

St. Mary of the Hills
Vestry Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2020 at 5:30pm

Via Video Conference

Vestry Members Present: Chip Myers (Sr. Warden), Tim Silver (Jr. Warden), Doug Galke, Roy McCraw, Jim West, E.B. Springs, Sterling Hutcheson, Lisa Kaufmann, Jane Milner, Bill Furr, Crawford Cleveland, and Gigi Poole

Others Present: Fr. Andrew Hege (Rector), Amanda White (Treasurer), Elizabeth Sudderth (Clerk) and Fr. Sam Tallman

Fr. Andrew called the meeting to order at 5:35pm

A motion to accept the meeting agenda was made by Sterling Hutcheson with a second from E.B. Springs.

The Vestry approved the motion.

The July meeting minutes were reviewed. One correction was requested. The virtual tour description of the home of Bo Henderson and Ed Springs should not state their home was scheduled to be on the Tour of Homes this year.

Chip Myers made a motion with a second from Bill Furr to accept the July minutes with the needed correction.

The Vestry approved the motion.

The Clerk will make the correction.

Fr. Andrew shared a devotion. Gigi Poole led those present in reading from In the Early Evening. Fr. Andrew checked in with Vestry members. He referenced an essay by C.S. Lewis which focused on “little moments of grace where the heart sings unbidden”.

Andrew asked how Vestry members are finding moments of grace during this challenging time. Some examples shared were being able to visit a family member again in assisted living, Jane Milner welcoming a new great grandson-John Ramsey Moore, Jr., the McCraw family celebrating 53 years of marriage, enjoying playing a sport with friends, a long visit via Zoom with grandchildren, gratitude for a long happy marriage to a spouse who has passed away, hope as a loved one faces a serious health issue.

Andrew wished a happy anniversary to the McCraws and happy birthday tomorrow to Jane Milner.

Andrew shared the news from Dean Hamric that the Tour of Homes gala will not be held this year. There is still the hope that a small in-person gathering of some type may be held for the Gala sponsors. He encouraged everyone to view the virtual tour of Bo and Ed’s home.

E. B. Springs shared an update on the service mark request. E.B. sent the packet of information to the attorney in Winston-Salem on June 21. E. B. has tried several times to contact the attorney to get a status update. He recently spoke with the attorney and learned he has not submitted the packet to the office of the Secretary of State. He told E.B. he has been out of his office for an extended period of time and he will get to this as soon as he can. E.B. will get in touch with him

again the week prior to the next Vestry meeting and if he has not submitted it by then E.B. will do that himself.

Fr. Andrew shared his thanks to the Vestry Nominating Committee for their good work in the discernment process which led to the choice of a slate of candidates for the open Vestry positions. The slate of candidates will be presented to the parish for their approval at the annual meeting on August 30. The slate of candidates was sent out to the parish yesterday. The parish members chosen for the slate are Marjory Holder, Patty Patella, Chip Monroe (year round) and Faith Jones (seasonal).

Amanda White shared the Treasurer's report. The financial reports were sent to Vestry members prior to the meeting. Amanda reviewed the reports and is happy to report that next month a new, much easier to read format for reporting will be shared. She expressed thanks to Roy McCraw for sharing the new format with her and the Finance Committee.

Amanda reported the parish is in a healthy position financially. The trust and endowments are creeping up in value after the downturn a few months ago.

Amanda noted some operating expenses of the parish are down such as nursery attendant salaries, paper, postage and some decrease in building maintenance expenses.

A question was asked as to why our projected income varies substantially from month to month at times. Amanda explained the yearly total budgeted income amount is not divided equally by 12 months, but rather the income projected for each month is averaged historically from year to year.

Chip Myers made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Gigi Poole.

The Vestry approved the motion.

Chip Myers presented the proposed allocations from the Outreach Committee for the month. The committee has around \$14,800.00 left which can be donated this year.

The proposed allocation for this month is \$2,325.00 as follows:

- 1) \$325.00 to the Empty Chair Support Group here at St. Mary's
- 2) \$1,000.00 to Who Needs A Change diaper fund in Watauga County
- 3) \$1,000.00 to Dig Deep-a national clean water scarcity project. This donation would go to the Appalachian Chapter

Chip Myers made a motion with a second from Jim West to approve the allocation as listed from the Outreach committee.

