



SPECIAL VESTRY MEETING

MEETING MINUTES
Tues. April 8, 2008 – 6pm to 9pm.
St. Nicholas Bldg, Rm 216

Vestry Members Present

Susan Lewis, Senior Warden
Bob Muglia, Junior Warden
Sam Fleshman
Phil Haas
Carol Hoerster
Kate O'Sullivan
Margaret Rothschild
Randy Urmston
Herb Williams

Officers Present

John Hoerster, Chancellor

Vestry Members Absent

Antonio Foglia
Miller Adams
Sandy Brown
Michele Hasson
Randy Revelle
Greg Rickel, Bishop

Staff Members Present

Ralph Carskadden, Priest In Charge
Virginia Lenker, Recording Sec'y
David Mesenbring, Pastor for Church
in the World
Liz Sloat, Exec. Assistant

Guests

8 guests attended

Call to Order

Susan Lewis called the meeting to order at 6:10. Father Ralph Carskadden led the group in a reflection about an icon titled "The Harrowing of Hell" that is hanging in his office.

Old Business

Proposed Resolution #08-FI-02 (Approve Gift to Seeds of Compassion to help fund Interspiritual Breakfast)

This resolution helps underwrite the costs of the April 15, 2008 Seeds of Compassion Interspiritual Prayer Breakfast with a gift of \$1000. The event, originally scheduled to be held on campus, was moved to a hotel for easier compliance with security issues, but in the process incurring costs of using the hotel. An offer to help secure funding was offered by Dean Taylor before he resigned. In his absence, the Vestry has decided to go forward with a small donation to demonstrate the Cathedral's commitment to the promotion of interfaith and interspiritual dialogue in our community. To keep the gift budget neutral, some members of the Vestry donated the \$1000 to the Operating Budget of the Cathedral.

The Resolution was moved, seconded and passed with one vote against at the Vestry's April 1, 2008 meeting, and is hereby entered into the vestry's minutes.

Proposed Resolution to Hire Mary Coon as Interim Chief Operating Officer

On the advice of the Chancellor, John Hoerster, Susan read the following resolution adopted in Executive Session during last week special Vestry meeting: "The Vestry recommends to Ralph Carskadden, Priest-in-Charge, that he approach Mary Coon about serving as the Cathedral's Chief Operating Officer on an interim basis."

The motion was moved, seconded and passed unanimously at the Vestry's April 1, 2008 Executive Session, and is hereby entered into the Vestry's minutes.

New Business

"Healing Our Planet Earth", Saturday, April 12. Susan reminded the vestry about this conference, distributed an informational flyer and encouraged members of the Vestry to attend.

Saint Mark's Celebrates Seattle 2008 will be rescheduled, probably to October, but the date has not been determined yet. The Bishop's Bash will also occur in early October. Susan assured everyone that there is good communication between planning committees.

Press Packet. On the advice of Pete Strimer, former Diocesan Communications Director, and others, Susan recommended maintaining a Press Packet on file at the Cathedral office to deal with future requests for information about the Dean's resignation. The Vestry discussed and agreed to include 1) the seven documents posted on the website regarding the Donovan Report and the Dean's resignation, 2) the Press Release from the Bishop, and 3) a Seattle Times article written by Janet Tu. Bob recommended posting the Bishop's press release to the website now. Kate recommended including an introductory letter from the Bishop's office with contact info. John recommended that the Vestry take into account documents that might need to be added in the future.

The vestry made a motion to create a Press Packet about the Dean's resignation, to include the seven documents currently on the website, plus the Bishop's press release and a cover letter, and the possibility of adding more materials later. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Treasurer Vacancy. Tracy Garland resigned as Treasurer following the resignation of the Dean. The Vestry must elect someone to fill the vacancy. Bob Muglia and Phil Haas, in consultation with Cathedral staff and current members of the Finance Committee, agreed to take on the task of identifying a candidate.

Vestry Member Vacancy. There was a discussion on the process and timing of filling the open position created by Ben Porter's resignation. Susan reminded the Vestry that the new member orientation will be revisited on April 22, from 4:30-6pm. At the regular meeting of the Vestry on April 22 at 6p, officers will be elected and committee assignments made. The Chancellor reviewed the bylaws on replacing Vestry members noting that the Dean presents nominees to fill a Vestry vacancy. There was discussion on how to proceed under current conditions. Kate spoke of the many skills of the person who was previously nominated, and noted he had been waiting for a long time to hear whether he is in consideration. The Vestry agreed that the wardens and Father Ralph should meet and present a recommendation for a vote. They were asked to take into consideration the skills needs of the current Vestry. The vote on filling the vacancy will take place in the last week of April or first week of May 2008.

Finance Committee Chair Vacancy. In previous meetings of the Vestry and the Finance Committee concern was expressed that the Vestry should not wait until April 22 to fill the Finance Committee chair position. Phil Haas agreed on the condition that he was co-chair with someone who had experience with the committee. He will talk with current members of the Finance Committee about finding a co-chair. It was noted that previous membership on the Finance Committee is not a requirement for chairing the committee.

Committee Vacancies. Susan and Liz will email Vestry members with descriptions of committees, current openings, and rosters, including lay members, of the Vestry committees so that everyone is prepared on April 22. A minimum of two vestry members are required on each committee, with the exception of the Finance

Committee which requires three. Father Ralph and others expressed concern about matching skills to open positions. Bob noted that the Senior Warden is automatically on the Mission and Strategy Committee.

Reports/Discussion

Priest in Charge's Report

Father Ralph reported Bishop Greg promised to provide professional help for the Saint Mark's community in the months ahead. The Bishop has recommended that the Listening Sessions continue "as long as someone wishes to be heard." Father Ralph said that Cathedral staff should consult with John Hoerster about proceeding with the specifics and legalities of the Financial Settlement.

Interim COO. Acting on the request of the Vestry, Ralph approached Mary Coon and asked her to return to the Cathedral as COO on an interim basis. He was pleased to report that she had. He distributed a flyer with her priorities and requests which include working closely with the Priest in Charge, Finance Committee and Vestry on 1) a plan to address finance and accounting issues and implementation of the plan, 2) plans for interim & long-term staffing (including preschool director, development/stewardship manager, accounting/finance manager, property management), and 3) review new models for administrative ministry support and recommend them to the Vestry. Father Ralph said that some of staffing holes might not be filled during this interim period. He noted that Mary has asked that it be clear that her appointment is "at the request and with the support of the Bishop, Priest in Charge, Senior Warden and Vestry" and there is no fanfare. Her title will be Interim COO, to coincide with the Priest in Charge's term (3-5 months), and her schedule will be approximately 25-30 hours per week with a flexible schedule. Mary asked that her pay be based on the previous COO's rate or below, or a rate deemed fair by the Vestry. Susan will contact Mary to clarify how she would like the appointment announced. Mary's first day will be Wednesday, April 16.

Randy thanked Ralph for filling the vacancy and agreeing to come out of retirement. After applause, Ralph reminded the group that "we (including the whole congregation, plus the Diocese and D. House) still have a lot of work to do. We are all in this together, and nobody is off the hook." Kate stressed the need to shift from focusing on one person, to finding out how to work together as leaders.

Open Mike

A guest thanked the Vestry for their work especially in these tough times, and suggested that every meeting be started with a prayer. She asked if people who have dropped or not renewed their pledges have been contacted. Also, she was concerned about a family member being dropped off the Sunday prayer list, and wondered if that happened to other people and why.

A guest and member of the congregation, who had just returned to Seattle, noted that not everyone is "up to speed" on recent events, both because they had been out of town or for other reasons, and suggested that a brief synopsis be included at the beginning of community meetings. He thanked Kate for her kindness in explaining events.

Margaret stated that a lot of people are hurting, in light of recent events. This includes both congregation and Vestry members. Kate agreed, and added that some people have been personally attacked in community conversations. Kate and Father Ralph expressed hope that a consultant will come soon, to help people start the healing process. Carol reminded the group that the bishop offered pastoral counseling to anyone on the Vestry or Cathedral staff. There was discussion about having a Vestry retreat for the purposes of healing later in the spring.

David Mesenbring said that Jonathan Kattab, a leading human rights lawyer in Israel and a Palestinian Christian (Anglican), has been invited to preach at Saint Mark's on April 20, St. Mark's Day. He will be in town for a major conference about Palestinian Christians, and focused on that community which has been

reduced so much in recent years that it is in danger of becoming extinct. Father Ralph and David remarked that Saint Mark's was the first congregation in Seattle that gave a forum to Palestinians.

Phil expressed concern that in terms of preaching, we have not heard equally from the clergy on staff at the Cathedral. In particular he noted that he had only heard Marilyn preach once. Ralph understood the concern and said he will work with Becky, David and Marilyn on the preaching schedule.

Executive Session

The group went into Executive Session at 7:30pm in order to receive advice from counsel on communications issues.

During the Executive Session, it was decided by consent (and subsequently reported for the minutes) to make the document "Factual Background of Dean Robert Taylor's Resignation (Prepared by the St. Mark's Vestry, April 2008)" available to the congregation on the website and in the back of the nave and chapel.

Next meeting will be Tuesday April 22, 2008, 6:00pm in the St. Nicholas Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Lenker
Recording Secretary

Bob Muglia
Junior Warden