



ST. JAMES the FISHERMAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FEBRUARY 15, 2025 @ 1:00 IN BLISS HALL

VESTRY MINUTES

PRESENT

Father Farrell Graves

Ellen Allison, Sr. Warden

Tom Fernandez, Jr. Warden

Jan Comfort

Toni DeLuca, Clerk of the Vestry & Vestry Member

Marianne Di Somma

Jesse McCrery

RoseMary Stalter

Deacon Mike Ligon, Co-Treasurer

ABSENT

Chris Kenzel

Kathleen McDonald

Deacon Jean Miller

GUEST IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Biddle, Parishioner

- 1. Call to Order, Father Farrell**
Father Farrell called the meeting to order at 1:00 and seven Vestry members were in attendance.
- 2. Opening Prayer, Marianne Di Somma**
Marianne provided the opening prayer and Jan volunteered to provide the opening prayer for the next meeting.
- 3. Reflection, Father Farrell**
Father Farrell read a passage from the Gospel of Luke 6:17 – 26 and discussed the passage with the Vestry. This Sunday is the 6th Sunday after the Epiphany.

4. **Approval of the January 8, 2025 Vestry Minutes, Father Farrell**
Father Farrell asked if there were any questions. Toni commented that #7 of the fourth page of the Vestry minutes, St. James Computer, was corrected. There were no other questions.

Motion: RoseMary Stalter made a motion to approve the January 8, 2025 Vestry minutes, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry Members.

5. **Rector's Report, Father Farrell**
Father Farrell said that when we see a guest or visitor at a service, to make sure to greet them. It is important to make a connection with visitors. This is how a church grows.

May 3, 2025 is the diaconal ordination of Mr. James Green, Priest in Training.

6. **Treasurer's Report, Deacon Mike Ligon, Co-Treasurer**
Deacon Mike went over in detail the Treasurer's Report. Our operating income is \$28,209, 12.5 percent over the budget and 17.2 percent over last year's budget. This is income from pledges and plate. The operating expenses are \$19,017, which is on budget. We are using a paycheck payroll service.

Endowment Fund

Deacon Mike provided the Vestry with a printout report of the St. James Endowment Fund. He stated that we cannot go below \$150,000 and the amount was set by a Vestry vote. If we go over \$24,000, it requires a Vestry vote. The Bylaws states that the Vestry can spend the money, but the Vestry has not acted on it. The church has been able to use other funds.

There was a return last year of \$24,000 on the endowment, a 12.3 percent return.

Investment Accounts

TD Ameritrade merged with Charles Schwab. Deacon Mike recommended that we close out that account because it is not earning money and communicating with Charles Schwab has been difficult.

Motion: Ellen Allison made a motion to close out the Charles Schwab account and move the account into the Truist savings account, which was approved by the Vestry Members. To be discussed at a later date on how to use the funds.

Edward Jones investment has not been doing well and Deacon Mike recommended that we close out that account.

Motion: Jesse McCrery made a motion to close out the Edward Jones account and move the account into the Truist savings account, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry Members. To be discussed at a later date on how to use the funds.

Reports attached to the Vestry Minutes: Endowment Report; Statement of Financial Position as of January 31, 2025; Summary of Restricted Net Assets, Date Range Dec. 31, 2024 – Jan. 1, 2025; Statement of Activities Vestry thru Jan. 31, 2025 – Jan. 31, 2025; 2024 End of Year Statement of Financial Position; St. James the Fisherman Episcopal Church 2025 Budget; Summary of Restricted Net Assets, Date Range: Dec. 31, 2024 – Jan. 1, 2025: Endowment Fund Report

Deacon Mike asked if there were any more questions regarding his report. There were no more further questions.

Father Farrell asked Peter Biddle if he would agree to be on the Investment Committee. Peter agreed and will discuss further with Deacon Mike.

Motion: Jan Comfort moved that the Treasurer's Report be entered into the minutes as presented, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry Members

7. New Business

- **Brooks Siding Contractor, Tom Fernandez**
Meeting with Dale Brooks, Siding Project Contractor
Tom presented Mr. Dale Brooks, owner of Brooks Custom Renovations. Mr. Brooks reviewed with the Vestry his background. His company has done work in the area and Charlotte, NC. The Vestry received for review, a copy of the St. James the Fisherman Church siding work contract prior to the meeting.

Marianne, who has a background in contract writing, asked Mr. Brooks if he would be in agreement with a draft contract written by the church. He was in agreement to doing a church drafted contract. Marianne, Tom and Mr. Brooks withdrew from the meeting to another room to discuss the draft contract prepared by Marianne.

Vestry Questions & Discussion following meeting with Marianne and Tom:

- His hourly rate is \$50 - \$70 an hour.
- He would work with us if something came up during the construction.
- Gutters, Mr. Brooks will discard if necessary. Tom will discuss with him which gutters are not needed.
- Mr. Brooks anticipates the project would take about six weeks, dependent on the weather.
- Tom will meet with Mr. Brooks about the placement of the dumpster.
- Every day the grounds will be cleaned up when the workers leave.
- How soon will we be able to be on his schedule? Mr. Brooks will need to discuss with his staff.
- Does Mr. Brooks have references? He has references and will provide to the Vestry.
- Mr. Brooks will bring samples and materials to recommend.
- Who signs the final contract? The Sr. Warden, Jr. Warden and contractor.

