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**MINUTES**

**GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**

**Monday May 21, 2018**

**Location: Room 109**

**Present:** Paul Arnold, Jim Ayres, Jean Reed Bahle, Tim Creamer, Kathleen Delp Higgins, Patrick Eaman, Win Irwin, Carol Kooistra, Brad Miller, Katie Mitchell, Dana Munk, Amy Preston, Bettegail Shively, Mark St. Amour, Chip Wall

**Absent:** None.

**Staff:** Jack Woller, W. Fred Wooden

**Guests:** Mike Grass, Todd Johnson, Tom Logan

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by the Chair, Win Irwin.

1. **Call to Community** Carol Kooistra Contemplation

Carol Kooistra read from the works of David Rankine on the topics of fathers and freedom .

1. **Congregant Comments** Guests Comments

None.

1. **GB minutes – February 19, 2018** Paul Submit to File

***MOTION*** by Brad Miller to submit the April minutes to file. Seconded by Jim Ayres.

1. **Financials** Tim Approval

Tim Creamer reported an expected $30,000 shortfall from budgeted amounts this year. Tim stated that church staff are working to manage the budget. Tim said that the Finance Committee does not recommend making any cuts at this time, as they would be detrimental to church functions.

Jack Woller presented a Venue Rental Price Analysis by Events Manager Conor Bardallis, which gives a market analysis of event pricing by other local venues, as well as ideas for increasing event revenue while maintaining competitive pricing. Jack welcomed feedback from the Board, though event pricing is a staff decision. Tim Creamer said the Finance Committee supports the ideas.

Tim Creamer said the Finance Committee also discussed the need to develop a fundraising strategy. Tim said that currently, several church subgroups make uncoordinated asks, which should be aligned into a more cohesive fundraising strategy to avoid multiple or untimely asks of members. Tim added that we need to earn support by showing how member pledges will be used. Jack Woller said that this strategy would require knowing each subgroup and committee's anticipated expenses for the year. Jim Ayres said that there needs to be a governance policy in place to control when and how funds are requested. Kathleen Delp Higgins asked whether subgroups' fundraisers are monitored and processed by staff.

Tim Creamer said that the Finance Committee has also been looking at balance sheets for dormant funds, to see if there are any complete projects or inactive groups whose funds might be folded into operating costs. Tim emphasized that any restrictions made by the funders on their donated funds would be respected.

Jack Woller added that sales of historical Fountain Street posters have started from the webstore and at a table onsite. Jack said this could provide a few thousand dollars of additional revenue this year.

***MOTION*** by Tim Creamer to approve the Finance Report. Seconded by Patrick Eaman.

1. **Executive Team Report**  Jack

No comments.

1. **Historical Marker Application**  Tom

Tom Logan said that he is nearly done with the application to the State of Michigan for a historical marker for FSC. Tom said that there is a year-long lead time; he hopes for the marker to be approved by the end of 2019. Tom said the marker would likely be double-sided, supported by posts, and be put somewhere it can be seen from both directions.  
Tom asked for a Board endorsement of making the application. Tim Creamer asked about the cost for the marker. Tom Logan answered that the application fee is $250, a tall double-sided marker might cost up to $4,000, and the Foundation may be interested in providing funds since it is a property improvement. Win Irwin added that other church groups such as Archives have been approached and should be included in this process. Several Board members thanked Tom Logan for his efforts in this matter.

***MOTION*** by Carol Kooistra to support and approve the historical marker application to the State of Michigan. Seconded by Win Irwin. Motion passed.

1. **Oversight Committee Report**

Carol Kooistra reported that the proposed by-laws changes passed at the May 20 special member meeting. Carol distributed packets with those changes already made, crediting staff help from Melissa Hoezee. Brad Miller asked about the set of 7 by-law changes proposed at the member meeting by Don Wheeler. Carol Kooistra answered that those suggestions will be reviewed in the fall, ready for presentation at the annual member meeting.

Carol Kooistra described the process of the "retrospective" performance review of the Senior Minister.

Carol Kooistra provided a list of the 2018 FSC Summer Speakers.

1. **Objective #2 Report**   
     
   Brad Miller said that Objective #2 seems like a large and ongoing project. Brad described their proposal of a new entity called the Community Engagement Team. Brad said it would be an open group to step up involvement within and outside the church. Win Irwin said that he sees value in a Community Engagement Team who could provide data about why people come to or leave Fountain Street Church.

Jack Woller described his efforts with an exploratory group of 3 internal and 3 external people also studying community engagement with FSC.

1. **Portico Direction**  All Reflections

Win Irwin brought up continuing concerns over enforcing the church policy about unauthorized portico use. Jack Woller said that because it would be difficult to restrict portico use without restricting portico access, there has been research into either glass or wrought iron fencing. Jack said that his personal stance is that if the church does make a move to restrict building access, we would need to also do something to make a statement showing that we are interested in doing more than sending people away. Jack spoke about true collaboration with local organizations more expert in street-level social work.

***MOTION*** by Brad Miller that the following three steps be implemented and communicated to our homeless neighbors, the congregation, relevant social service agencies, and law enforcement officials to alert everyone who should know of this direction.  
  
1) Enforcement of the building policy against sleeping on the church grounds should commence at the earliest opportunity but no later than September 1, 2018.  
  
