

	<p>Presbytery of Boston Council Minutes</p>
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February 27, 2020

Attendance:

David Dorer (moderator), T. J. DeMarco, Cindy Kohlmann, Andy Parmelee, Mark Wells, Ivy Turner, Sarah Hathaway, Thatcher Freeborn, Katherine Pater

Guests: Cathy MacDonald, Mark Hellberg

Convene

The moderator called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with prayer and declared that a quorum was present.

The council approved the minutes from its previous meeting.

Young Adult Volunteer Program

(Conversation with Mark Hellberg)

The YAV board sent a letter requesting that the program be dissolved. Mark Hellberg, who is a YAV board member, joined the conversation with council. Mark identified a “perfect storm” situation. They have lost two volunteers this year, struggle to find church partners, and there is a struggle to find community partners. He expressed that he believes in the program and that it is one of the best ways that the PC(USA) is building leaders. Right now, the board is in the process of recruiting volunteers and has one individual committed to the program. Mark Hellberg identified finding active board members who are excited about the program and willing to be part of the “working” board.

The council engaged in a discussion about the issues raised by the YAV board. Mark Hellberg agreed to present these issues to the Presbytery meeting at the March meeting as a starting point to assess if the Presbytery has the energy to continue this ministry.

Treasurer

Andy Parmelee

The treasurer provided the following cash flow worksheet.

PoB OPERATING FUND CASH FLOW WORKSHEET

Period: February 21 – September 30, 2020

Beginning Balance - February 21, 2020 - \$ (9,192.74)

Ending Balance – March 31, 2020 - \$ (23,333.65)

Notes: Presbytery has authorized that up to \$ 30,000 may be transferred from the Trustees' Funds to the Operating Fund. **No** funds have as yet been transferred. Synod *per capita* **is paid**. Funds **may be** transferred as believed appropriate.

Beginning Balance – April 1, 2020 - \$ (23,333.65)

Ending Balance – June 30, 2020 - \$ (23,145..90)

Notes: **No** funds have as yet been transferred according to Presbytery's authorization. Funds **may be** transferred as believed appropriate.

Beginning Balance – July 1, 2020 - \$ (23,145.90)

Ending Balance – September 30, 2020 - \$ (65,086.86)

Notes: This balance reflects **no** funds as having been transferred, that the GA's *per capita* **has been paid** and that **the full amount of Presbytery's December 2019 authorization will have to be utilized** at some point between February 21 and September 30 as the projected balance of the operating fund will seriously exceeded the balance of the operating account.

This worksheet is factored on Presbytery's 2020 budgeted operating fund authorizations and Presbytery's historic operating fund income patterns.

At its March 9th meeting the treasurer **will ask for an additional \$ 35,000 authorization**, bringing authorized transfers to \$ 65,000 based on this estimated cash flow worksheet.

Budget Task Force

Ivy Turner

The chair of the budget task force has not yet met, but she plans to ask the group to commit to forming the 2021 budget and ask others to join the committee. She has heard from members of the Presbytery who may be interested in participating.

The council **voted** to grant the budget task force authority to recruit new members and report new members of the task force to council.

Cathy MacDonald, Honorably Retired Member of the Presbytery, sent a memo to the moderator raising the concern that if the council planned to follow a zero-based budgeting process that there needs to be a personnel component to the process. Cathy MacDonald joined the meeting to participate in this conversation. She expressed that it is important that the job descriptions be reviewed. She stressed that personnel decisions should not be made simply to cut expenses. She asked when and how the process of reviewing staff would take place. She feels it is important to have a designated group with an established and defined process and with which the Presbytery can work and by which the council can hold itself accountable. This is in contrast to an informal personnel process.

The budget and strategy chair agreed to speak with two individuals who expressed interest in serving on a personnel committee.

The task force plans to meet shortly after the next Presbytery meeting.

Moderator

David Dorer

The moderator put together an outline for discussions with sessions.

Stated Clerk

T. J. DeMarco

Statistics

The statistical reports deadline has passed. I made a few final revisions for congregations and there may be a few more to come over the next week. The total ending balance at the moment is 1975. This number may change slightly in the coming week as final adjustments get made. This is down from 2057 in the previous year 2018.

Needham AC

The Needham AC has continued its work. The session has been helpful in providing information and also in developing a plan to dispose of the contents of the building. With adding Thatcher

Freeborn to the commission, I believe there will be better collaboration between the AC and the Presbytery Trustees than there have been in past similar efforts. The final service is scheduled for June 14 with a reception to follow. There will be more details coming soon.

New Worshipping Communities

The sub-committee of council for new worshipping communities will have its first meeting in the next month. I plan to provide staff support to this group because they will need help moving through the process of becoming fellowships and chartered congregations. In my opinion, this is where the greatest opportunities are for growth, but they do require significant Presbytery support. I think that we may be able to charter Shekinah Natick by the end of the year and perhaps one other in 2021. The budget and strategy group recommended that the Presbytery form a 3-year mission plan and I think that this is the most natural mission plan for our Presbytery at this time. I recommend that council make this proposal to the Presbytery.

