

Tree of Life Church Council ZOOM Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 23, 2020

Members Present: President Jack Zimmer, Vice-President Kevin Solberg, Treasurer Jim Voelz, Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham, Secretary Susie Rust, David Fischer, Tom Gros, Larry Klotz, Jim Lemaux, Richard Schaper, Pastor Chris Lake

Members Absent: George Timmins

Visitors: Youth Director Bunny Stoutes

A. President Jack Zimmer called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM. Pastor Chris read the 23rd Psalm and led the opening prayer.

B. Consent agenda

I. Motion: Adoption of agenda *.

II. Motion: Approval of minutes (February 17, 2020)

III. Motion: Ratify new members: no new members:

MOTION: Larry Klotz moved to amend the February 17, 2020 minutes with an insertion of a word; Jim Voelz seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

MOTION: Jim Lemaux moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Jim Voelz seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

C. Financial reports

I. February Monthly Statement

Treasurer Jim Voelz reported that the February numbers looked pretty good, thanks to a large donation carry-over from December 2019. The non-pledged offering is dropping off and will probably get worse. But spending is below budget and we will have to keep it that way throughout the year. The recorded loss of \$715.23 under a new line item (Revenues: Interest and market change) was added this month. If our pledged monies come in, we will have minimal borrowing from Seeds, but we could probably run for 3 months just on our Seeds Account.

Discussion followed a question as to what percentage of our income is automatic. Heidi Beckham answered that in January and February about $\frac{1}{3}$ of our total income is on Realm. Generally about 40% of our income comes in automatic checks. David Fischer suggested that a letter might be sent out to especially encourage the mail-in donations. Jim Lemaux and Heidi Beckham will research income trends with additional income data from March. Treasurer Jim Voelz gave kudos to the office staff for a good job of advertising the way to give during this era of "streamed Sunday worship" due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

MOTION: Jim Lemaux moved to accept the Financial report and Larry Klotz seconded. All were in favor and the **MOTION PASSED.**

II. Vice-President Kevin Solberg and Treasurer Jim Voelz reported on the issue of Garage Sale Income. It has been resolved in follow-up discussions with TOL members, reiterating our youth and camp funds are a high priority to the church. President Jack Zimmer reported he also was approached by a couple of key youth volunteer leaders to

clarify Council position and feels we are now on the same page. Youth Director Bunny Stoutes has to delay our traditional Spring garage sale to Fall and hope to have the 2021 Spring garage sale as well. **ACTION ITEM:** Bunny will pick an October date this next week. and begin promoting it. Presently we have no more storage room at the church, although additional room might be available in September. Treasurer Jim Voelz offered to pay for additional storage. Decisions on camp are still ahead. President Jack Zimmer observed the brewing of a “perfect storm” between the Pandemic and the economy; if we can’t have long-term goals, we will concentrate on shorter-term goals.

D. Pastoral report

I. Pastor Chris Lake began by inviting any questions following the ZOOM meeting (Saturday, March 28) for Council members on the subject of Vicar Carrie’s resignation as our Wartburg Seminary Intern. The questions centered around why the Seminary ended her internship here at TOL, and why so abruptly. Pastor Chris offered that no one is happy about this, but the Seminary has authority over the local church and their decision is final. Protocols are in place at the Seminary and Synod to resolve the situation from this point on. Discussion followed as to how to address this as Council. Treasurer Jim Voelz suggested we approach this as to what we should learn from it. Our employee manual doesn’t yet address Internships here. President Jack Zimmer spoke with Vicar Carrie but she did not clarify decision details. Vice-President Kevin Solberg suggested we need more information and a **Task Force** was established to explore our Council response: Secretary Susie Rust (former Internship Lay Committee Chair) offered to lead these efforts.

II. Our first streamed worship service was well attended with 90 folks online. It has been a steep learning curve with daily adjustments continuing. Family members from the Lakes, Burkwalls, Stoutes, and Rineharts supported the backstage efforts. Streaming equipment was provided to Ryan Dockery and his church. The next big project is a (streamed) Wednesday Holden Lenten service, followed by the family movie “Abominable”, all in the TOL parking lot. Bishop Mike Rinehart is our guest preacher for the March 29 worship service.

Over **1000** N95 masks from our Muck-and-Gut supplies were distributed among Lone Star Clinic and small EMS groups.

III. There are no illnesses to report nor update on George Timmins. Deb Zimmer and Bunny Stoutes are contacting folks to check on how people are doing. Office Manager Megan Dillon is stepping away from her position and her end date is scheduled to be anywhere from April 30 to May 30. Discussion followed: do we need another person or could Bunny Stoutes, John Burkwall, and Pastor Chris manage our (reduced) office needs now? Bunny has offered to help with the office work and as Youth Director, has already planned out the whole summer youth schedule. Our traditional July VBS is in holding pattern. The Synod Convention in New Orleans (May21-23) has been cancelled.

