First United Church – Hanna, Alberta

Council Meeting, Church Lounge

Thursday, January 13, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Winona Gutsche

Secretary – Rhonda Lund

Rev. Aurora Coulthard, Hanna First United Church

Rev. Jan Richardson, Stettler United Church – Virtual

Laura Creasy Jean Lypka

Tyler Creasy Linda Quaschnick

Liz Gourlay Gwen Snell – entered at 7:12 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER Chair Winona Gutsche called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. WELCOME & OPENING WORSHIP

Chair Winona Gutsche welcomed everyone to the meeting in the fellowship room which allows everyone to be a safe distance apart in respect of COVID-19 regulations, but still be together.

Rev. Aurora Coulthard opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion No. 53** Moved by Jean Lypka that the Agenda for January 13, 2021 be adopted as presented.

Motion seconded by Linda Quaschnick. **Carried.**

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

**Motion No.** **54** Moved by Laura Creasy that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held December 9, 2020 be adopted as presented.

Motion seconded by Linda Quaschnick. **Carried.**

1. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Rev. Coulthard confirmed that she will be away at school February 3rd to 14th, 2021.

Memorial Park - Discussion was held, including the following comments:

* The request from the Park Committee to consolidate the bank account with the general account is to enable the park to operate within the larger church budget. The Committee will remain dedicated to operation of the park and resume fundraising when it is possible to do so.
* The intention when the park was developed was that it would be self-sustaining, but there were no restrictions on making changes as time progressed.
* Initially the park paid their own water bill, but the park pays for mowing in the park and church grounds and the church now pays the water bill.
* The cost to replace plaques is approximately $70.00, so the process to replace the older plaques has become an issue.
* The cairn recognizing donations needs to be reviewed, updated and cleaned.

Gwen Snell entered the meeting room at 7:12 p.m.

Piano Donation Plaque – Winona Gutsche confirmed that she would contact the office administrator to order the plaque to acknowledge the donation of the grand piano.

1. CORRESPONDENCE
   1. Grace Kaye – Janitorial resignation

Winona Gutsche read the letter submitted by Grace Kaye resigning as janitor for the church and thrift store. She will continue to clean until January 15th and is willing to train someone for us.

During discussion it was noted:

* janitorial services are needed for the thrift store as it is open 4 days per week.
* The time spent varies between the church and the thrift store (cleaning bathrooms, high touch areas, vacuuming, mopping floors, etc.)
* Winona Gutsche offered to place an advertisement in The Coffee Break and Hanna Herald, as well as on Facebook.
* Jean Lypka offered to clean until a new janitor is hired.
* The wage should be set at $21.00 per hour.

**Motion No.** **55** Moved by Laura Creasy that Council accept Grace Kaye’s resignation as janitor for the church and thrift store, effective January 15th, 2021.

Seconded by Linda Quaschnick. **Carried.**

**Motion No.** **56** Moved by Linda Quaschnick that a janitor be hired for the church and thrift store as soon as possible and that the wage for the position be set at $21.00 per hour.

Motion seconded by Tyler Creasy. **Carried.**

* 1. St Andrew’s College – Letter requesting that one Sunday be designated “College or Vocation Sunday”.

During discussion, the consensus was to designate one Sunday in 2021 to highlight St. Andrew’s College and donate the offerings for that Sunday to the College. Rev. Coulthard will confirm a date with St. Andrews College and bring it to council for a motion.

* 1. Quote for new United Church sign.

Council reviewed the quote provided by Tumbleweeds Print Shop to design a new sign for the west side of the church. Tumbleweeds will provide an aluminum sign, but installation is not included. Winona will contact the United Church of Canada for the newest version of the crest for the sign. Winona and Rhonda will provide the wording for the new sign.

**Motion No.** **57** Moved by Jean Lypka that Winona Gutsche be authorized to accept the quote from Tumbleweeds Print Shop for $486.81 to provide a sign for Hanna First United Church.

