

The Presbytery of Boston

Council

February 16, 2023

Draft Minutes.

Call to Order.

The regular monthly meeting of the Council of the Presbytery of Boston was called to order at 7:07 pm on Tuesday, February 16, 2023, by the Moderator, Kate Carlisle.

This meeting was held on the electronic application, Zoom. A quorum was virtually present. The Council appointed the Stated Clerk to take the Minutes for this meeting.

Present: Drew, Meagan, Kate, Katie, Ivy, Ken, Trina.

The Moderator explained that the Minutes were late in distribution, approving the Minutes but giving time for comments and corrections.

Stated Clerk.

Paul reported on his work, which is mostly responding to issues and questions from the presbytery. He has prepared a draft Docket for the Stated Meeting of March 9 which we will look at under New Business.

Moderator.

Kate reported. Yan Wang was ordained and installed as organizing pastor of the Chinese Fellowship.

Kate represented the presbytery at a Massachusetts Council of Churches prayer vigil focused on the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Personnel.

Meagan reported. The committee had a review with Ben, who seems to be our last remaining traditional employee. There is a subgroup meeting with Donnie to review his work. Meagan, Kayla, and Moon are working with folks from SNE on a possible shared Stated Clerk search; they are meeting soon to come up with a job description. She noted that the Temp Stated Clerk has agreed to stay on until April 15.

Andy has quit as Treasurer the other day, giving two weeks notice. He will be done on February 28. He is not planning to attend the March 9 Stated Meeting, although we would like to recognize him for his service. His exit interview will also be on the 28th, when they will discuss immediate continuity like payroll and mail. The Trustees are looking at ideas to cover this position and hope have a plan in about 6 weeks.

Kate thanked Meagan for her pastoral and practical responses to emergent situations.

Trustees.

Ken reported. We have received news from PILP that 100% of the congregations who have been borrowing from the lending program have received 1% rebates, some of these are significant returns of interest payments. Our investment in the program was the presbytery's best performing asset. Last year was a good year for us in this relationship.

He noted that Whitinsville is asking for a loan.

Ken reported that the presbytery's assets have been transferred to New Covenant from Schwab. New Covenant will be presenting at the upcoming Stated Meeting.

Council **VOTED** to authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 from the 2023 operating budget of the presbytery for the Massachusetts Council of Churches. The Trustees further recommend that the Council ask our sister presbyteries in the Commonwealth, Northern and Southern New England be invited to match our contribution.

Council **VOTED** to establish a Work Group (Task Force) comprised of representatives of Personnel, Nominating, and Trustees, plus the Moderator [and Treasurer] to evaluate the engagement of a bookkeeper or bookkeeping service, as a matter of best practice, resulting in the separation of fiduciary duties and offering business continuity, said bookkeeper to be managed by the Treasurer, to potentially:

- Record deposit activity;
- Generate invoices for the member churches and other accounts receivable as needed on a quarterly basis;
- Generate disbursement requests, as needed, as approved by the Treasurer;
- Initiate Payroll with the Presbytery's payroll provider, as approved by the Treasurer;
- Maintain records of individual gifts and support the creation of charitable contribution letters following calendar year end;
- Reconcile Bank statements monthly;
- Create a set of accounting ledgers using an online accounting software;
- Prepare financial statements for the Presbytery monthly including an income statement, balance sheet, and statement of per capita receivable.
- Work with the Presbytery's Treasurer and accountant to perform timely annual reviews of the Presbytery's financial statements as required by the PCUSA Book of Order

We are planning a Council meeting on March 1 for face-to-face conversation to get a unanimous consent motion; if that fails we will need a special meeting.

No reports from Task Forces. Needham is planning to bring recommendations to the 3/9 SM.

COR.

The committee is reaching out to the churches for annual statistical reports to keep up to date our demographic information.

CPM.

Drew reported. A team has met with Samuel Caraballo to evaluate his suitability to serve as a Commissioned Pastor for Iglesia. They agreed that he is qualified and referred him to COM for assignment. They also enrolled him as an Inquirer of the presbytery.

CPM is one member short and 4 of 5 are in their second terms. Turnover is a concern; plus Drew is looking at an upcoming sabbatical. He is letting us know of these circumstances, concerned for the continuity of the committee's work going forward.

Finally, he noted that none of our candidates took the exegesis exam this round, so they avoided the controversy about the selection of Judges 19 for the main text. But he would support any effort to question this decision to use this text, based on our experience of systemic bias in the testing process.

Nominating.

Katie reported. The committee is continuing to work. There are 16 partial and 24 full terms trying to fill in the structure of the presbytery. Often Pastors are hesitant or reluctant to offer people to serve at the presbytery level. The major arc is relationship building and recruitment.

They also need 2 more for Nominating Committee itself, who should be nominated to presbytery by Council. Council took a minute to consider who might be good to serve on Nominating.

Old Business.

The Council date remains unchanged. Council is also meeting on March 1 at 10:30 am to share a meal and brainstorm staffing possibilities around the question of Resource Presbyter and the hopes that would raise, especially the possibilities of working with neighboring presbyteries. We need a place and a couple of people to help organize and provide food. Newton is a possibility. Perhaps make it at least partially potluck.

Website. Ben wants Council support for his work on this. He is happy this is moving forward.

The Council decided it has the authority to approve a Stated Clerk job description, but of course any nominee for the position would require presbytery approval.

Docket. Paul presented a First Draft of the Docket for March 9. The departure of the Treasurer means there will be no report. Plus the Needham Task Force was added, as was a report from the GLOW youth program..

The Council agreed to a February 23 deadline to get Packet material to Paul and Ben, with the Packet going out on March 1.

Trina reported. She has seen a report from Jessi Killilea on her participation at APCE in Alabama. We will invite her to share the curriculum she is developing on the Lord's Supper with the whole presbytery.

This afternoon she listened to a webinar with Sara Lund, a pastor in Indianapolis, who has written on breaking the stigma of talking about mental illness in the church. Her recent book is *Blessed Youth Survival Guide*. Trina is ordering them from Chalice Press at 45% off.

Kate asked others to help plan for presbytery worship on March 9. Trina volunteered. Perhaps it is possible to hear again from our Validated Ministers. Drew also said he would help in the planning.

Adjourn.

At 8:45 pm the Council **VOTED** to adjourn by singing Happy Birthday! to Kate.

Prayer was finally offered by Katie.

Attest:

Rev. Paul F. Rack
Temporary Stated Clerk

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