Marianne will send revised contract to the Vestry and contractor. Father Farrell asked if everyone is in agreement to vote via email for the siding project? The Vestry was in agreement to vote by email.

Tom will continue to do oversight of the siding project and be in communication with Mr. Brooks. He will keep the Vestry apprised of the progress of the construction.

(Attached is the draft construction contract)

- **Parochial Report, Father Farrell**
Father Farrell provided copies of the 2024 Parochial Report to the Vestry. There were two corrections, #9, Adult Communicants in good standing and #10, Youth communicants in good standing under the age of 16. Father Farrell will make the corrections, get the necessary signatures and follow up on sending the report to the diocese.

Motion: Ellen Allison made a motion to approve and accept the 2024 Report of Episcopal Congregations and Missions according to Canons 1.6.1.7. (Parochial Report), which was unanimously approved by the Vestry Members.

8. Old Business, Ellen Allison

- **Fresh Face Forward**
Jan will write up a summary of the FFF for the St. James the Fisherman Newsletter. Father Farrell will speak to Bill Chase if he would write a summary of FFF and the status of the permits for the Vestry. Nothing can be done until we get the permits.

Should the FFF committee be reconvened? It was decided that let's wait until we have more information about the permits and lighting.

Plan proposed: 1. Father Farrell will speak to Rick Coltharp about the lighting. 2. Give the lighting plan to Jesse. 3. Jesse will get us quotes on three lighting plans. All were in agreement to the plan.

- **SJtF Office Computer**
Thank you to Jesse and his wife, Callie for all their hard work and diligence investigating computers. We have a new computer in the office and Ann Sutton, Administrative Assistant, is using it. Total Computers have been very helpful with technical advice.

Motion: Ellen Allison made a motion that the Vestry accept the estimate cost from Total Computer Solution presented on January 13, 2025, using the Silver Package for ongoing repairs and assistance, which was approved by the Vestry Members. Vestry Members agreed at the January 8, 2025 Vestry to approve via Vestry Members emails, and via email, eight people indicated YES to approving Total Computers and the Silver Package at the total cost of \$1,821.36. The funds for the purchase will come out of the Vestry Discretionary/Unforeseen Account #6494.

- **Foyer Groups**
Holly Goff resigned as the chairperson of the Foyers Group. It was the consensus that emphasis should be placed on Pot Luck Dinners, since there seems to be a better response from parishioners to church dinners.

February 22, 2025 is Newcomer Welcome. RoseMary will have welcome bags at coffee hour.

Potluck Dinner is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2025, which is Shrove Tuesday, at 6:00 in Bliss Hall. RoseMary will provide a food sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthex.

- **Lobster Sale**
The lobster sale will be on hiatus for 2025. We will focus on the festival gala celebrating the completion of the siding and lighting. Jan will send out a REALM notice to people who have purchased lobsters in past years, stating that we are on hiatus for this year.

9. **Wardens' Reports**

- **Jr. Warden, Tom Fernandez**
Tom had to leave and Father Farrell gave a report. Tom has been working on meeting with siding contractors, termites were treated and there is water damage in the back of the Nave.
- **Sr. Warden, Ellen Allison**
Ellen is still working on finding someone to hire for the nursery. She placed an advertisement in the Shallotte Face Book.

Payroll service is working well.

The three members of the treasurer's office will continue, temporally, until we can find a replacement. Father Farrell will contact the three people to see how long they are willing to continue. Ellen will inquire if the people who were on the Budget Committee will continue in their role? Kit Goff, Jerry Thrift and Kathy Sanchez were on the Budget Committee.

Jesse provided the Vestry with a print out of Bookkeeper information: Responsibilities and Qualifications. Brunswick County salaries range from \$16 - \$20 an hour for part-time employees. He will investigate further for more information.

10. **Deacons' Reports**

There are no Deacon reports at this time.

11. **Liaisons' Reports**

There are no reports from Building, Communications, Finance, Ways & Means, Outreach Ministries, Worship and Graveyard. Parish Life was discussed under Foyer Groups and Fresh Face Forward was previously discussed under Old Business.

Grounds Liaison Report, Kathleen McDonald

Kathleen's report was given by Toni. The January 31, 2025 cleanup on January 31, 2025 went well. The Annual Cleanup Day was rescheduled for April 4, 2025. A dumpster from East Coast Dumpster Rentals was rented at the cost of \$335 and is covered in the Grounds budget allowance. February cleanup day is February 28, 2025. (Grounds report attached to the minutes)

12. Comments from the Audience

Peter Biddle, parishioner, was present for the meeting and made comments on the financial standing of the church. He agreed to be a member of a St. James the Fisherman Investment Committee and will be in contact with Deacon Mike.

13. Adjournment, Father Farrell

Father Farrell provided the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 4:15.

Jesse McCrery made a motion to adjourn the Vestry meeting at 4:15, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry Members.

NEXT VESTRY MEETING, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025 AT 1:00 IN BLISS HALL

Antonia (Toni) DeLuca
Clerk of the Vestry

Ellen Allison
Sr. Warden

Date:

Date: