**St. George’s of Forest Hill**

**Parish Council Minutes for November 28th, 2017**

***Present:***

Nelson Cuthbert, Chair Charlotte Cromarty Lynne Skanes-Bannon

John Dale, Secretary Murray Gamble Lesley Burland-Prong

Terry McCoy Anne Taylor MaryLynn Forrest

Reta Risto Fr. Stephen Hendry Vivian Harris

Catherine Carlson Jack Nahrgang Valerie Cuthbert

Cheryl Fox John Ryrie Katherine MacLean

Matt Brown

***Regrets***: John Shaw, John Coleman, Mike Stredwick, Mary Ann Millar, Jim Fox, Connie McCoy, Nathaniel Couzens, April Couzens

**1. Call to Order:** At 7.35 p.m., by Nelson Cuthbert.

**2. Attendance/Regrets**. As above.

**3. Devotions**. Catherine Carlson.

**4. Approval of Current Agenda**. It was pointed out that the previous minutes to be approved (item 5) should be those for October 16th, 2017, not September 18th, 2017. John Ryrie offered to provide a brief update on the Diocesan budget for 2018 as item 8(b). Valerie Cuthbert asked to have discussion of the provision of coffee for Bishop Terry’s Wednesday evening Bible Study group as item 9(d).

**Motion** to accept the Agenda for the November 28th, 2017 meeting as amended: Proposed, John Ryrie; Seconded, Lesley Burland-Prong. **Carried**.

**5. Reading and Acceptance of the October 16th, 2017 Minutes**: Catherine Carlson suggested that Jeff Poolton be credited by name as the provider of the Christmas Concert on November 25th in support of the Youth Group’s attendance at CLAY.

**Motion** to accept the minutes of the October 16th, 2017 meeting as amended: Proposed, John Dale; Seconded, Catherine Carlson. **Carried**.

**6. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes:**

**a)** **Warden Succession Planning**. Nelson Cuthbert urged PC members to continue to suggest the names of potential new Wardens.

**b) Auction Date**. Nelson and Jim Stirling have decided on Saturday April 21st as the date for the next Auction. Hall preparations will occupy the previous Thursday and Friday.

**c) Website Update.** The Website Update Team has been defining goals and tasks and will evaluate the websites of a number of different Anglican churches. Catherine Carlson pointed out that it is important that the redesigned site be vital and attractive enough to attract new, young parishioners. It should, thus, incorporate rolling banners. The team has determined that they will, at some point in the redesign process, need professional advice.

**Motion** to engage the support of PC for the inclusion of a $3,000 budget item for website redesign in the proposed 2018 budget to be presented to Vestry: Proposed, Cheryl Fox (for Jim Fox); Seconded, Catherine Carlson. **Carried**.

**d) Nursery/ Sunday School Issue Update.** Nothing further to report.

**e) Christmas Market and Coffee Hour.** Valerie Cuthbert reported that the Christmas Market was a great success and generated about $4,220 in revenue that day. It is hoped that about $3,700 will be realized after supplementary sales are added and expenses are deducted. Valerie thanked all who helped and/or participated. She pointed out that we are in need of more tables (cost approximately $50 each) for the Frank Thompson Hall, both for the Market and for the BBQ. PC agreed to the purchase of some more tables. Valerie further explained that it was becoming very tough to arrange people in advance to run Coffee Hour, and asked those P.C. members who belonged to teams and committees to urge these bodies to consider undertaking a coffee hour session.

**7. “Fresh Start Programme”.** Deferred until next meeting**.**

**8. Standing Committee Reports:**

**a) Rector’s Report:** Fr. Stephen presented the report of his activities since the last P.C. meeting. He indicated that he was devoting two to two and a half hours per week to home visitations on average. Fr. Stephen asked members of the group to identify anything that they felt was *not* being done. Cheryl Fox asked how often he was meeting with church youth and Fr. Stephen said that he was attending a youth meeting every 6-8 weeks and liaising with the youth group more frequently than that regarding fundraising, and, in particular, about a projected series of fundraising concerts.

**b) Finance.**

(i)Anne Taylor, Treasurer, presented the financial report as of the end of October. The revenue/expense ratio YTD remains approximately $6,000 below budget, but this deficit was apparent last June, and has not grown since then. Contributing factors are, a large deficit YTD in non-auto-debit parishioner donations, (those by auto-debit have grown a little) and a $2,000 (approx.) outlay on repairs to the rectory, offset by a $1,000 (approx.) saving in payroll, and miscellaneous income (fundraising etc.) which was greater than expected.

