

WEST PHILADELPHIA MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP
Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 4, 2016

Present: Tim Martin Johnson (Council Chair, HRC), Mark Michalovic (Elder), Reuben Wetherbee (HRC), Bryan Geib (Deacon), Dorianna Lordi (Administrative Assistant), Nick Lordi (Elder), Lorie Hershey (Pastor), Laurie Callan (Elder)

Absent: Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Betsy Sneller (HRC), Brooke Blough (Deacon), Lenny Thompson (Deacon)

Minutes recorded by Dorianna Lordi

1) Opening devotions and prayer

- Tim began meeting at 7:06 p.m. by reading Psalm 46 and Ephesians 4 and prayer.

2) HRC

Pastoral/Congregation Review update

- Review team is Christine Waanders, Nathan Vader, Tim Martin Johnson, and Nancy Geryk.
- Review will possibly have more open ended questions and a combination of small groups and questionnaire.
- Tim will review topics discussed at previous council meeting with review team.
- Review team will report for HRC, then HRC will present it to council.
- Tentatively planning for review at the end of October, 2016.

Child Protection Program update

- Annual training and Valuing our kids conference is Sunday, September 18, 2016.
- Emphasis on the entire church community's role in child safety.
- Will possibly do part two of this conference in January, 2017 for those who miss September 18.

3) Deacons

Elevator

- Elevator is complete, but not currently accessible. Calvary is working out details, will possibly have an access code.

Heating

- The boiler has been broken since fall of 2015, it may be a few weeks/months until the current one is replaced. Last winter was particularly difficult for staff during the week and Sunday's activities. Specifically, last winter and spring the preschool class had to be cancelled several times because the classroom was too cold.

building issues

- Bryan explained reasons for delays in Calvary's plans to renovate downstairs classrooms.
- Adult Sunday school room is under construction to make room for elevator entrance. Adult Sunday school room is now much smaller and will be used for another building users' offices because their current office has black mold.
- Adult education class is currently using Curio's "black box" room, though it is only a temporary solution until Curio begins shows.
- Council members shared some main concerns about our current location, which are listed below.
- Lorie shared concerns, emphasized that we do not have enough classrooms and space for our congregation on Sunday.

- It appears that we are outgrowing this space and it is time to at least consider our building options.
- Nick shared that our building is restricting what we can do, as well as turning away visitors.
- Dorianna shared concerns of being a staff member during the week. Shared an instance where the double doors to outside were propped open early in the morning and possibly left open overnight.
- Size – We do not have enough classrooms to accommodate our Sunday school classes and other activities. We also need to work our schedules out with other building users, one of our children’s classes needs to end early to make room for the next group.
- Security – the 48th street door latch is broken, it has been broken for some time, often leaving the door cracked and unlocked most of the day. The alarm is not being utilized during the week and doors are not kept secure, there have been several recent instances where non-building users have come in from outside.
- Bathrooms – bathrooms are frequently out of order during the week and on Sunday mornings.
- Structure – The building is run similar to a co-op, where all users share responsibility of the building and work together. Council members shared pros and cons of this type of structure.

Survey

- Bryan handed out the survey that the deacons created from the feedback from last year’s congregational meeting. Survey goal is to compile opinions to generate ideas of space options and needs. Some feedback was offered regarding survey questions. Deacons plan to email out survey in the next few days. Plan to do a survey on a regular basis and make it a part of our culture.

Next steps

- Council decided to have one staff member and one deacon meet with Calvary center to discuss and share our building concerns and needs.
- Deacons will email out survey to congregation and compile survey responses.
- Tim will ask a few people to look into other building options that will be considered. Will then present options to congregation and discuss next steps.

honorarium payments refused by guest preachers

- Bryan clarified our policy, being that when a guest speaker refuses an honorarium, it will not be redistributed to another person.

4) Elders

Isaac Villegas/CHMF response

- Tim spoke with Rebecca Rich at Isaac’s congregation, and she shared some ways that we can show support. One being to take a picture and post it to social media, as well as send a gift and card from our congregation. Picture was taken and posted on Facebook and website.
- The elders decided at their pastoral team meeting to not write a formal letter to Virginia conference because we have no formal connection or relationship with the conference.

5) Pastor

Black Lives Matter sign

- Lorie met with Rabbi from Kol-Tzedek and Pastor from Calvary United Methodist, and was asked to ask our leadership how we feel about having a black lives matter banner on the building.
- Council discussed it and no one disagreed.

6) Admin Assistant

social media update

- Dorianna shared about the churches public Facebook page, its purpose, and current status.

- Council briefly discussed roles of leaders and staff in the Facebook page.
- Council decided to look over our Facebook page and a few other church Facebook pages and discuss involvement at next council meeting.

7) Chair

Reflection on organizational structure

- Tim briefly shared and noted that we changed our organizational leadership structure some time ago and wanted council to start thinking about how it is working to discuss at next council meeting.

8) Next Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 7, 2016, 7:00pm

Tim concluded meeting at 8:39 p.m.