

St. James Vestry Minutes
Tuesday, February 18, 2025
5:45PM

Participants: Rector De Freeman, Assoc. Rector Amanda Doshier, Finance Director Jim Ketchum, Senior Warden Margaret Cadden, Junior Warden Bruce Stone, Treasurer Amanda Montz, Dan Campbell, Tracy Corte, Jim Daniell, Bill Dowdle, Dee Gambill, Jennifer Lambert, Bettsie Norton, Cappi Sully, Ken Talbert, Misty Whitehead and Clerk Mary Mullins Redditt

Opening Prayer -

Amanda opened us in prayer at 5:46 PM.

Recitation of the Mission Statement -

The vestry then recited together the mission statement:

We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God, sharing His love, and serving others.

Meditation – Tracy Corte

Tracy offered a meditation on the practice of gratitude.

Discussion from Previous Meeting

Wedding Usage Update	(Tabled until March meeting)
School Tuition Agreement	(Tabled until March meeting)
Organ Repairs	(Tabled until March meeting)

Other

The vestry needs to approve the resolution from the Diocese for Drew Downey to join the diaconate, worthy of ordination. ***Dan made a motion to approve the resolution, Cappi seconded and all approved.*** Margaret passed the resolution around for signatures.

Decisions

Capital Campaign Update (Dee Gambill)

Development Committee is working now on approaching foundations for grants. Jeanie should be able to help with reaching out to Bestor Ward at the Bedsole Foundation. Jimmy Conyers may be able to reach out to Tom Van Antwerp at the Hearin-Chandler Foundation. Jim Laura has offered to help with the paver program. The Development Committee believes we should be able to make money this way, perhaps \$100-200K, but we will need to see the design and know the quantity we can sell. If interested in helping, let Dee know. Additional contributions came in after the Annual Meeting. We are at \$4.8 million promised right now. De and Dee will be having more meetings. Dee asks all vestry members to encourage more individual contributions in their small groups. Will be sending a letter out to all parishioners about the status and what is needed. Want participation from all, no matter the amount.

Building Committee Update

De sent an email to all vestry members yesterday with an update. We need to decide whether to move forward with the \$8.55 million project or whether we want to move forward with something at a lower price. Rusty with WAV has provided some options about not fully building out the multi-purpose building, though it really doesn't save us as much as we would hope. Doing the whole project is important to the future of the church, but we also want to be fiscally responsible. With the scaled-down version, we gain all the classrooms, the music room, a couple of rooms for church usage, a larger Green Hall, covered entrance up front (essentially everything but the multi-purpose building). If we do the scaled-down version now, we need to understand that fully building out the plan will cost us more later. Just doing a pavilion and not building out the multi-purpose building saves us \$1 million and puts us closer to a buildout later. \$6,122,000 would be the total base bid with the open pavilion. There will be additional soft costs, bringing us to about \$7.4 mil. Another cost-saving measure is not to invest in the soft costs for the classrooms until we would actually use them. Jim Ketchum reminds that the way to pay for our construction loan is to offer more classrooms sooner. Jennifer notes that the school really needs the multipurpose space now, and will more as we grow. Buildout of the school will have to be complete by July 2026 in order for us to offer additional classes for increased demand. We need to make a decision which way we want to go no later than May 2025. Bettsie asks if we have tried to have a fundraiser through the school for this yet. The parents of students may not be parishioners and could be a good market for fundraising. However, there are only about 75 families of students now. They may be in a better position to help with the in-kind and soft costs. The bank loan bids are for interest-only payments for two years, so that would give us two more years to raise additional money. Dee says there are 100 people who have pledged to the stewardship campaign who have not contributed to the Capital Campaign.

Cappi made a motion to move forward on the pavilion concept with the understanding we can build out as more funds are raised, Misty seconded. All approved.

Bruce made a motion to let the building team know to immediately proceed, Dan seconded. There was further discussion. Witherington will be producing a not-to-exceed cost in March. At the current rate, interest-only payments on a construction loan will cost us \$19,400/month. Bill Dowdle says we should work to pay off any loan as quickly as possible.

All approved the motion to immediately notify the building team we will be moving forward on the open pavilion concept.

2025 Budget (Amanda Montz)

Church income is budgeted for about what it was in 2024. The pledges are not as strong as they were last year, though we are expecting contributions to fill the gap in pledges. This is the first year in a while where we have not increased our estimated income. We don't have a lot of room to tweak expenses without drastically reducing services. Have cut our diocesan pledge. Outreach has been shifted to fund next year's activities with this year's income.

Misty made a motion to accept the budget, Tracy seconded and all approved.

January Financial Report (Amanda Montz)

Income was \$271 K (\$155 from the school). Expenses were \$171 K. Net income was just shy of \$100 K. There is \$2.5 million in cash. The majority of cash is at Merrill Lynch earning 4-5%. Capital Campaign funds are at \$1.5 million in hand. Expenses were \$130 K. ***Dee made a motion to accept the financial report, Margaret seconded and all approved.***

January Vestry Minutes

Dan made a motion to accept the vestry meeting minutes, Ken seconded and all approved.

Parish Meeting Minutes

Jim made a motion to accept the parish meeting minutes, Jennifer seconded and all approved.

Other

Margaret thanked all for their contributions to the Sirmon Family's sendoff.

The vestry will be serving red beans & rice, salad and bread at the first Lenten dinner on Wednesday, March 12.

NEXT VESTRY MEETING IS THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025

FUTURE VESTRY DATES: APRIL 29, MAY 22, 2025

Reminders: Shrove Tuesday Chicken & Waffles dinner: March 4, 5:30 pm

Ash Wednesday Services: March 5, 2025, 7:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 6:00 PM

Lenten Concert Lunches: Tuesdays during Lent beginning March 11, 12:05 pm

Lent Evening Program begins March 12, 5:45 pm—Vestry to cook first meal

Closing Prayer

Amanda offered a closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 pm