



Council Meeting Minutes

Date: September 15, 2020

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Zoom Meeting

Members: Sallie Smylie, Moderator Carl Nauert, Clerk
 Megan Lewis Alissa Lonergan
 Marteki Reed Susan Pierson
 Sue Saliny Dan Pietrini
 John Lurain Tim Dull
 Jamie Shamhart Dave Hanson
 John Borrero - E Lucas Banout-Kult
 Samantha Duwe - E

Staff: Rev. John Edgerton Alicia Reese
 Rev. Lydia Mulkey Amanda Swanson
 Amy Cardin

Guests: Bob Giles, Lois Love, Rick Ashton, and Tom Wolford

Sallie Smylie, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm with a quorum present.

I. Opening Devotion and Prayer – Susan Pierson

Susan Pierson's devotional reflected on the current environmental crisis, the pandemic, protests against racial injustice, and our education crisis. She finished by leading us in prayer.

II. Joys, Concerns and Remembrances

We shared the joys of new cats, the birth of twin grandchildren, and a positive Presbytery exegesis vote. We prayed for a brother with thyroid cancer, friends, a grandfather, a LGBTQ+ issue at work, and an elderly mother in law who fell.

III. Agenda Approval

Carl Nauert moved that Council approve the draft agenda. The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and it was passed unanimously.

IV. Omnibus Motion – Carl Nauert

Carl Nauert moved that Council approve the following:

Council Meeting minutes July 21, 2020
Special Council Meeting minutes – August 25, 2020
July/August Membership Report

The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and it passed unanimously.

V. Capital Campaign Update – Rick Ashton

Rick Ashton, Chair, shared that the Capital Campaign Planning Task Force has resumed meeting after a several month hiatus. He anticipates that the task force will begin evaluating consulting teams at its next meeting on September 17.

VI. Policy Approvals

Sallie invited Tom Wolford, Chair of the Personnel Policies Reconciliation Task Force, to introduce the updated Personnel Handbook, which compiles the policies of all Church employees including the staff and teachers of the First United Nursery School. The handbook can be found in the September Council packet. Tom explained the areas where the policies have differences between the two groups of employees. He also pointed out that the Nursery School has a safety policy, which will be reviewed in coordination with a review of the Church's current policy. After giving a summary of the task force's efforts, Tom thanked the members of the task force.

Carl Nauert moved that the Council approve the updated Personnel Handbook presented by the Personnel Policy Reconciliation Task Force. The Council also directs the Clerk to work with the Lead Pastor to ensure that the updated handbook is distributed to all church employees and posted in the correct Sharepoint folders. This motion was seconded by Dave Hanson

A friendly amendment that fixed page numbering in the handbook, changed the date in the handbook to September 15th and corrected an employee title (Communications Administrator) was moved by Sallie Smylie and seconded by Carl Nauert.

The motion with the amendment was unanimously approved.

Sallie dismissed the task force with Council's thanks to its members -- Tom Wolford, Ken Wylie, and Christine Ricordati.

Sallie next reviewed two new policies listed below. The policies can be found in the September Council packets along with a memo to Council giving background information.

1. Policy Governing Lobbying Activity by the Church
2. Policy Governing Participation in Political Campaign Activities

Sallie explained that the IRS has rules governing church lobbying and involvement in political campaigns. The Council and Lead Pastor should be involved in deciding whether the Church supports lobbying for or against potential laws, among other reasons, to ensure the activity remains an insubstantial part of the Church's activities. Sallie noted that the Church has historically engaged in lobbying activities, such as lobbying to reduce gun violence. Sallie also noted the importance of understanding the IRS rules prohibiting political campaign interference, especially given upcoming elections. The Faith in Action Team has reviewed these policies and supports them.

Policy Governing Lobbying Activity by the Church: Carl Nauert moved that the Council approve the Policy Governing Lobbying Activity by the Church presented by Sallie Smylie, Church Moderator. The Council directs the Clerk to ensure that this policy is included in the First United Governance Manual and posted in the Sharepoint Policies and Procedures folder. The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and passed unanimously.

Policy Governing Participation in Political Campaign Activities: Carl Nauert moved that the Council approve the Policy Governing Participation in Political Campaign Activities presented by Sallie Smylie, Church Moderator. The Council directs the Clerk to ensure that this policy is included in the First United Governance Manual and posted in the Sharepoint Policies and Procedures folder. The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and passed unanimously.

