

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2020

Opening Devotion: The Rev. Elizabeth Gardner called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. via Zoom video conference and led the Vestry in prayer.

Present: Belinda Appiah, Jim Bailes, Rob Bluey, Eric Bryda, Charlotte Brown, Francisco Escobar, the Rev. Elizabeth Gardner, Nihal Masih, Mary Jane Stockstill, David Walton.

Clerk's Report: Jim Bailes made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from April 20, 2020, and May 19, 2020, Mary Stockstill seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

Rector's Report: Rev. Elizabeth spoke about faith in the future. She discussed plans for a joint worship with the St. Mark's, Olivet, All Saints Sharon Chapel that builds on the virtual experience with the Potomac Region. A few notes from her remarks:

- It's important to create a vision based on our passions, dreams, and hopes. We have the extraordinary privilege and opportunity to create a new Christian community—an opportunity to do church in new ways.
- St. Mark's should choose clarity over certainty. Clarity is presenting a clear concise vision for the future. Clarity brings hope. Certainty is speaking in concrete absolute terms. There is no flexibility in certainty, making it difficult for others to come on board because they cannot envision what we see. Certainty is grounded in past actions. Clarity creates flexibility.
- The Vestry is called, at this time and in this place, to demonstrate flexibility and commitment to the Kingdom of God. Now is the time to dream and then clearly promote our united vision to the community.

Senior Warden's Report: Jim Bailes said wardens from the region's churches have been meeting and talking as a group with their rectors about what will happen when they reopen. There are no plans to reopen before September for safety reasons. Even then, restrictions will limit what St. Mark's is able to do (for example, a music soloist would need to be 23 feet away from everyone). Because of its size, St. Mark's is the only church that can accommodate more than 30 people and welcome parishioners from Olivet and All Saints Sharon Chapel. St. Mark's has more resources, the biggest sanctuary, and the most entry/exit points. St. Mark's will continue to offer a virtual experience once we reopen to give parishioners who can't join in person an opportunity to worship. Mr. Bailes announced there would be a region-wide webpage and social media for all churches in the Potomac Region. Pohick Church has invited all of the churches to participate in a virtual Vacation Bible School.

Junior Warden's Report: David Walton circulated the guidelines and parameters from the Diocese to return to the church building and conduct outdoor worship. Mr. Walton recently met with the interim director of River Farm Cooperative School. RFC is unclear what it will do—an all

virtual environment or half virtual/half in person. Once we hear from RFC, Mr. Walton will submit a new Letter of Agreement to the Vestry. He also reported that the Boy Scouts, Pan de Vida, and San Marcos want to get back in the building, although they will need to adhere to the Diocese's guidelines and our requirements. We will need to have conversations with them about their belongings and storage. Therefore, he's proposing the creation of a Reopening Subcommittee, which is open to Vestry members and parishioners. This subcommittee will help make decisions on everything from WiFi access to the availability of cloth masks and hand sanitizer. Services would be limited to 50 people with no collection plate, no singing, no peace, and no coffee hour. St. Mark's will also be pursuing a church planting grant from the region to cover online expenditures for streaming church services. St. Mark's would retain the video equipment.

Treasurer's Report: Eric Bryda presented a statement of financial activities through May 2020. St. Mark's finished the month of May with a surplus of \$3,960.52. For the year to date, St. Mark's has a surplus of \$11,733.50. By comparison, the budget projected a deficit of \$12,479.20. Mr. Bryda is working on a budget recast for the July meeting, accounting for the \$100,000 cut from the budget. Jim Bailes made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, David Walton seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

Good of the Order: Charlotte Brown presented the St. Mark's Financial Internal Controls Policy, which adheres to the Manual of Business Methods in the Church Affairs in accordance with Title I, Canon 7 and the principles defined in the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). There are seven internal control procedures:

1. Separation of Duties
2. Accounting System Access Controls
3. Physical Audits of Assets
4. Standardized Financial Documentation
5. Daily or Weekly Trial Balances
6. Periodic Reconciliations in Accounting Systems
7. Approval Authority Requirements

St. Mark's has been testing the policy to make sure it works. The policy raises the limit to \$2,500 for expenses requiring two signatures. It also identifies recurring transactions (e.g. church pension, insurance). Rev. Elizabeth recommended the Vestry review the list annually.

Resolutions

1. **Whereas**, St. Mark's has received a donation from a parishioner at The Fairfax, be it **Resolved** that the Vestry approves transferring \$15,873 from General Fund to Capital Projects Fund.
Eric Bryda made the motion, Jim Bailes seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.
2. **Whereas**, St. Mark's requires an internal control policy that adheres to the Manual of Business Methods in the Church Affairs in accordance with Title I, Canon 7 and the principles defined in the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), be it

Resolved that the Vestry adopts the Financial Internal Controls Policy and requests an annual review of recurring expense transactions.

Jim Bailes made the motion, Mary Stockstill seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

3. **Whereas**, St. Mark's must develop and implement a reopening plan consistent with the guidance provided by the Bishop to ensure that the church is ready to resume its regular 10 o'clock service at the earliest possible date, be it

Resolved that the St. Mark's Vestry authorizes the establishment of a St. Mark's Reopening Subcommittee with the Junior Warden serving as chairperson. Committee membership is open to any Vestry member or any member of the St. Mark's congregation.

David Walton made the motion, Rob Bluey seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

4. **Whereas**, St. Mark's is beginning preparation for in-person services at the church, be it **Resolved** that St. Mark's will serve as host church for Episcopal congregations in the Potomac Region for at least the first six weeks after in-person services resume.

David Walton made the motion, Rob Bluey seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

5. **Whereas**, the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented several St. Mark's tenants from utilizing the church building, be it

Resolved that San Marcos, Pan de Vida, and the River Farm Cooperative School will be given credit toward future rent beginning with any rent paid to St. Mark's from June 1, 2020, until the building has reopened.

David Walton made the motion, Jim Bailes seconded, and the Vestry voted to approve.

Adjournment: The Rev. Elizabeth Gardner offered a closing prayer. Jim Bailes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:55 p.m., Rob Bluey seconded, and the Vestry voted to adjourn.