

## **Tree of Life Council Meeting Minutes December 9, 2019**

**Members present:** President Jack Zimmer, Vice-President Larry Klotz, Treasurer Jim Voelz, Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham, Secretary Susie Rust, Richard Schaper, Kevin Solberg, Pastor Chris Lake

**Members absent:** Kirk Helberg, Linda Baumgartner

**Visitors:** Tom Gros\*, David Fischer\*, Jim Lemaux\* (\* designated nominees for Council terms to begin in 2020)

Tillman Academy Board members: Rob and Emily Anders, James Kennedy, Lisa Branch

Pastor Chris Lake opened with prayer and Jack Zimmer called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

### **A. Consent Agenda**

I. Motion: Adoption of agenda

II. Motion: Approval of minutes (November 11, 2019)

III. Motion: Ratify new members: Evelyn Hyde, John & Joni Stephenson, and daughter Maria, Dee Donelson

**Motion: Vice-President Larry Klotz moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Richard Schaper seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

### **B. Discussion Agenda**

Tree of Life Lutheran Church has been asked to consider leasing our Fellowship Hall building as a site for a proposed private school (initially K-4) called the Tillman Academy. Tillman Board members presented the background, intention, and initial business plans for the Academy, whose focus is to exemplify and develop "Leadership, Character, and Civic Virtue" among its students. The school's namesake, Pat Tillman, is remembered as an outstanding football player who decided to forgo a career in sports to fight in Afghanistan following the 9-11 attack on the US. In doing so, he gave the ultimate sacrifice. The Tillman Foundation was established in 2004 by his widow Marie to help service members gain further education and Board member Rob Anders was one of the recipients of this endeavor.

Board members Emily Anders and Lisa Branch have extensive backgrounds in education and along with James Kennedy (real estate background and on the YMCA Board) and Rob Anders have been developing the program and branding of the Academy: a liberal arts education based on a classical model, encouraging respect, purpose, love of country and fellow man.

Board members see an excellent opportunity to begin the private school with K-4 grade levels, expanding as they can, to K-8, and ultimately K-12. They want to keep tuition costs low, (\$6500 vs. the average of \$13000-\$15000) and seek a low student/teacher ratio. Board members see TOL as an attractive location in a growing community, with room for 3 classrooms, lunch facilities, playground, & parking as they hope to launch their school in Fall 2020.

Discussion followed, with many questions from Council members regarding the values and model of the school as well as the financial plans and planned use of TOL facility. The Tillman Academy presented a "letter of intent", detailing needs, plans, and possible timeline.

President Zimmer thanked and excused the Tillman Academy members and the Council reconvened to deliberate on the question. The consensus of the Council is that this could be a win-win for the Academy and TOL and further research/due diligence is needed to properly examine the financial and logistical issues for TOL.

**ACTION ITEM:** A task force is established to work expeditiously to conduct the research and make a recommendation to the Council hopefully by the January 20, 2020 Meeting. Kevin Solberg was appointed Chair and the following will be asked to serve: Jeredith Pasechnik, Tom Gros, Larry Klotz, Jack Zimmer and Corrine Meyers.

### **C. Financial Report**

I. Treasurer Jim Voelz presented the October report sent out November 8, 2019. Total income is close to the budget, less about \$2000. The staff continues to hold expenses down; we still owe the Seeds account \$13,000. **Motion: Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham moved to accept the Financial Report; Jim Lemaux seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.** The preliminary November report looks good. President Jack Zimmer reminded Council that our meeting will be moved to the third Monday of the month, beginning January 2020, giving the Financial Committee additional time to complete their monthly reports.

II. Treasurer Jim Voelz presented the final 2020 Budget draft. Relative to the Revenues, the \$526,472 proposed budget was amended to approximately \$544,000 with increases in expected income of Building Use Fees to \$5000 and increase in Other Revenue to \$60,000. The most conservative budget possible that included a 4% increase for staff totaled \$584,443 which would cause a deficit of approximately \$40,000. The Council felt the income projections were conservative and recent history has shown that AND that we are capable of beating the expense budget when needed but regardless, it appears another deficit/faith budget will be presented.

**Motion: Vice-President Larry Klotz moved that we propose a 2020 budget of \$584,443, which include general expenses of \$297,890 plus staff salaries (with 4% increase) totaling \$286,553. Kevin Solberg seconded.** Discussion included suggestions to more closely analyze our income and spending actuals from the beginning of the year and add checkpoints throughout the year. **All were in favor and the motion passed.**

**ACTION ITEM:** This is the budget to be presented to the congregation for consideration at the Congregational meeting on Sunday, December 22, 2019.

### **D. Pastoral Report**

Pastor Chris Lake reported that Russ Bliese is interested in donating something special in memory of his parents. He is exploring a stained glass design plus a water wall to sit close to the baptismal font. Two of our church members, Barb Nelson and Bob Fellers, are currently hospitalized. One of our current nursery attendants (Talena) is resigning at the end of December and the search is underway for her replacement.

### **E. Old Business**

I. Vice-President Larry Klotz has reconnected with the Stone Company (call/email/in person), who assured him they will be out this week. Office Manager Megan Dillon will talk with

Kevin Solberg soon on the brochures for the engraved stones for the **Memorial Walk/Prayer Path**.

I. Our Annual Congregational meeting is tentatively set for January 19, 2020. We will set location and time for the February Council retreat next council meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm and Pastor Chris Lake led us in the Lord's Prayer to close.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Rust,  
Secretary

NOTES: Congregational January 2019 Meeting: Susie Rust confirmed as Secretary (replace Linda B.) Congregational Meeting 2018: Jack Zimmer. President 2 yr. term, Jim Voelz (Treasurer), Linda Baumgartner (Secretary), Kirk Helberg, George Timmons, Heidi Beckham (Financial Secretary); elected for 3 yr. terms: Susie Rust, Annie Lindemann, Richard Schaper, Kevin Solberg, Larry Klotz (VP). Congreg. Mtg 2017: Jim Voelz (Trea), Linda Baumgartner (Sec.), Kirk Helberg, George Timmins, Jack Zimmer (3Yr. terms), Dennis McConnell President (term expires in 2017). 2016 Congreg. Mtg: Susan Blough (Sec.) Elected 2015 - Heidi Beckham, Matt Hannes (2nd term), Chuck Will, Lawrence Zuelke, Elected 2014 - Linda Baumgartner, Alicia Macha (resigned position January, 2015), Jim Voelz. (2nd term), John Nye (2nd term), Julie Weeks. (2nd term)