Motion seconded by Laura Creasy. **Carried.**

* 1. Thrift Store Proposal

Laura Creasy advised that a letter had just been received offering to rent a retail space in the downtown core to the thrift store. Council discussed the benefits and drawbacks of moving the thrift store from the church. The letter will need to be taken to the thrift store board for their review and decision prior to a decision by council. Laura will contact the property owners and advise that their proposal is being reviewed.

5.5 Thank you from Tricia Gladdish for the Christmas gnome.

1. COMMITTEE REPORTS
   1. Finance Committee – Written Reports

Linda Quaschnick reviewed the financial reports. Interesting to compare to prior year. Fall Visit exceeded expectations and what we received in 2019 and offerings exceeded the budget by $7,000. She noted that the thrift store is a large part of our income. Laura Creasy confirmed that the thrift store contributed $25,000 and had and extra $5,000 approved if needed.

Laura Creasy reviewed the proposed budget. The revenues are not much higher than last year and the expenses are increased by 3%, other than the ones that are confirmed already. Again, the thrift store contribution will be needed to offset the shortfall.

Laura Creasy advised that Mr. Canfield was at the church today to tune the piano. He charged $50.00 including travel, and she would like to suggest the church give him extra funds.

**Motion No. 58** Moved by Laura Creasy that Mr. Canfield be given an additional $50.00 to thank him for the excellent service in tuning the piano in the church.

Motion seconded by Linda Quaschnick. **Carried.**

* 1. Board of Trustees – Verbal Report

Tyler Creasy reported that the Board has not had a meeting as they have not been asked for any financial assistance from the church. He noted that the investment funds are increasing.

* 1. Worship, Mission & Service – Verbal Report

Jean Lypka reported that the Worship Committee has not met since the last council meeting. Things are going well, although we are not having in person services due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Jean noted that the Christmas Eve service was recorded and uploaded to the First United Church facebook page. Discussion followed with the following items noted:

* The service was very nice, however the sound quality was not always clear.
* The music was loud compared to the singing or speaking levels.
* Service was recorded on an iphone, not external recording equipment.
* Professional audio services are available, but may be costly.
* People who are not able to connect to Facebook are missing the services.

In person and traditional gatherings are being missed. Rev. Coulthard suggested that the church be opened for congregation members who cannot access the online services. Expect that only 6 – 10 people would be in the church which is within the Covid-10 restrictions. Covid protocols would be followed. The consensus of council was to proceed with online services in the church, beginning January 17th.

Laura Creasy advised that our pledge for Mission and Service needs to be submitted this month.

**Motion No. 59** Moved by Laura Creasy that Hanna First United Church pledge a contribution of $5,000 to Mission & Service in 2021.

Motion seconded by Jean Lypka.**Carried.**

* 1. Christian Education – No Report
  2. Pastoral Care – Verbal report

Linda Quaschnick reported that the committee met on December 11th and decided to make calls to congregation members to update them on the church and ask if people feel there is something more the church could do for them. The committee will put a report together for the next meeting.

Linda also noted that cards are being sent to members as well. Discussion followed regarding pastoral care, with the following comments or suggestions:

* Difficulty getting information to know when someone is ill or needs a card. There are people that don’t want others to know they are ill.
* The phone calls by the committee members were helpful in connecting with people.
* A diary system may be helpful in making follow up calls when someone is ill or needs assistance.
* Important to let Rev. Coulthard know so she can call people as well.
  1. Memorial Park – Verbal Report

Winona Gutsche advised that the Nativity scene was blown down by the windstorm. It will be put away this week.

**Motion No. 60** Moved by Laura Creasy, that as requested by the Memorial Park committee, the Memorial Park bank account will be closed, the funds will be transferred to the general operating account, and the park revenue and expenses will be included with the church operating budget.

Motion seconded by Tyler Creasy. **Carried.**

* 1. Ministry & Personnel – Verbal Report

Winona Gutsche reported that she attended a meeting with Rev. Coulthard and the members of the Ministry & Personnel committee Ron Lowther, Alan Lund and Doreen Fitchett to discuss the committee role in supporting our minister. A schedule of regular meetings was set (every three months) to keep lines of communication open.

