

Tree of Life Council Meeting Minutes January 20, 2020

Members present: President Jack Zimmer, Vice-President Kevin Solberg, Treasurer Jim Voelz, Secretary Susie Rust, Larry Klotz, Jim Lemaux, Richard Schaper, Vicar Carrie Petersen, Pastor Chris Lake

Members absent: Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham, David Fischer, Tom Gros, George Timmins

President Zimmer called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and Pastor Chris Lake opened with prayer.

A. Consent Agenda

I.Motion: Adoption of agenda

II.Motion: Approval of minutes (December 9, 2019)

III.Motion: Ratify new members

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

B. Discussion Agenda

President Jack Zimmer distributed a sheet entitled "General Duties and Responsibilities of a Council Member". He reviewed the specific duties of Obedience, Care, and Loyalty to Tree of Life. President Zimmer gave examples, noting the good work done recently by our task force considering Tillman Academy (private school potentially leasing TOL space). Though the task force decided it was not currently possible, they learned what the church would require in order to consider this in the future. President Zimmer reminded Council that we may need to do "homework" to make our best choices and that we are always responsible to serve in the best interest of TOL. We may need to abstain or dismiss ourselves from a vote if there is a conflict of interest.

C. Financial Report

Treasurer Jim Voelz presented the December 2019 report and year-end wrap-up. Generally we are at anticipated revenue with about \$12,000 shortfall due to "Other Revenue" being less than budgeted. However; we are about \$30,000 under budget, thanks to expenses being held down in most areas across the board. We have repaid our Seeds Account (Dedicated Funds) \$10,000. In summary, we have about a \$6400 shortfall, without considering carryover, so we are pretty close to breaking even in 2019. We have moved from an estimated \$16,000 shortfall in 2017, to \$10,000 in 2018, and to \$6000 in 2019. As a church, we are improving our accuracy in forecasting our income and keeping our expenses down. Special kudos to Stewardship Chairman Jim Lemaux, and our Financial Team (Heidi Beckham, Ted Dinklage, and Jim Voelz) for their excellent work and dedication.

Motion: Richard Schaper moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Larry Klotz seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Jim Lemaux asked for clarification on the appropriate use of the Seeds Fund. Treasurer Jim Voelz answered that the largest amount from the Fund was intended for debt reduction, then renovations, then four specific charity projects. We have about \$100,000 left, half in our investment fund and half available for immediate access. If monies are borrowed from the Fund during the year for unanticipated expenses, they are repaid. Guidelines for using the Seeds Fund were established at its inception, but the Council may use the Funds as it decides.

D. Pastoral Report

Pastor Chris Lake gave a congregational update which included the good news that Vicar Carrie Petersen is cancer-free. Our Church mailbox was broken into and the lock has been replaced. There is feral hog activity close by so exercise caution on the grounds. Jessalyn Christianson is filling in as a nursery attendant. Pastor Chris is going to San Diego in February for Continuing Education. He is planning a trip to Kenya in April along with the founders of The King's Embrace, TOL members David and Linda Fischer, and others. He is also going to the Synod Assembly in New Orleans May 21-23.

Hospitalized members include Barb Nelson and Treva Allen (now home); Council member George Timmins has surgery February 4.

Special kudos to Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham for implementing a policy change from a year ago to do away with husband-wife counting partners for the weekly offering.

Worship planning for the year continues.

E. Old Business

I. Work on the Employee Policy Manual continues.

II. Larry Klotz reported that communication with the Stone company for the Memorial Walk/Prayer Path continues.

III. Vice-President Kevin Solberg, Chairman of the task force on the Tillman Academy, reported that TOL will not go forward with potential leasing of the Fellowship Hall space for a private school at this time. Counting the logistical costs, TOL cannot afford to share the space, and Tillman Academy cannot afford the costs of the estimated \$113,000 we would need to make the endeavor cost-effective for TOL. Treasurer Jim Voelz suggested we formalize and file notes from the task force. President Zimmer reported that the task team did a thorough and commendable job looking at the options.

ACTION ITEM: Task Force Chair, Kevin Solberg will produce a summary report.

IV. Pastor Chris Lake reported that the Bliese Stain Glass Window and Water Wall was in design stage. The final project would need Council approval. Further discussion is tabled for now.

F. New Business

I. President Jack Zimmer reported that the Council Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, March 21 (8:45 AM to 3:00 PM) at the residence of John and Linda Baumgartner. This will include the March Council meeting. Bishop Mike Rinehart is our facilitator.

II. President Jack Zimmer reviewed the Council/Ministry Teams Liaison Assignments. This initiative began two years ago and is meant to strengthen communications between council members and teams fulfilling the various roles of the church.

ACTION ITEM: Council members need to touch base with team leaders, listening for any concerns or suggestions to be addressed.

III. Vice-President Kevin Solberg brought forward a concern by a TOL member on the issue of Garage Sale income: How it is handled with regard to income for Youth expenses, i.e., camp/mission trips? If extra money is made, is that reserved for Youth in a special fund? Treasurer Jim Voelz answered that all monies made from Garage Sale, Mystery Dinners, and other Youth Fund-raising events are put into the General Fund. If the monies collected were not sufficient to cover all the Youth expenses, the Youth would still carry out their participation, because TOL would make up the difference regardless of any shortfall. Supporting our Youth Ministry has top priority.

ACTION ITEM: Treasurer Jim Voelz and Vice-President Solberg will continue the conversation with the concerned member.

IV. Treasurer Jim Voelz has been serving TOL Council since 2014 and as Treasurer, since 2016. He is pleased to continue as Ted Dinklage works behind the scenes with him on the financial spreadsheets.

V. Kathy Krauzer has completed the financial audit for 2018.

ACTION ITEM: Pastor Chris will contact her for report.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM and Pastor Chris led us in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Rust
Council 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)