. Although we certainly are going through some challenging times right now, God has not abandoned us and continues to grant us many blessings.

Pastor Reports:

Pastor Miriam:

- Pastor highlighted many of the activities still going on amidst social distancing and stay-at-home orders. She specifically talked about the love and dedication of staff to continue Preschool, conduct individual at-home graduation ceremonies, provide Easter baskets, etc.
- She also mentioned that there would be a second round of call-outs to check in on members.
- Finally, she expressed her appreciation for COS's ability to still provide meaningful worship and fellowship opportunities to the congregation and beyond through our various online offerings.

Pastor Fritz: **Returning Home**

- Pastor allowed his written report to do most of the talking for this month. Some items he emphasized were:
 - The process for determining when we will resume in-person activities at COS. An advisory committee has been formed to explore the many factors and considerations that will need to be addressed in order to resume live services and activities. The ELCA and our Synod have provided valuable information to inform our decision; Bill Grabill has agreed to head the advisory committee.
 - The personnel moves occurring within COS's staff.
 - A second virtual Men's Retreat [*Update-5 COS men joined in online fellowship on Saturday May 23rd*]
 - A "lunch with leadership" opportunity for COS members to ask church leadership questions about our current operations

-The need for a technology team to address the shifting role that technology will play in COS's future,

-A challenge to each of us to share COS Facebook posts and invite others to one or more of our worship experiences.

Financial Report:

-April was another unexpectedly good month for giving while also coming in under budget on expenses, which allowed COS to close approximately \$17k of the budget shortfall that had been growing throughout the year. The financial team was not yet sure of the source of the increased giving: one-time, new members, recurrent, etc.

- Current projections are for COS to finish FY20 (June 30, 2020) with an approximate \$22k deficit.

-There was a verbal motion by Bernice that was seconded by Don to install Mark Bunker as the new COS Treasurer effective 1 July 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

PPP Loan

-After missing out on the initial wave of PPP disbursement through inaction by Wells Fargo, COS pressed ahead with a separate loan application to iThink bank located in FL (a COS member's brother is a loan officer there). The bank stated they had everything they needed to process the loan. Mark will reengage with iThink for a status update. *[Update-COS was approved for the PPP and received approximately \$109k in PPP funds, of which approximately \$100k can be forgiven.]* Further information will be provided during our June congregational meeting.

Personnel

-The elimination of the Director of Operations position. This move is being done to both address a current budget shortfall, as well as addressing the changing staff needs required as we look to transition to a more robust online capability. Although we have some great volunteers currently enabling our online productions, each of those volunteers have other jobs that they will be returning to at some point soon, which is why we need to look to hiring a professional technology staff member. Sue K will conduct 'turnover' meetings with various staff and committee members Linda V the week before Memorial Day.

-The transition of our Director of Children and Family Ministry. Ellen P has expressed a desire to transition out of her staff role after 5+ years with COS. The congregation has been informed and we are beginning the process of finding a replacement. Ellen has graciously offered to extend through the summer if need be in order to get a new director in position and trained. Thank you to Ellen for her hard work and dedication to COS.

-The addition of a technology staff member. With the rapid change of COS worship services to an entirely online format, new skill sets will be required from staff to facilitate our continued use of technology. We will be looking for someone to lead online audio/visual productions. The personnel team will need to develop a job description, roles and responsibilities, and organizational structure for this position. Discussion was had about utilizing a portion of budget that had previously been allocated to the Dir of Ops position toward this new staff position.

-A motion was made by Don and seconded by Rick to make additional weekly hours available for Linda V in order for her to shoulder a portion of the responsibilities previously held by the Dir of Ops. Discussion entailed Linda's ability to take over this workload based upon her previous experience at Hella Corporation in both facility management and human resources. The motion is printed below:

The COS Council authorizes Linda Volckmann to be paid up to 6 additional hours per week at her current rate of pay to address some of the duties formerly covered by position of Director of Operations.

The motion passed unanimously.

Facilities Maintenance Team

- The FMT is trying to determine what its role would be over the next year, especially given the fact that the Dir of Ops position is being eliminated. The council was provided a report by the FMT that highlighted several frustrations with both the council and staff concerning several projects both at the main campus and at Palmetto Road. This report, while not entirely accurate in its depictions, did highlight the need for better communication between the council, finance team and FMT.
- Rick, as the council's finance team liaison, offered to take a similar role with the FMT in order to facilitate better communication and coordination.
- Don stated that he had a 45-minute meeting with Gary about the FMT's concerns. He is eager to move forward and determine the FMT's new roles and responsibilities.

Budget Discussion

- Mark Bunker brought back a second draft of the FY21 budget for council review based off of guidance from April's council meeting which included: assuming 1% better financial donations, eliminating money for constructing a fence at Palmetto, but did not eliminate the financial audit. The new budget depicts a \$39k deficit, or approximately 4%.
- Mark emphasized that the finance team strongly feels that an audit be conducted since it has been quite a while since the last one.
- The updated budget still did not reflect recent personnel changes but the recommendation was to continue with the current personnel amount to provide flexibility to the Council and Pastors as we define the final organizational structure to best meet the needs in the new normal.
- Several motions were presented for a vote:
 - FY21 Budget.** Motion by Bernice, seconded by Don. Discussion centered on whether or not to keep the initial budget proposal of creating a staff bonus pool or to scrap it in light of the staff reorganization. It was emphasized that any potential staff bonus would only be available if the church had a budget surplus at the end of FY21.

Motion wording: **"The Council moves that the FY21 budget be approved as presented with the staff bonus program contingent on a minimum of balanced FY21 operating result."**

The motion passed unanimously.

A communication plan will be developed and sent out to the congregation announcing a meeting on June 14th in order to pass the budget. Additional work will be done by Don, Eric and Lisa to develop a plan for conducting an entirely virtual Zoom congregation meeting and ensure that all our members are able to participate.

-Use of CTA funds for Palmetto. Motion by Eric, seconded by Molly. Noting the FMT's desire to mitigate security issues at Palmetto Road through the construction of a fence, the council debated whether CTA funds still remaining from the original purchase of the property could be used for that purpose. Members noted that CTA specifically could NOT be used for maintenance activities, but didn't think that this would prevent new construction. Ultimately, a revised motion was made by Don and seconded by Mike to table the vote for CTA funds, in order to send the issue back to the FMT in order to conduct further due diligence on: 1) the appropriateness of using CTA funds for a fence, and 2) whether a fence would actually cut COS's liability exposure and insurance costs in the future.

The motion to table the original CTA funds motion and return it to the FMT for addition research passed unanimously.

-A final budget will be presented to council on May 18th with a congregational meeting and vote to follow in early June.

The meeting was adjourned by Don. We remotely closed with the Lord's Prayer together.

The next council meeting will be Monday June 22nd.