

Episcopal Church of the Ascension
Vestry Minutes
November 7, 2021

PRESENT; Senior Warden Zadinga Ogada, Junior Warden Kristen Keating, Danielle Allen, Adoma Baffoe, Wadai Dennis, Arturo Rodriguez, Monty Peterson, Ruth Anna Skowronski, Ed Armstrong, Gary McLaughlin (Treasurer). **ABSENT;** Wendy Quijada, Lauren Kingsland

Meeting opened at 2:05pm following prayer by Padre Javier.

CONSENT AGENDA: Zadinga stated that the information about the Sandy Ridge contract has to be reworded. Zadinga said she will send the reworded document to Kristen and Ophelia.

Ruth Anna moved to accept the minutes with the correction and Danielle seconded. It passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS; Gary stated that September was not a good month. We are lucky that we only lost \$11,000. We can make up that in a given month, but we haven't in the last few months. We are now averaging a \$7,000 loss year to date. We should come up on a reasonable amount by year end. We received a gift of approximately \$5,000 in stocks. Last week, we were invited to go to the diocese to talk about the mortgage. Gary told the Finance Committee of the diocese that we have a 38-year-old elevator which needs refurbishment. We have three proposals with the best being the \$100,000 proposal from Thyssen Krupp. We went to the bank (Bank of America) and they were not interested in giving us the loan. The Episcopal Church Building Fund agreed but wanted to roll in the mortgage. Gary didn't like the idea but after learning all there is about the loan, it made sense. The Bank of America mortgage we have which will be up in two years, has a rate of 5.875%. In running the two together with the Episcopal Church Building Fund, we will add the \$100,000 to the remaining mortgage of about \$120,000 to come up with a 25-year mortgage with an ARM (Adjustable Rate Mortgage) which will be renewed every five years. The first payment we will make has a rate of 3.75% and will be \$1,100 a month. We currently pay \$5,100 to Bank of America. If we continue to pay the \$5,100 to Episcopal Church Building Fund, we will pay off the mortgage in about five years. If it is not paid off in five years, the rate will be renewed. It could be up or down. Gary stated that we pay Bank of America about \$51,000 a year towards the mortgage. He asked the Finance committee of the diocese and they approved this. Two days later the Standing committee approved the loan. The last hurdle is the vestry's approval (affirmation) to move forward. Wadai asked if the ARM has an automatic renewal. Gary said yes. It is a commercial ARM which is different from a residential ARM.

Ed asked if there is a limit on the rate and how it is calculated. Gary did not have an answer, but he will check and report back. Arturo said that it will be tempting but not wise to pay the minimum payment and that we have to keep up with the payments. He also praised and thanked Gary for keeping us informed during the process to secure the loan. Arturo moved and Kristen seconded the motion to approve the mortgage application. It passed unanimously. Gary also added that the diocese suggested that we have a legal officer to oversee the document.

Zadinga asked Gary where the deposit for the elevator refurbishment came from since the loan has not been secured. He explained that it came from our checking account which has about a \$200,000 balance. He also hopes that by the time we make the next payment, we will have the funds from the loan.

Gary would like to see more people pledge and wants us to remind those who usually pledge at the end of the year to do so. He has sent reminders to about 25 people in that category.

Facilities: Kristen reported that Randall has three bids to clean the gutter for \$650, \$800 and approximately \$1,200. The \$650 bid is for the gutters and then another \$750 to trim the trees hanging over the gutters. Kristen has not spoken to Randall about all this yet, but she would like permission from the vestry to use no more than \$1,400 to do all the work. Zadinga asked if we have funds for this and Gary said that the Facilities Reserve Fund should have enough to pay for it. After discussion, Arturo moved for a maximum of \$1,400 to be spent to clean the gutters and trim the trees and Danielle seconded. It passed; Wadai abstained.

NEW BUSINESS:

OPEN MIC; Danielle asked when the Parish Council will meet. She also asked, on behalf of the RESJ committee, when the committee can submit a budget and for how much. Gary said there is no formal budget for the committee, but they can submit one stating the purpose for the budget. Deadline for submitting budgets is set for December 15, 2021. Padre confirmed that the Parish Council meeting will be held on December 9, 2021 at 7pm.

Ruth Anna: The RESJ is talking about trying an initiative to try to increase the LGBTQ and Spanish community. Just wondering what the vestry thinks. An idea is to attend church services at All Souls church in DC since they have a larger gay and lesbian membership. Danielle mentioned that the effort will include Asians. We also have to be careful how we invite and include new people in our community. Arturo's observation is that the RESJ committee has done a great job as a whole. He feels there has to be an evaluation of what the committee is doing. They don't have to look outside all the time, but we have to look at ourselves as well to make sure everyone feels welcome. Ruth Anna said it was a good point and it is the reason the History Committee was developed to address the history and current issues.

Ruth Anna stated that the River Road Lutheran Church in Bethesda had a coffee house and some of the youth used to hang out there. She thinks we can use Ascension House for that purpose. Padre and Kristen think it is a good idea. Wadai asked if the SDA church was not approved to use the space. They use it once a month. Friday nights for the youth to use the space should be fine.

Junior Warden election: The vestry was asked to send their votes to Padre for the Junior Warden. Danielle was elected as the new Junior Warden to begin her service in January 2022 after the annual meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Danielle made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Monty seconded. It passed unanimously. Ruth Anna provided closing prayer.

The meeting ended at 3:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
Secretary of the Vestry