

Excelsior United Methodist Church
Leadership Team Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2024

Attending: Attending: Julie Newell, Brooke Heerwald Steiner, Bill Lester, Jennifer Brady-Johnson, John Fischer, Tyler Cronk, Jill Jewell, Jim Stromberg, Philip Pulitzer, Sarah Nelson

Communications - Julie moves to approve. Jim seconds, passes unanimously

Thank you to John Fischer for his years of work on the team. He'll be rolling off now. Jill transitions to the Trustees role for her final year.

Beth Firkins will be joining the Leadership Team in the ministry role for 2024-2027. Sarah joined Communications 2024-2027.

Ministry Teams – Jennifer

Bill- will stay as chair of social justice, unless someone else wants to step-up. Role described as not a huge commitment out of the meetings. The social justice team is pretty self-sufficient.

Outreach Group will add another Chair

Climate Change – same

Anti-Racism- same

Looking for help for writing letters to elderly – see Kristie Lester with nominations.

Jennifer to forward requests to the nominating group/Brooke – brainstorm next steps to get more people involved and fill vacancies.

Jennifer - How do we find people to help with certain committees?

Jim Stromberg suggests defining scope – better received by individuals when they know what they are getting into.

Ministry Moment continues to be a successful way to communicate to the church. Last Sunday discussed Letter writing campaigns for Palestine/Gaza? AND Climate Justice- Earth Day Kick-Off Activities

Finance – Tyler

Tyler reviewed the Word Doc attached with updates on action items.

Tyler hopes to update Ministry Groups on budget vs. restricted funds NEXT WEEK.

Jill asks if we can go to donors to ask if they can pay their remaining capital campaign commitment now, to avoid interest. Response - yes we can ask, it is a small % of the outstanding total/debt balance

Brooke and Stewardship committee working on financial plan. Will come up with a unified Stewardship Plan

- met with Scott Sorel, former pastor, to consult on the financial situation. will update after he reviews details/data

- Met with someone who does Estate planning, consult on legacy funds

- Working on a solution to address all 3 major buckets together- Operating budget, capital campaign/debt management & upcoming costs

Brooke mentioned there have been some parishioners who have come forward to offer assistance.

Jill asked clarification- did parishioners come to Brooke with ideas or money? Answer is both – people are willing to help, but need to gather all the information first.

Bill asks – what is our communication plan to people who come forward?

4 families increased their pledge after the church meeting last week.

Jill asks – what is the timeline to make hard decisions? Cut staff? Hire music people?

Tyler answered – June, it will be long enough into the year to check out the contribution posture, are we going to see increased funds in 2024?

We can ask for approval to reduce apportionment. Brooke says only salary/personnel to cut is her own. All others wouldn't amount to anything.

Tyler answers – we have room to move funds in order to make pay-roll and pay bills...but June is the time we need to address if our trends are closing the gap between increasing contributions and reducing spending.

We have flexibility/ways to use cash to be able to buy us some time.

Jill – do we need to increase urgency?

Brooke – We have 3 years in order to get our operating budget to \$600K annually, we are having a lot of conversations right now to get there.

We think some of these conversations we will have will bring in material progress. Brooke said there is capacity to increase giving with current donors –

We don't want to scare people – we have great momentum and there is a lot of reasons to stay positive.

We need to take the time to get into a good strategy for our giving in the future.

Communication strategy on financial decisions will continue to be a discussion.

Brooke –

Lily Grant is completed and submitted! Will find out in August if it has been accepted.

Jane Kune – moved back into town. Happy to help w/ accompaniment!!

Music Director Update – Ready to Hire? Will discuss once the applicant pool is established.

Gail's Celebration is Sunday May 19th – token gift? We will add something in the bulletin for congregation contributions to the gift. Bill and Phil will take the lead on folks wanting to contribute musically to the service.

Trustees

Jim/John: sent report

Couple notes – Lyn has been working on exterior lighting (solar lights on hwy 7 side), Brooke/s request to move the food truck/van to the far corner of the lot. Snow plow guy has offered free tree trimming!

Possible \$600 expense for the boiler. Concerns about the chemistry in the piping, it needs some adjustment. There is a worst case scenario \$2,500 – 99% sure that will not be the case.

Insurance Costs? Possibility for reduction? Working

Jim asked Tyler to include running total on budget updates

Jim emphasizes a strong contract between the park association and church if we are going to be under the same insurance plan. The park needs to be primarily responsible for any increases due to claims on their part.

John – met with Church closers – updated guideline with check-lists

Park - Sarah

Playground/Equipment delivery set for 1-2nd week in May. Will update as it gets closer.

Plan to have a dedication ceremony in June/July and invite the whole community, ice cream truck, music, games etc.

Park has budgeted for extra to contribute to landscaping help and operation budget for future (mostly dedicated to insurance costs)

Waiting on Insurance Quote for park plan (est. \$4-5K annually)

Emphasized we have long term partners with the park in the community, we hope this is phase 1 of more to come! (Mt. Calvary, City of Excelsior and Rotary Club)

Group acknowledged the church may have to help fundraise or contribute to insurance costs in the future for the park. This is a project that fits the vision of the church and is part of the big picture.

SPRC - no updates

Brooke - Close

Read poem by Jan Richardson, "How the Light Comes"

Next meeting -

Sunday April 28, 2024 11:15am in person at Church

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Nelson