Discussion of the motion focused on the location of the organizations (local versus regional or national). There was hesitance on the part of some Vestry members to support any group outside our local area at this time. Chip stated the Outreach committee and Bishop Gloster are aware of this as it was expressed at prior Vestry meetings. The Outreach committee has followed a guideline for the past several years of donating 50% of their funds to local causes, 25% to state efforts, 12.5% to national groups and 12.5% to international groups. Questions were asked of Chip as to the geographic reach of the area supported by the Dig Deep organization. Chip would like to take these concerns and questions back to the Outreach committee.

A substitute motion was made by Gigi Poole and seconded by Jim West to approve \$1,325.00 to be donated by the Outreach committee to the Empty Chair group and Who Needs A Change at this time. The additional donation to Dig Deep will be put on hold.

The motion was approved by the Vestry.

This renders the prior motion inactive.

Discussion continued on the various opinions of Vestry members on the issue of where our parish outreach dollars should be donated. Some comments noted that even though an organization may be regionally, nationally, or even internationally based that the impact of the work of the organization may be felt here in our area in the future. It was noted that traditionally funds from the Tour of Homes are donated locally. The point was also made that our parish has chosen a committee structure for decision making, with oversight from the Vestry and the feeling was expressed that we should continue to have faith that the Outreach committee researches requests for support thoroughly. The differing opinions on what qualifies as a "local" organization were discussed as well. To some local is strictly Watauga County; to others that includes neighboring counties or even the Appalachian region.

E.B. Springs made a motion which was seconded by Bill Furr to instruct the Outreach committee that all donations be made to groups only based in Watauga County and the surrounding counties; but to leave the door open to possible approval by Vestry of other donations on a case by case basis if the Outreach committee feels strongly about a group requesting funds.

Chip Myers and Doug Galke both expressed the desire to have this issue be brought to the Outreach committee before any action is taken by the Vestry.

Fr. Andrew polled the Vestry on whether or not this motion should be voted on at this time. The majority voted against action on the motion from E.B. at this time.

Fr. Andrew stated the motion will be tabled until the Executive Committee can meet with the Outreach Committee to discuss this issue.

E.B. Springs withdrew his motion.

Fr. Andrew reminded the Vestry the parish Annual meeting will be conducted on August 30 at 11:00 via Zoom. Greta Wilson has designed a new annual report which will go out to parish members prior to the meeting.

Fr. Andrew asked for anyone on the Vestry who is interested in serving as a delegate to the annual Diocesan Convention to contact him. The convention will be held virtually this year in November on a Friday evening and all day Saturday.

Tim Silver chose to forgo sharing a Junior Warden's report in the interest of time as there is nothing pressing he needs to share at this meeting.

Chip Myers also chose to defer to next month for his Senior Warden's report.

Fr. Andrew shared the Rector's report.

The Diocese has recently shared new guidelines for safely conducting services as we continue to deal with the risk of COVID-19. The Diocese is now approving outdoor gatherings of up to 50 people who are wearing masks and practicing social distancing. Andrew has reviewed this policy change with the wardens and the 2 physicians on the Vestry and the decision has been made not to increase the capacity of our services at this time due to space constraints. The need for in person communion services appears to be met at this time as only one service has been full thus far. The limit at St. Mary's will continue to be 10 persons at indoor services and 20 persons at outdoor services.

The Vestry will be receiving materials on our stewardship campaign soon. The theme this year is "How Firm A Foundation" and will be led once again by Peter and Valerie Purcell.

Fr. Andrew reports Fr. Sam Tallman just concluded his book study and Andrew has one more session of his to complete. Andrew also shared he will be taking a two week sabbatical from the Rector's Forum before beginning a study on Philippians.

Andrew encouraged the Vestry members to check out the Godly Play story each week. The Godly Play stories coordinate with the weekly Scripture readings.

Fr. Andrew will be on vacation from August 21-28. Fr. Sam will fill in for him.

Andrew noted these are strange times we could never have imagined a year ago. He shared it continues to be challenging and difficult not to be able to relate to each other in the same room. He reminded us we are a wilderness people and to be gentle with ourselves and others.

Gigi Poole made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:04pm with a second from Jane Milner. The Vestry approved the motion.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Sudderth, Clerk of the Vestry