VII. Financial Reports – Bob Giles

Bob Giles, Chair of the Finance Team, reviewed an updated version of the FY 2021 budget that was passed by Council in the July Council meeting. Bob explained that the budget changes, resulting in a larger projected deficit, are explained primarily by decreased enrollment in the Nursery School. We discussed whether to reapprove the budget before the October 4th annual meeting and decided that it was not necessary. The Nursery School enrollment (and revenue) frequently changes and could well change again before the congregational meeting. Importantly, the Church has sufficient cash reserves to cover the projected deficit, should it be realized.

Bob shared that the Finance Team has formed a sub-group to research unemployment insurance and any alternatives.

VII. Safe Church Policy – Lydia Mulkey

Sallie stated that we have asked Lydia Mulkey to lead our efforts in finalizing a draft safe church policy. Lydia reviewed past efforts to update the current policy (created in 1996 and updated in 2007) and anticipates an updated policy can be completed in short order.

Carl Nauert moved that Council create a Safe Church Policy Task Force to be led by Reverend Lydia Mulkey, tasked with finalizing a safe church policy for Council approval. The motion was seconded by Marteki Reed and passed unanimously.

VIII. Administration Search Team Update – John Edgerton

John updated the Council on the search team's efforts to locate a new administrator to succeed to Dennis Cobb. The team has updated the position description and title (from Administrative Assistant to Communications Administrator), received approximately 12 resumes, has interviewed numerous candidates, and has identified a preferred candidate with whom to continue discussions.

IX. Faith in Action Motion – Sallie Smylie and Lois Love

Sallie introduced Lois Love, Faith in Action Chair, and Lois then educated the Council on the background and continuing significance of the Oak Park Housing Center, the letter referenced in the first motion below and the lobbying activity documented in the second motion. The letter and the Faith in Action Team report can be found in the September Council packet.

Motion #1: Carl Nauert moves that Council approve the letter prepared by the Housing Justice Team which can be found in the Council packet and hereby direct Lead Pastor, Rev. John Edgerton, and Moderator, Sallie Smylie to sign and share the letter this month, September 2020. The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and passed unanimously.

Motion #2: Carl Nauert moves that Council approve the following proposed lobbying activity: The Housing Justice Team of Faith in Action along with Housing Justice and other congregants may engage in the lobbying activity described in the Faith in Action 9/8/2020 report directed to the Village of Oak Park Trustees and Mayor Abu Taleb to i) recognize and support financially the Oak Park Regional Housing Center as a key institution committed to working for and maintaining racial integration and diversity in Oak Park; and ii) the Village of Oak Park Board to call upon the Oak Park Regional Housing Center to help provide the leadership, expertise, and innovative ideas needed for the Village to live into the goals of our Oak Park Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement. The motion was seconded by Sue Saliny and passed unanimously.

Sallie introduced the following two motions and Lois provided detail:

Motion #3: Carl Nauert moves that Council approve the proposed nonpartisan election promotion activities described in the 9/8/2020 Faith in Action report designed to inform congregants on ways to participate in the voting process, including by becoming an election judge. The motion was seconded by Marteki Reed and passed unanimously.

Motion #4: Carl Nauert moves that Council approve the Faith in Action team initiative to encourage congregants to become educated on the Fair Tax Amendment, including by providing information about different perspectives on the Fair Tax Amendment and opportunities to attend public virtual meetings for education on this topic, between now and the election 11/3/2020. The motion was seconded by Marteki Reed and was passed unanimously.

X. Staff Reports

Please see the September Council packet for staff reports. John Edgerton shared that there were two burials this past week: John Hubbuch and Mary Brown (long time member). Alicia highlighted that Quest has been postponed due to the small size of the class and will be combined with the next class.

XI. Moderator Report – Sallie Smylie

Sallie, with assistance from Amy Cardin, Nursery School Director, highlighted a change to the First United Nursery School refund policy. The new policy can be found in the September Council packet.

Sallie also referenced Jon Edgerton's annual personnel review, a summary of which also can be found in the September Council packet. Sallie noted the consensus of those participating in the review that John had an extraordinarily strong first year. John's position description was amended as a part of his review and was also in the September Council packet. The Council approved the updated position description.

Carl Nauert moved that the Council approve the amended Lead Pastor position description as listed in the Council packet. The motion was seconded by Dave Hanson and was approved unanimously.

XVI. Team Updates

Team updates may be found in the September Council packet.

XVII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Carl Nauert moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 pm. The motion was seconded by Marteki Reed and approved unanimously. John Edgerton led us in closing prayer.

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY JULY/AUGUST 2020		
ITEM	DATE, NAME, FAMILY MEMBERS	TOTAL
Births		0
Baptisms		0
New members		0
Confirmations (also new members)		0
New Members		0
Members removed by request		0
Members removed by Transfer		0
Members removed by Death	August 11, 2020 Edna Kuiken Frank	1

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Nauert, Clerk