



Vestry Check-In Minutes
Thursday, January 7, 2021

Highlights:

*Vestry discussed plans for holding the annual meeting amid a pandemic. While the meeting will have to be held online, rather than in person, we want to ensure that those who might have difficulties connecting digitally still can participate to the maximum extent possible.

*The preparation of a slate of candidates for Vestry and for diocesan delegates is well under way.

*We spent a fair amount of time reviewing the preliminary budget. While some of the numbers are not yet final – for example, we’re still receiving pledges for 2021 – we sought to address questions that Vestry members had, in part to prepare a list of Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers) that parishioners might have about our finances at the annual meeting.

Present: Lisa Jones, Emily Williams Guffey, Jim Treece, Christine Galli, Carolyn Maher, Howard Matthew, Betty Warner, Roger Basse, Denise Crenshaw, Anthony Estes, Desmond Jones, Beth Ann Tesluk.

Excused/Absent: Chuck Atwater, Phil Brown

Reports received: Draft 2021 budget, assignments for thank-you notes to those who had pledged

Action items underlined.

After an **Opening Prayer**, Vestry **approved** the minutes of the Dec. 17, 2020, meeting.

Emily noted that, as we prepare for the **Annual Meeting**, much needs to be done in new ways, yet in keeping with state and Canon laws. To have a quorum requires 10 percent of communicants “in good standing,” though the latter is a bit loose, because none of us is taking communion now.

Beth Ann and others are working out how to use Zoom to take motions and votes – voting by acclamation should be easy – and to include those who cannot connect digitally. Also, the agenda needs to be simplified for Zoom, meaning streamlined and inclusive of visuals. We’re aiming for a 45- or 50-minute meeting. Next week, a small group will meet to work out details: Emily, Beth Ann, Lisa, Jim.

The nominating committee for new Vestry members was made up of the returning vestry members. We have four openings for full three-year terms, plus one opening each for a one-year and a two-year term. We will recruit diocesan delegates later. Nominees for the three-year Vestry terms are John Leney, Jose Rodriguez, and Ruth Boeder. Anthony Mitchell is okay with a term of any length. We are checking with two more people.

We will ask candidates to prepare short bios to be sent out in advance of the meeting. We will determine if, when we meet with someone on a porch to drop off financial documents and the annual report, we can ask how they would vote. It should be very simple to have a parish-wide mailing of just photos and bios of candidates. If a mailing hits on Jan. 20, and a porch drop on Jan. 20-21, we can gather those votes then. First class mail is getting through pretty well, though postcards aren’t. Suggestion: Do both the “porch drop” and an email, using Shepherds and Emily’s Angels.

We’re approaching final versions of reports- & financials. Next Vestry meeting (Jan. 21), Vestry will be asked to approve the budget, which then will be presented to the congregation. The congregation can discuss it, but doesn’t approve it. We’re asking that committee and ministry reports be turned in by the evening of Jan. 18, but that’s not sufficient time to mail a packet. We will have the annual reports available by Jan. 26, and send out a

notice that it has been posted on website. For Advent by Candlelight, there were only about 13 people to whom we had to get hard copies of materials. For the annual meeting, we expect 20 at the absolute maximum. Motion: Gratitude given to Roger and Denise for their efforts to keep people connected in various forms of “in-parish” outreach. **Approved.**

Before turning to the **Budget**, Jim reported that pledges received so far total 1 percent more than the amount pledged last year. Assignments for thank-you notes were sent to Vestry members with the meeting agenda.

Vestry members were asked to come up with questions about the budget asap, so that we can build a series of questions and answers (FAQs) to be presented to the congregation in advance. That should minimize time needed for questions at the meeting. Seth Lloyd has agreed to put together a list of FAQs in advance, but we need to know what questions jump to people’s minds. If something in the budget doesn’t make sense to a Vestry member, other congregational members are likely to have the same reaction. The following were suggested; Christine gave current answers to these questions, some of which are included here.

Q. 2020 actual November (YTD through November). How to explain any discrepancies against the revised budget.

A. That column is a combination of actuals drawn from our accounting software, plus informed estimates, e.g., regular contributions from parishioners who traditionally give but don’t pledge.

Q. What’s the red ink mean?

Q. What are we taking out of our endowment?

Q. How can we spend more than we have?

A. Loans (PPP, diocesan) don’t always show up on this operations-based spreadsheet. Note: big-ticket spending on building projects is not shown here.

Q. What happened with the PPP loan/grant?

In **Other Business**, Roger requested that we keep a chair open on vestry for George Port, in memoriam.

Motion: Vestry recognizes Lisa’s wonderful work as senior warden, and Roger’s as junior warden. **Approved by acclamation.**

Adjourned at 6:55 so that we could attend the Diocese-wide vigil for our nation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece, secretary