

Minutes – United Church of Strafford Trustee Meeting February 7, 2016

Trustees John Echeverria, Ned Coffin, John Hawkins, Treasurer Kerry Claffey, Moderator Bill Burden, and Pastor Lynn Wickberg attended the meeting, which was called to order at 11:50am at the United Church of Strafford.

The minutes of the meeting of December 6, 2015 were reviewed and approved. It was noted that there was no Trustees Meeting in January, 2016.

Kerry distributed a current budget so that we could review the Trustees' Reserve Fund balance to get a sense of how much we had left during this fiscal year for additional capital projects. Kerry pointed out that the unrestricted available reserve fund balance, which showed ~\$6540 does not include a bill for ~\$1000 that we received from Randall Hoyt in January for the repair of the slate roof on the church, should read ~\$5540 to take into account the roof repair. There are no other outstanding bills on the capital improvement work we've done during this fiscal year.

Kerry was asked about the audit and said he was still working on getting Idella Adams to go over the books.

We then discussed the letter from the Mission Committee, that Bill submitted, requesting \$2000 from the Cumulative Endowment Income Fund for the Newton School Health Clinic/Health Hub. John H noted that this request fit with the discussions the Endowment committee had taken part in about setting aside a portion of each year's 3%, 3 year rolling average income, for the Mission Committee. There was discussion with John E and Ned about whether this was an ongoing commitment to the Mission Committee, as the letter implies that it is, and there was a question about whether we, the Trustees, should be less directive in the letter of request we asked for (in other words, shouldn't we just give them \$2000/year for mission work, no questions asked).

We agreed that the Mission Committee request should be made yearly and that the Trustees' didn't need to be told where the money would be spent as part of the yearly request. This hopefully makes it clear that while we support the Mission Committee work, and this project in particular, this was not an iron-clad guarantee that \$2000 would be available every year going forward, and that the Trustees' do

not feel that we should be perceived as controlling the ways in which the Mission Committee spends the money.

Bill excused himself after the discussion and the approval of this year's Mission Committee request and we moved on to discuss potential capital projects we might undertake with the remaining Trustees' Reserve Fund money.

John H brought up painting in the Parish Hall and Parsonage and the improvements to the handicapped entrance as possible projects. He mentioned that he and Bill had looked at the suspected leak in the Sanctuary and decided that if it was, in fact, water damage, the repairs to the slate roof would have solved the problem (it is still not clear that it is water damage or even how long it has been there). We will continue to monitor the spot and check in the attic when possible.

Lynn then mentioned that her biggest concern was a ramp from the Sanctuary into the Parish Hall. John H agreed to contact Blake Spencer to get an idea what would be involved and what such a modification might cost. We made no decisions on further capital improvements at this meeting.

At the request of the Council we then had a discussion of next year's budget and what Guidance we could give the Search Committee vis-à-vis the salary for a settled pastor. John H and Kerry said that next year's budget didn't look like it would be much different from this year's in terms of income and therefore, we are still looking at a half-time position. Kerry mentioned, as he had at the last Council meeting, the idea of looking into sharing a pastor with Sharon. There was more discussion on whether it was appropriate to use endowment income for operating expenses (such as salaries). John H indicated his opposition to this idea but did make the point that it was ultimately a congregational decision.

Lastly, we discussed the possibility of grant money to bolster our Music Director line item in hopes that we could hire a Music Director as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm.

Submitted by John Hawkins