Communications

Per council's recommendation, I've asked Ben to be in contact with committee chairs to produce material that communicates what committees are doing. This will start in the second half of March after all of the communications for the Presbytery meeting wrap up. Thanks for the recommendation on this.

Resource Presbyter

Cindy Kohlmann

March Presbytery Meeting

Looking ahead to March, I've invited Bryce Wiebe from the Office of Mission Engagement to come to the Presbytery meeting to talk about the Special Offerings of the PC(USA) and help connect more of our churches to the mission we're doing nationally and internationally. Ellie Johns-Kelley from the Presbyterian Foundation will also join us. If we can work it into the agenda, I'd love for them both to have up to half an hour each, in a chunk of time that will focus on generosity and gratitude.

Bryce is also planning on doing a pre-presbytery program. I'll connect him with Newton so they can prepare and we can get something in the e-connection.

Another special guest for the March meeting will be coming from the E.P.O.C.A. Group in Worcester, who has received a Self Development of People Grant from the PC(USA). TJ knows more about their ministry, but since we as a denomination support it, I thought it would be good to hear a "mission report" from our neighbors.

***Leading up to General Assembly, the Presbyterian Giving Catalog is doing a project called Links of Love. You can read more about it here: <https://presbyteriangifts.pcusa.org/page/links-love-activity/> If we haven't set a worship offering yet, perhaps we could use this idea and connect with this activity. Since this is separate from One Great Hour of Sharing, it shouldn't

conflict with that offering in our congregations, and we can publicize in advance different level gift: \$10 buys farming tools, \$15 buys a fishing net, \$25 helps educate a child, etc.

Matthew 25

The response to the Matthew 25 invitation has been strong. I'm working with Ben to make sure that resources are regularly highlighted in the e-connections. As of today, January 22, four congregations in the Presbytery have signed up as Matthew 25 churches: KCB, Roxbury, Burlington, and Church of the Covenant. I know other congregations are in the process of discussing it. There's a free Lenten study resource connected with this initiative, and I've heard good feedback about it as well.

Pastors' Retreat

I won't have time to really work on this until after June, but I have a growing sense that the pastors of our congregations, and many of those in validated ministry as well, could use an opportunity for encouragement and renewal. I'd like to start laying the groundwork for such an event, probably in the summer, to include both Presbytery's.

Poor People's Campaign

The Poor People's Campaign, a movement supported by the Presbyterian Church, has announced a march on Washington D.C. to call for a moral revival and Poor People's Assembly. The march will be on June 20, 2020 with the assembly to follow that week. That is the same day as the opening of our 224th General Assembly in Baltimore, and plans are being discussed to find ways to connect our work together as the PC(USA) with the march and assembly in DC. You can learn more here: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org>

Service as Co-Moderator

With about four months to go, I'm continuing to enjoy the opportunities to travel and see the church at work across the country and around the world. Thank you so much for your support and encouragement in this time. I truly could not do this without all the ways you have been cheering me on. Here is my travel schedule through March:

- March 2-5: General Assembly 224 Leadership Selection, Louisville
- March 6-7: New York City Presbytery
- March 10-11: Newton Presbytery (New Jersey)
- March 11-13: Abingdon Presbytery (Tennessee)
- March 16-18: West Jersey Presbytery
- March 20-22: Northumberland Presbytery (Pennsylvania)
- March 22-23: Presbytery of the Western Reserve (Cleveland)

Personal

March 5 marks one year since we moved my Mom into memory care in Oak Harbor, Washington. In addition to my travel as co-moderator, I've also traveled several times over the past year to spend time with my Mom and Dad. My Mom has entered a time of decline, and recently has been falling quite a bit. Her mental state has also declined significantly, so I'm visiting the last week of February, the 24th-28th. Thank you again for keeping my family in your prayers.

The council **voted** to designate the worship offering to the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

Reports of Committees

Committee on Ministry

Katherine Pater

COM has approved several temporary pastor positions. First Brookline is moving toward hiring a pastor. COM has also approved a boundary training program which will take place prior to the September meeting of Presbytery.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

No report

Committee on Mission and Congregations

No report

Trustees

Thatcher Freeborn

The chair reported that the trustees have been working closely with the Needham Administrative Commission. This has included reviewing rental contracts with tenants of the Needham building. The trustees completed a robust insurance review and have a few follow-up items. He will circulate a written report after receiving feedback and votes on matters that are pending. The trustees acted on the council's action and funded the grant for the Mandarin Bible Study. The chair of the trustees and of the investment committee continue to work on an investment and spend policy. They continue to be in conversation on how the trustees can be helpful in serving the mission of the presbytery.

Nominating Committee

Sarah Hathaway

The council voted to **nominate** Katie Stansifer (RE) to serve on the nominating committee. Sarah Donovan and Meagan Manas have agreed to be nominated to serve at Synod Assembly.

Adjourn

The moderator adjourned the meeting with prayer at 8:55 PM.