

Mount Seymour United Church  
Council Minutes  
September 13 2023

The meeting was held in the Cafe Space and was **called to order** at 6:43.

In **Attendance** were Klirsten Harkins, Steve Wellenbrink, Nancy Talbot, Mary Sparks, Kathryn Ferriss, Lorna Leckie, Younes Skhissi, Heathir Naesgaard, and Jen Towers, with Ward Branch attending via Zoom. Mary Sparks chaired the meeting and Kelly Nobles took the minutes.

The meeting **opened** by acknowledging our debt to the traditional stewards of the land, with input from Council members. This was followed by a brief check-in with members sharing summer highlights.

**Minutes** of the June meeting were reviewed and amendments proposed.

- ❖ “That the Minutes of June 14 be approved as amended” moved by Klirsten Harkins, seconded By Heathir Naesgaard. CARRIED

**April/May minutes still need to be approved**

**Minister’s report**

- The potential donation from the defunct Preschool unfortunately didn’t go through despite Mary’s best efforts.
- The Iranian church trial went well but their theology is at odds with the UC and there are many conflicting Sunday rentals. They may continue to rent on occasion when the space is available
- Nancy followed up with Marc Coulombe re: the strategic direction process. According to Marc, if there is a strong sense that the church’s future is “community-facing and community-embracing” then the heavy lifting is the work of Council. A small group should put together a recommendation. Mary, Kirsten, Catherine Branch and Nancy will meet to discuss the issues. Is the staffing and energy reflective of the church’s mission? The upcoming Council Retreat will also focus on these questions.
- Nancy is four years from retirement. The church will need a transition plan.
- Rentals are up but we still need a regular Wednesday evening tenant
- Seven people have signed up for the Seekers group and five have requested to transfer membership.
- Nancy spent some time during the summer revising the historic roll.
- Carla has finished revising the constitution and the next step is to call a congregational meeting.

**Action:** Nancy to get Jeff Smith to look at the revised constitution.

## **Finance**

- Some short term GICs needed to be cashed in in August to keep afloat.
- Good news: income is up, Thrift Shop up \$10k, givings up \$20k
- Not so good: expenses are up more. The Church's Deficit to date is 10k more than budgeted.
- The steepest expense increase was for snow removal. Steve Wellenbrink is exploring options for a better quote.
- The Cafe situation is \$10k better than it looks because of accounting changes.
- Hard decisions may be required next year. The property budget will continue to rise as our volunteer base ages.

## **M&P**

- M&P conducted Nancy's performance review over the summer
- Katie Savoy has been hired for children's ministry. Catherine Branch is working on a contract. She will need some support and mentoring. There are 2-3 kids out for services on a Sunday.

## **Garden project**

- Steve Wellenbrink tore out the chain link fence. The Playground equipment has been removed at the new user (housing coop)'s expense. Catherine Branch will write a letter transferring legal liability to the new user.
- The end of the parking lot has been made wheelchair accessible.
- Big thanks to Steve for taking care of these big jobs.

## **New business:**

- Oct 1 congregational lunch may be Pot Luck since Peter Muirhead is away. Steve Wellenbrink suggested a cross-promotion with the cafe if Nyenna or Jen is available. Volunteers can set up tables, wash dishes etc.
- New barista Jimena is a great fit and also can run sound and PP

**Action:** Nancy to contact Jen/Nyenna re lunch

**Next meeting** Oct 11 at 6:30

**Closed** with prayer