E. Old Business

I. President Jack Zimmer and Pastor Chris Lake will renew their efforts to complete the **Employee Policy Manual**.

II. Larry Klotz and Vice-President Kevin Solberg updated efforts on the Memorial Walk/Prayer Path. Larry Klotz has spoken with Choate Monument Company in Bryan-College Station who gave the following bid: Show-up trip is \$350 and costs for bricks are \$50 for 6"x9", \$135 for 12"x12". The five engraved bricks currently planned will cost \$770 total. **MOTION:** Pastor Chris moved that we accept this bid and finish this long-awaited project. Jim Lemaux seconded. Discussion followed.

We have had money to do this for 18 months and these completed bricks will serve as samples. We might want to do future bricks in groups of 5-10 orders at a time as the Show-up fees are \$350 each. All were in favor and the **MOTION PASSED**.

ACTION ITEM: Bunny Stoutes, Larry Klotz, and Kevin Solberg will figure out engraved brick prices for future sales.

III. Larger planning topics are tabled until next month

IV. President Jack Zimmer reported that Kathy Krauzer did generate the attached findings and when finalized by next month will serve as our **2018 Financial Audit**. Kathy offered her services for next year. Treasurer Jim Voelz and Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham thought this was fine.

F.. New Business.

I. George Timmins will be resigning his role on Council. Pastor Chris will deliver a letter for him to sign. His wife Julie Timmins was willing to finish the term and discussion followed. The general consensus from Council was that she would be a good addition.

The bylaws will be checked to verify that a President may appoint a substitute to finish out a term.

ACTION ITEM: President Jack Zimmer and Pastor Chris Lake will facilitate George's resignation and invite Julie to the next meeting.

II. Dr. Liz Johnson will offer a presentation through a ZOOM meeting on March 29, at 9:15 AM regarding long-term investments through this ELCA affiliated company. This will be a 40-minute program with opportunities to meet with her individually at a later time.

III. Our next Council ZOOM meeting is set for Monday, April 20, at 6:30 PM.

At our May 18 Council meeting, we plan to invite guests: Vickie Rogers, Social Ministry Team Leader (Council Liaison David Fischer will arrange) and Kathy Krauzer.

IV. Treasurer Jim Voelz answered Jim Lemaux's question as to updating our financial details in light of changes in staff and in youth activities; as soon as we have more data, this will be addressed.

V. Richard Schaper proposed a question about when (or if) we get bids for an annual HVAC Maintenance Contract: The cost for 10 units is about the same as last year

(\$2500). The timing of a checkup twice a year is at our discretion. i.e., spring (for summer check) and fall (for winter check). Treasurer Jim Voelz suggested that from a financial standpoint we wait on this, as we cannot anticipate summer usage yet. Currently we set the AC to run for 20 minutes every week to keep everything exercised and ready to use when needed. **MOTION:** Richard Schaper moved that we continue the annual Maintenance System checkups (twice a year) but not decide to begin bids for it until we decide we need it. Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham seconded. All were in favor and the **MOTION PASSED.**

VI. The topic of our **cleaning contract** was discussed in light of our streaming worship services. Youth Director Bunny Stoutes suggested having a deep clean of the whole church in place of the weekly clean. The Council thought this was a good idea, but would consider that at a later time. Bunny Stoutes and Pastor Chris will handle this.

G. President Jack Zimmer thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM. In closing, Pastor Chris Lake read verses from Isaiah and led the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Susie Rust
Council Secretary

NOTES: **2020 Congreg. Mtg.:** Jack Zimmer President (second 2 yr. term), Kevin Solberg VP, Jim Voelz, Treasurer, Susie Rust, Secretary, Heidi Beckham, Financial Secretary, Larry Klotz, George Timmons, Richard Schaper; and elected for 3yr. term in 2020: Jim Lemaux, David Fischer, Tom Gros. **2018:** Jack Zimmer. President 2yr. term, Jim Voelz(Treasurer), Linda Baumgartner(Sec 2018), Kirk Helberg, George Timmons, Heidi Beckham (Financial Secretary); elected for 3 yr. terms: Susie Rust (Secretary 2019), Richard Schaper, Kevin Solberg, Larry Klotz (VP). **2017:** Jim Voelz (Trea), Linda Baumgartner (Sec.), Kirk Helberg, George Timmins, Jack Zimmer (3Yr. terms) **2015** - Heidi Beckham, Elected 2014 - Jim Voelz. (2nd term),