**Motion** to accept the October financial statement as presented: Proposed, Anne Taylor; Seconded, Matt Brown. **Carried**.

(ii) Fr. Stephen indicated that he would like to reconstitute a Stewardship Committee, to begin work in January 2018; he has already identified a very experienced individual who is willing to serve as co-chair. This group would plan a series of parishioner visitations (to start in May 2018) in which the experience of parishioners with St. George’s would be probed, and at which those visited would be assisted in calibrating and directing their giving. Some members of P.C. expressed a need for time to digest and consider this idea, which is quite new for us. There was some concern about the overlap with the ongoing five-year ASCEND/RENEW program (2014-2019). Murray Gamble felt that the nature of the roll-out of this stewardship project at Vestry was important. Stress should be laid on the fact that fundraising was not the sole concern, but that it concerned parishioner feedback, volunteerism, and the support of individual projects. There is also a need to adequately explain the financial requirements of a parish the size of St. George’s; most parishioners probably underestimate these.

**Motion** to gain P.C. endorsement for the concept of a Stewardship committee, for an approach to the potential co-chair, and for the start of planning for a Vestry presentation: Proposed, Murray Gamble; Seconded, Lesley Burland-Prong. **Carried**.

(iii) John Ryrie presented a brief overview of the 2018 Diocesan budget presented at the recent Deanery meeting. It seems that estimated Diocesan expenses for 2018 are 8% less ($227,000 less) than for the current year, mainly as a result of unexpectedly good returns from pension fund investments and defined rules about limits to pension fund excess. As a result, the good news is that it is likely that next year’s apportionments for individual parishes will be less than this year!

**c)** **Outreach.** Outreach activities are as detailed in the minutes of the latest meeting of the outreach committee (see separate attachment). Reta Risto emphasized the following in her presentation to PC.

- 30 large bags of winter outerwear were generated by the ‘Share the Warmth’ campaign and have been delivered to the salvation Army.

- $2,624.68 has been distributed to a number of charitable causes.

- Angel Tree gifts are due back at the church on December 10th.

- 100 pneumonia vests have been sent overseas from St. George’s.

- For the next Community Clothes Closet, consideration is being given to shortening the duration of the event and staggering the putting out of clothes, since last time tables were quickly stripped.

**d) Property.** Murray Gamble reported on the following:

(i) Upgrades to the Church: a new HVAC unit has been ordered and will be installed shortly at a cost of $14,400 plus HST as the old HVAC unit is 19 years old and is failing badly at the moment (this is the only source of heat and A/C for the Sanctuary); a new water softener has been installed; new backflow preventers have been installed on the main water line into the church as per latest code requirements; repair and replacement of old piping and faucet in the men’s washroom downstairs; repairs to the Sacristy window and the Rose window are coming as well.

(ii) Upgrades to the Rectory: Most are completed with the latest being: the installation of a new water softener; repairs to a leaking sewer stack in the basement; installation of new “up to code” gas lines and shutoffs in the basement; completion of the installation of floor mouldings; removal and reinstallation of appliances in kitchen and laundry room; removal and reinstallation of the toilet and pedestal sink in the main floor washroom; installation of new floor in kitchen and hallway.

(iii) Murray also summarized the latest work of the Sign Committee and distributed a summary of quotes from three companies for a) a new non-digital sign, b) a new digital sign and c) the renovation of the existing memorial sign. Including permits and electrical work, mean cost for (a) was approximately $20,000; for (b) approximately $35,000 and for (c), approximately $12,000. Murray pointed out that, because permits will not allow us to have two signs, the specific signage on the existing memorial will be removed.

It was decided that, since these estimates considerably exceed the original cost presented to Vestry last year, this year’s Vestry must be informed of the increase in cost and asked to mandate the further pursuance of the project.

A number of P.C. members indicated that it was important not to go with too cheap an option, and that movement and illumination on the sign was important as it would catch the eyes of passers-by and give witness to ‘life’ within the church. Katherine MacLean said she had been to a presentation at which it was indicated that signs are of dwindling significance and self-announcement via electronic media of growing importance. Cheryl Fox felt that both approaches were important.

Murray asked P.C. to think about the sign considerations between this meeting and the next in January and be prepared to give definite direction in this regard then.