2) We should immediately contract with someone knowledgeable of homeless programs in the area that could be available on Sunday mornings in the Social Hall to answer questions, direct people to appropriate local services, and help staff in dealing with any problems that may arise on site. Funding for the resource should come from the monies collected each week for Social Action grants.  
  
3) Fountain Street Church should formally join the Grand Rapids Area Coalition To End Homelessness. Sixty other community organizations are members of this coalition and work together to identify gaps or overlap in services. FSC should be at the table to fully understand the scope of this problem in the region and truly meaningful actions that can be taken. There is no fee to join the coalition and we could be represented at their meetings by church staff or a member of the Social Action Committee.  
Seconded by Jim Ayres.

Brad Miller said that this proposal is budget neutral, using a reallocation of Social Action Committee funds. Brad gave a rough first estimate of this cost at $5,000 a year out of the approximately $50-60,000 annual collection. Brad emphasized that this would not create a new program of services for people experiencing housing insecurity, but rather connect them to existing services. Brad Miller said that he has spoken with Jason Hubbard about possibly using Social Action Committee funds for this proposal. Brad added that he thinks plate contributions would increase because people want a way to help people experiencing homelessness besides a direct donation.

Jim Ayres said that he has felt conflicted about this topic and has appreciated what Mark Saint Amour has written in support of welcoming neighbors as part of our mission. Jim said that he has not wanted to simply shut down access to the building.

Jean Reed Bahle said that this proposal helps her think about the balance of hospitality, safety, and not enabling dangerous situations. Jean asked how this might be received by the neighbors themselves, how it could be presented so the first sign isn't an iron wall going up. Brad Miller said that security staffing and partnering with social organizations could help enforce appropriate building use without the cost and image of a physical barrier to church spaces.

Jack Woller asked what this motion is asking of staff in regards to enforcement. Jack said that sleeping on the property is currently being enforced on an as-problem basis, rather than every night. Jack asked for specific direction on this divisive church issue.

Mark Saint Amour asked whether it is even feasible to do enforcement of the property without physical access barriers. Jack Woller answered that from his research, there would need to be an expensed intervention. Jack added that the architectural intervention would be much less expensive than nightly security. Jack estimated that it could cost between $15,000-45,000 per year for full security. Jack said that the majority of the Sunday church space users are less open to services than those who visit throughout the week, so an outreach attempt would need to go beyond Sundays.

Dana Munk said that part of what she believes the mission of the church is to help the people experiencing housing instability in a helpful and sustainable way. Dana said that the security expenditures we choose should also advance the mission.

Jack Woller said that joining the Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness group would be a symbolic gesture more than a solution. Brad Miller said it could provide networking on this issue.

Mark Saint Amour said that as much as they want to give the staff concrete direction, they did not feel like they have enough concrete information about costs of any of these options.

Bettegail Shively brought up the possibility of grants to fund some of these projects or programs. Jack Woller said more specific ideas were needed first and grants are time consuming.

Fred Wooden said that the big question on the floor, where clergy and staff need direction is: does the Board want to say we do not want anyone sleeping on church property. Fred said that once the directive was given, the clergy and staff would be able to come up with some implementation strategies - and/or to discern external resources.

Fred Wooden said that while there are overlaps, there are multiple communities of people using our building during Sundays and people sleeping on the portico at night. Fred said we should not conflate or confuse the two. Jim Ayres said that he wanted to understand specifically why allowing people to sleep on the portico is leading to dangerous behavior, as well as what the differences are between the nighttime and daytime building users.

Mark Saint Amour stressed the importance of starting with a People First model of addressing the population with trained professionals.

Several Board members thanked Brad Miller and Mark Saint Amour for putting forth their ideas to address this complex issue.

***MOTION*** by Paul Arnold to table the issue for one more month until the next Board meeting, to communicate with the congregation on this topic. Seconded by Kathleen Delp Higgins. Motion passed 7-5. 1 abstention.

­­­­Katie Mitchell said that another benefit of spending a little more time on this is for transparency to the church community, who might want the Board to know statistics and budget impact before making a decision.

Bettegail Shively proposed an email to the congregation notifying them of this discussion for transparency and providing a public comment period. Patrick Eaman agreed that the Board are representatives of the congregation, who should offer input of how to move forward in speaking to and resolving better support of our neighbors in this church.

Win Irwin asked the Board to go out and talk to other church congregations about what they have done, to be informed for the next Board meeting. Patrick Eaman said he would share some examples of organizations faced with legal liability from injuries on their property. Several Board members agreed on the need for specific research in the next month.

1. **New Business**

Win Irwin introduced a matrix prepared by Patrick Eaman to identify any gaps among Board members in either experience or representation of major FSC subgroups.

1. **Adjourn & De-brief** Motion to adjourn All

***MOTION*** by Paul Arnold to adjourn at 8:59. Seconded by Carol Kooistra. Motion passed.

**Upcoming GB meetings and events**:

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| Next OC/ET meeting | Monday, June 4, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | OC, Sr.Minister, Ex Dir  Board Room |
| Next GB meeting | Monday, June 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m. | GB, senior staff, Room 109 |
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**Secretary Paul Arnold  
Scribe Katie Assarian**