

Alamo Heights United Methodist Church Board of Stewards

Minutes of March 16, 2023

Present: Dan St. Romain, Doran Dennis, Jack Rodgers, Dianne Dorsett, Charles Johnson, Roger Lind, David Kinder, Brian Griffin, Carol Cauley, Johnny Boyd

Absent: Steve Waters, Brian Nash, Scott Boynton, Amy Willcox

Staff Present: Jason Adams, Robert Ortiz, Donna Strieb, Valerie Slade, Janet Weatherston, Jeff Guillory

Staff absent: Darrell Smith, Chris Estus

Secretary: Leah Jayne

Present on Zoom: Pat Crump, Ryan Jacobson

Welcome-David Kinder opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Prayer-Rev. Donna Strieb gave the opening prayer.

Approval of February Minutes-David asked the Board to review the minutes and approve if there are no corrections. Dan St. Romain asked for a change to the 20% of at-risk students mentioned under the "Arts for All" paragraph. Dan thought a more accurate reading was 19% of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged and 25% are at-risk. David agreed to the change and the minutes will show the change. Charles Johnson moved to approve the minutes and Carol Cauley seconded.

Finance Report-Valerie said people are still contributing to complete their 2022 pledge, and we are grateful. The number of households giving is showing stability. A few households have left the church, but there have been new members and regularly attending prospects who are covering the loss. There are 20 new givers for February and 3 are repeated givers.

Expenses were \$8000 favorable, and the attachment has more detail. Roger asked if weddings were increasing in number to what they were pre-pandemic. Valerie did not know the answer but shared the church is experiencing many the non-member weddings. The church has renegotiated its printer and postage machine contracts which will result in a \$38,000 savings over the next 5 years.

Valerie introduced Jeff Guillory who is the new Finance Associate Director. Jeff shared some of his background.

Trustees- Steve Waters could not attend the meeting and asked Valerie Slade to share the report on the Town Hall meeting. Valerie said Steve and Jason did a great job explaining the reason for the church to enter a long-term lease of the northeast corner parking lot and fielded questions from the audience at the meeting as to how this would happen.

Anyone who would like to hear more about the lease or have questions regarding the lease are invited to the Seekers Classroom on Sunday, March 19, at 9:45 am. Jason will be present and available to answer questions.

Charles Johnson asked if there have been any other complaints heard about the ground lease. Jason responded that he has heard some express concerns.

Carol Cauley asked if it will be voted on by the church. Roger explained that the Trustees will vote and then it will go to the charge conference for a vote.

Brian Griffin wanted to clarify that this is a land lease and did not understand why it required so much discussion. David explained some people want to leave it as a parking lot in anticipation of the church growing much larger.

Brian asked for the name of the company who is interested in the property. Valerie said because we are still negotiating the contract that this information is not yet public. She also said whoever does lease the land will need to be in line with the mission of the church. After the Trustees and BOS approve the offer, the District Strategy Committee must approve the lease, and then it will be officially voted upon during a charge conference.

Robert confirmed that the District Committee is aware of the interest being shown in the property. Jason clarified the process and said all is contingent on the Trustees. He said they will need to be respectful of the interested party by not taking too long to give them an answer.

David asked when the next Trustees meeting is scheduled. Valerie responded on April 18 and if necessary, they would schedule a called meeting.

Dianne Dorsett asked if the Town Hall meeting was still available to view online. It was confirmed it is available.

David said transparency for the congregation is important through the process even if it falls through. In the past the congregation felt left out of the decisions being made by the leaders of the church.

Dan said this is preparation for when the sale is complete.

Valerie explained that there will be no revenue for the church budget for at least a year. The first payments will need to cover the expenses associate with the lease.

SPRC-Carol asked Robert Ortiz to step out of the meeting. She said the SPRC, and the Finance Committee have approved a church wide love offering for Robert. She asked David to read the motion. After the reading Jack moved to approve the motion and Roger seconded. All were in favor. Robert returned to the meeting.

Senior Pastor's Comments-Jason said Ryan Jacobson will be the minister for the Modern Worship service upon Robert's leaving. The Modern Worship has had 3 ministers in the last 3 years and Ryan is known to the congregation and will offer stability. He and Ryan work well together and agree, though we have 2 services, we are still one church.

This change leaves an opening for a Congregational Pastor. He is praying and looking for a solution to this whether it be a pastor or lay person.

Johnny asked if this information can be shared with others. Jason said that was fine.

Question/Answer Time- David asked if there were any other questions. Roger wanted to know If going forward there would be more Board Listening sessions. Diane suggested after the May 6th meeting when the churches that are disaffiliating have left.

Jason said the bishop is having a meeting at UTSA that will be from 1 to 2 -hours on May 6. This will be when churches disaffiliating from the conference receive permission to do so. After this meeting will be a good time to have a listening session.

David has wanted to have a time for the board and staff to be in the parlor to meet the congregation. After an 11 am service on a Sunday to develop relationships and have positive discussions.

Dan said meeting intentionally is a good idea.

Roger said people seemed to feel differently in a positive way after being heard. The leadership needs to always be transparent about what is happening in the church. David said he thought there was going to be a meeting to inform the congregation about the landscaping project that was being planned.

Roger was disappointed there were no visitors at the meeting. Jason said the communication department could add a line on the bulletin insert to alert the members to the Board's meetings. Valerie said the Board's meetings and minutes are also listed on the website.

David is enjoying the attendance and finances in the bulletin.

Doran praised Jason for always coming down to greet everyone who attends Lunch Bunch. Most of the people are senior citizens and this means a lot to them. The Lunch Bunch will celebrate their 50th anniversary in September.

Johnny reminded everyone that there are members who came over from Broadway and are grieving the death of a dream, when discussing the lease of the northeast corner parking lot.

BOS Chairman's Comments: David reminded the Board of the 5 things you should say to your children every day. He feels that Robert personifies the 5 items and is very proud of him. He thanked Robert for all he has done to serve the congregation and the leadership of AHUMC over his time here and at Asbury UMC.

The next BOS meeting will be April 20, at 5:30 pm in W100.

Closing Prayer -Everyone was asked to stand and hold hands as Rev. Jason Adams prayed.

Meeting closed at 6:37 pm