**e) Worship**. See separate attachment for details of latest worship committee meeting on November 7th. Fr. Stephen highlighted the following issues:

- There will be four services on Christmas Eve (including one at 9.00 a.m.), one on Christmas Day and a single service at 10.00 a.m. on December 31st.

- The usual Christmas Pageant will be replaced on December 17th by a performance of **The Jesse Tree** featuring readings by the Youth group. The Sunday school will also participate. The Service of Lessons and Carols is also on that day.

- The choir will have made a decision concerning robing by the next PC meeting.

- Fr. Stephen will preach at St. Francis Roman Catholic church on Saturday January 20th in what might prove to be the exciting beginning of a move towards reconciliation.

- There were timing difficulties with the Legion, but, apart from that, the Remembrance Day service went well.

**f) Atmosphere**. Catherine Carlson indicated that the ‘St. George’s Welcome Totes’ were now available. It is intended to sell twenty of them to pay for the cost of production. A Euchre Night is planned for January, a Family Games Night for March, Food Trucks and a Car Rally for May, and the Church Picnic for June (see #12, Upcoming Events).

**g)** **RENEW/ASCEND**. No report.

**h) Youth Group**. Nelson Cuthbert read a report from April Couzens. Eight youth and two leaders are confirmed for CLAY 2018 in Thunder Bay. Proceeds of the very successful scrapbooking event and Jeff Poolton Concert will support this. Youth are also selling poinsettias and mint smoothies. There will be a Bake sale on December 17th after both services. Catherine Carlson said that it would be good if the youth group were visible in mainstream church events such as the Fall Clean-up. Jack Nahrgang offered to represent the group at 8.15 a.m. services and make their announcements.

**9. New Business.**

**a**) **2018 Parish Council Membership**. At the next P.C. meeting, members will be asked to indicate whether they are prepared to continue on P.C. next year. Suggestions for new members would also be welcomed.

**b) Vestry Reports.** These are due January 3rd at the latest. Valerie prefers an e-format. They have to be published two weeks before Vestry.

**c)**. **John Ryrie Motion**. John decided to defer this item until the January meeting.

**d) Coffee for Advent Bible Study with Bishop Terry November 29th and December 6th.** Valerie Cuthbert will provide coffee on December 6. John Ryrie and Catherine Carlson volunteered to provide it for the November 29th Meeting.

**10)** **Correspondence.** None.

**11) Other**. Nelson as Chair added the following important item to the Agenda: “Mission and Ministry Plan”. As you know, Bishop Linda has required each parish to complete this plan. A P.C. subcommittee has put in significant work over the past two months to produce a draft document which was distributed to all. Due to the lateness of the hour, P.C. members were asked to do a detailed read of the document and then to send comments, additions, and amendments to Mary Ann within the next week. An updated version will be produced and distributed to all asap so that P.C. can vote on the finalized document at the January P.C. meeting prior to going to Vestry for final approval and submission to the Diocesan Office.

**12. Upcoming Dates and Events:**

**November 29th, December 6th Advent Bible study with Bishop Terry at St. George’s; and December 13th and 20th** at St. James’ Hespeler

**December 10th**. Service of Remembrance, 7.00 p.m.

**December 17th**. **The Jesse Tree** (10.00 a.m.); Service of Lessons and Carols (7.00 p.m.)

**December 24th**. Fourth of Advent service (9.00 a.m.); Christmas Eve services (4, 7 and 10 p.m.)

**December 25th** (10.00 a.m.) Christmas Day service BCP

**December 31st**. (single service, 10.00 a.m.) BAS

**January 19th** **(Friday)**. Euchre night

**January 28th**. Single 9.00 a.m. Service and Vestry Meeting after (Refreshments required/also child care?)

**February 10th** (**Saturday)**. Messy Church

**March 9th (Friday)**. Family Games Night

**April.** Photo Directory

**April 21st. (Saturday)**. Auction

**May 5th. (Saturday)**. Car Rally

**May 26th. (Saturday)**. Food Trucks

**June 10th**. Picnic

**13. Next PC Meeting**. Tuesday, January 23, 2018. Social 6.30 pm., meeting 7.30 p.m. (NO December PC meeting)

Chair, Mike Stredwick; Minutes, John Dale; Devotions, ?; Refreshments, Executive.

**14. Adjournment**. 9.35 p.m. Proposed Matt Brown; Carried.