

Vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Richmond, Virginia
Minutes of the January 28, 2025 Meeting

The following vestry members were present: Bill Davis, Andy Luke, Anne Pinion, Whitney Van Der Hyde, Greta Kidd, Brenda McDowell, May Fox, Gayle Royals, Randy Seibert, Katherine Farley, Kathy Brock, Nan O'Connell, Mary Ashburn Pearson. Robert Birdsey and Chris Smith via Zoom

Staff Present: The Rev. John Rohrs, the Rev. Will Stanley, the Rev. Cate Anthony, Fred Staley

Also present: Bart Natoli, postulant for Holy Orders

Opening Devotions - John Rohrs led opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes - The December 17, 2024 meeting minutes were approved by voice vote with the edit of Dillon Gwaltney's name and Mary Ashburn Pearson was present via Zoom.

A. Focus Time: 2025 budget discussion and approval: the budgeting process begins in the fall and involves extensive edit and reviews by the finance committee, treasurer and executive committee. The goal is a balanced budget.

1. End of Year Financials: Fred Staley reminded the vestry that end of year financials will not be final until about mid-February (additional bills may come in). Current net surplus is \$14,000 (\$6,000 was budgeted). \$760,000 in available cash (some unrestricted is money market). \$539,000 is prepaid pledges for 2025 (which is larger than typical).

2. Annual Giving Campaign Update: While the stewardship committee is still actively securing LYBYNT donations (Last Year But Not Yet This Year), the campaign has exceeded its \$2.75 million financial goal by \$59,000 (\$2,809,345). We currently have 802 pledges with a goal of 875. Palmer Hall reported 69 pledges (up from 40 (2023) and 12 (2022)). The children of Palmer Hall submitted giving boxes totaling \$225 and when matched results in a \$500 donation to Hurricane Helene recovery efforts.

3. Proposed Operating Budget: Fred went over revenue explaining how we arrive at the total income of \$3,562,000. Expenses: Payroll includes COLA of 4% and the positions of the new Director of Outreach starting March 1 and new Administrative Assistant starting July 1. The music budget has increased. The youth budget includes an increase for a summer youth service trip to Asheville and will be offset by fees. In outreach the \$125,000 in grants is equal to 2024; and an additional \$5,000 is for discretionary use. The budget has a surplus of \$6,451.

4. Proposed Capital Projects Budget

This is funded from 4% of capital reserves for projects to include the chiller compressor, plaster repair and Palmer Hall expansion for a total of \$51,000.

From Budgeted Capital Projects for LED lighting upgrades which will result in significant savings (and will help offset costs) for a total of \$35,000.

From Preschool Funds Capital for LED lighting upgrades (in the Preschool space) and playground refurbishment approved in prior months for a total of \$65,000.

The vestry approved the proposed 2025 budget.

B. Ongoing Business

1. Treasurer's Report: included above

2. Executive Director's Report: included above

3. Junior Warden's Report: Anne Pinion gave a report on Jeff Johnson's behalf. Water staining of woodwork: the roofing company repaired flashing above the sanctuary and we can start the plaster repair. Water: All water repairs have mostly been rectified; however, there is some water damage above the organ pipes that needs to be addressed. The Dogwood playground refurbishment project will begin moving forward this summer. Some additional lighting is needed at both the Three Chopt and Grove entrances. There is a diocesan goal to be carbon neutral by 2035. The creation care committee is working on determining the current carbon footprint and identifying initial first steps. The LED lighting upgrades will help. In addition, the comprehensive facilities plan (20 to 25-year horizon) will be funded from capital reserves.

C. Senior Warden and Clergy Reports

1. Senior warden's report: the vestry heard from and conversed with Bart Natoli, who is in the ordination process. Bart shared his experience with the internship at St. James the Less in Ashland (education portion of process). The vestry voted in favor of Bart's candidacy with at least two-thirds of the members' signatures. Motion approved.

2. Rector's Report - John Rohrs reported on the following

- a) Staff update
- b) Sabbatical letter to the parish: John to send a letter to the parish prior to the annual meeting to communicate plans about Will's sabbatical (June 1-September 1). In addition he will send communication relating to current political atmosphere.
- c) Annual meeting and vestry calendar: the annual meeting is February 23, new vestry class will be affirmed by parish, all vestry to attend lunch and then abbreviated first vestry meeting.

D. The next vestry meeting is February 23, 2025.

E. Closing Prayer

Respectfully Submitted,

Whitney Van Der Hyde, Register