* 1. Property – Verbal Report

Gwen Snell reported on the following:

* Received a call regarding a power line down behind the church. Gloria Hutton called ATCO and it turned out to be a line that had been disconnected. It will be removed.
* In discussions with Longeway Eavestroughing about the ice buildup on the roof. He did install an extra ice dam on the roof last year. Once the weather warms up he will silicone the eavestroughs.
* Ira is looking into why the eavestroughs at the church were cleaned, but not the ones on the manse.
  1. Thrift Store – Written Report

Laura Creasy reviewed the Thrift Store report, confirming the following:

* December Statistics – $5,440.80 in Sales, 374 Customers and 229.5 Volunteer Hours
* The Thrift Store was only open for 12 days in December.
* Closed over Christmas Break to customers. Volunteers came in to sort during that time.
* Thank you gifts were given to the volunteers for Christmas.
* The Executive met on January 7th and made the following decisions:
  + Administrator title will change to Manager as the position is more hands on than before.
  + Will remain open 4 days a week. May go to 5 days eventually.,
  + Reviewed the proposed budget. Estimating revenues low, but never sure what the future brings.

**Motion No.** **61** Moved by Gwen Snell that the motion from the January 7, 2021 Thrift Store Board meeting be ratified as follows:

That the $35,000 1 year non-cashable GIC be renewed with an additional $10,000 from the Centre Street Thrift Store Operating account for a total GIC of $45,000.

Motion seconded by Tyler Creasy. **Carried.**

Laura Creasy advised that the Thrift Store Board discussed compensating Kevin Bossert in some way for his volunteer work to remove snow from the parking lot, perhaps with a tax receipt. After discussion, Winona Gutsche and Rhonda Lund offered to draft a letter of appreciation to Kevin for the work he does and confirming that a tax receipt could be issued to his business. The letter will also request that the snow be hauled away or piled on the parking lot, as the rocks and gravel deposited with the snow creates significant work to remove them from the grass in the spring.

1. CHINOOK WINDS REGIONAL COUNCIL – Verbal Report

Rev. Richardson reported that the Regional Council continues to host webinars, but in person meetings are not being held. She confirmed that Stettler is holding their services by zoom one week and online the next week. Castor is still holding services in person, under the threshold for Covid 19 restrictions.

1. MINISTER’S REPORT – Verbal Report

Rev. Coulthard gave a verbal report, including the following items:

* Music license is expanded so we can use music for our online service. She and Denise Wiens meet on Fridays to do the music for the Sunday services.
* Her recommendation is to continue with online services.
* She has been working to provide activity books for Epiphany. Paper copies are available for people who don’t have access to the online services.
* Church has a zoom account now, so would like to see if we can have a community zoom time each week on Friday mornings. Hoping that will keep people connected.
* She would like to have the office administrator come in to the office one or two times a week. As she is busy compiling the online services, it would be helpful to have Tricia in the office to answer phones and emails, etc. Council consensus was that Rev. Coulthard should call Tricia and let her know that she would like her in the office.

**Motion No. 62** Moved by Gwen Snell that the Reports be accepted as presented at the meeting tonight.

Motion seconded by Laura Creasy. **Carried.**

1. NEW BUSINESS

9.01 Congregational meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the potential that Covid-19 restrictions would not allow for the annual congregational meeting scheduled for February 21st, 2021. It was the consensus of Council that the Annual Meeting be cancelled for February due to Covid-19 restrictions. General Council in Toronto has changed the bylaws to allow churches to hold their 2021 congregational meeting later in the year, due to Covid. Council can pass the budget at a council meeting and it can be presented to the congregational meeting at a later date.

It was suggested that budget and annual report could be posted on the website.

Committee reports should be sent to Tricia by January 22nd so the Annual Report can be compiled, as the reports need to be submitted with the statistics in March.

Rev. Coulthard asked if council intended to close the church during July and August as they have the past two years. Council assured her that the church would be open. The only reason services were stopped for the summer in prior years was because we did not have a minister.

1. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. as Rev. Coulthard will be away on the 10th.

1. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Winona Gutsche thanked everyone for attending and stated that business being concluded, the meeting is adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

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Chair

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Secretary