



North Haven Congregational Church

Board of Finance Minutes

Meeting of September 8, 2009

ATTENDING

Sally Pallatto, Chairperson pro temp; Adam Schweickert, Stephen Peterson, John Tibor Philip DiPeri, Scott Morrow. Regrets: Betsey Reid, Ray Geissler

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM. Opening Prayer was offered by Scott Morrow.

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the 14 July 2009 meeting was postponed pending review by Committee chairperson Betsey Reid.

The minutes of the 16 August meeting were approved as corrected.

MINISTER'S REPORT

Care's service of installation has been postponed from November 8 to a date to be determined early in 2010.

Scott plans to talk with Adam about the proposed Welcoming Initiative and then hopes to enlarge the discussion to include other people.

Scott informed the Board that he will ask the Council to reimburse him for travel and registration costs associated with a reunion of participants in his leave study program.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Trustees have transferred \$1,800 to Buildings and Grounds for the elevator service contract.

Outstanding charges for lawn service amount to \$1,300, leaving B&G with ca. \$1,000 for the balance of the fiscal year.

AT&T has issued a credit for \$432 to adjust the double billing reported in the August meeting.

Income from the parking fees for the Italian Festival was \$655—somewhat lower than anticipated. Of this amount, \$65.50 has been transferred to the Fund Raising income line.

Payroll line is under spent by some \$5,000 representing savings by the delayed start of salary for the Associate Pastor.

The Nextel Tower line shows a balance of \$29,430. From this, \$6,922 has been paid for the stair repair. In December 20% of the total 2009 income will be transferred out—10% to Outreach Board and 10% to the endowment.

Although regular pledge income seems to be on track on an YTD basis, Income from the Step-Up appeal is lagging well behind.

It appears that we will end the year in balance, but that we will not have an appreciable balance to carry forward to 2010.

Adam asked if the Board could receive a separate summary of then Nextel Tower fund as part of the monthly Treasurer's Report. John agreed that this will be done.

The Treasurer's report was received with appreciation.

There was no report from the Recording Secretary.

COUNCIL REPORT

A summary of the 18 August Council meeting was distributed. Three concerns were raised.

There was concern about the \$47,000 estimate for repairing and repainting the lower steeple. Philip will arrange a joint meeting with the Board, Building and Grounds, and Martin Benassi to review Martin's report.

There is a need for more regular and structured interaction between the Board and B&G.

North Haven Congregational Church

28 Church Street, North Haven, CT 06473

www.NorthHavenUCC.org ❖ (203) 239-5691 ❖ (203) 234-1751 (fax)

There needs to be much greater clarity about the financial operations of the church and the role of the Board in these operations. E.g., should all expense requests come to the Board before being referred to, say, the Council, the Trustees, or Memorial Gifts?

CURRENT BUSINESS

The Board expressed concern that the May pledge report had not been sent to church members. The urgency of mailing the September report was also noted. The September report needs to include a reminder about the Step-Up appeal. Steve will communicate directly with Betsey about these concerns.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board engaged in a general discussion about the forthcoming financial campaign and several salient points emerged from the discussion.

We must have more detailed information about pledges. Minimally, this information should include;

- A bracket analysis of current pledges, i.e. the number of pledges in brackets of, say, \$500.
- An analysis of the growth/decline of pledges, both in terms of dollars amounts and in terms of the number of people pledging.

An analysis of the total church membership in terms of pledging activity, including:

- The number of members who do not pledge, and
- A translation of pledging units into membership pledging.
- One suggestion was undertake a best and worst case analysis of the pledging potential of the members who do not pledge currently.

It is imperative that we inform the congregation of the realistic financial challenge presented by our budget. In its 2009 Annual Meeting the congregation adopted an unbalanced budget while affirming the church program that we now have. Although that was an act of good faith, it is our responsibility to inform the membership in detail about the financial consequences of this decision.

Specifically, we approach 2010

- Anticipating a year of full staff employment—programmatically this is where we want to be, but financially the lack of full staffing has eased the budget picture in the past two years.
- We are not expecting any significant carry-forward income. In 2009, this carry-forward income amounted to 11% of our total income.

In order for the Speaking from Faith presentations to have their full potential impact, the membership must have detailed information about the 210 budget. This information should be mailed to all members not later than October 10th.

- Consideration should be given to informing the congregation of the per member “cost” of the church’s program.
- It also was suggested that the actual text of the four “Speaking from Faith” presentations be mailed to all members and/or posted on the website. Otherwise, these presentations only reach the 25% +/- of the membership who attend services regularly.

We must recognize that there are only three plausible ways to meet our financial challenge.

- Activate (motivate) non-pledging members;
- Expect more income from members who currently pledge;
- Increase church membership, specifically membership that will pledge.

In light of these several concerns, the Board set the date of Sunday, September 27 at 7 pm, in the Heath Room as the occasion to do more planning for the stewardship campaign.

It was agreed that Sally would represent the Board at the September Council meeting and Adam may be able to attend as well.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Board meeting will be October 13 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Peterson, Recorder