

**St. Martin-in-the-Fields**  
**Vestry Meeting Summary**  
**March 28, 2023**

**Present (all via Zoom):**

Father Jim Littrell  
Barbara Thomson  
Tom Sibson  
Katie Borgstrom  
Del Bright  
Jim Fairburn  
Rob Jennings

Emily Law (taking Minutes; Elizabeth  
Eagles is on vacation)  
Harry Gould  
Carolyn Green  
Ben Makem  
Victoria Sicks

Father Jim opened the meeting with a prayer.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

A few minor edits were received before the meeting. A motion to approve the Minutes from the February 28 Vestry meeting was seconded and passed unanimously. (Due to an oversight, the Summary of the February 28 was not voted on. This caused a delay in posting the Summary on the Parish Hall bulletin board.)

**II. Rector's Warden's Report**

*A. Transition consultant*

The committee of four Vestry members (co-chairs Jim Fairburn and Victoria Sicks, plus David Dieck and Harry Gould) who interviewed potential consultants for the transition have met twice since the February 28 Vestry meeting: First to establish questions to ask and to set up interviews, and afterward to debrief and decide about a recommendation. They provided first- and second-choice recommendations from the four candidates interviewed. The first-choice candidate will be approached regarding availability, and as Rector's Warden, Barb Thomson will notify Canon Arlette Benoit Joseph (the diocesan Canon for Transition Ministry) of the first choice candidate and ask about diocesan protocol. A motion to approve the first-choice candidate as the transition consultant (if that person accepts and the Diocese approves) was made and seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

*B. Copyright infringement claim*

Regarding the claim that a photo used by St. Martin's infringed on a copyright, a motion to pay the nominal fee requested to resolve the issue and avoid possible escalation passed with 7 yes votes and 4 abstentions. It was suggested that going forward, a copyright search tool be implemented for any proposed use of images.

*C. 2023 class of Vestry members*

Although Barb Thomson, Victoria Sicks, Ben Makem, and Harry Gould are scheduled to retire from the Vestry this spring, and normally per St. Martin's bylaws (section 4.9), retiring Vestry members are ineligible for reelection before a year has elapsed, there was discussion regarding whether Barb (as the Rector's Warden) and Victoria (as someone who filled a vacancy on the Vestry partway through a 4-year term) are eligible to remain on the Vestry. (Our bylaws, sections 4.9, 5.2, and 5.3, provide guidance on

these questions; Barb Thomson has noted that if our bylaws are inconsistent with the canons, the canons will rule.) Also, per our bylaws, the Vestry must nominate a new slate of Vestry members as needed 8 weeks before the Annual Parish Meeting (which in turn must occur by June 15), so a nominating committee must be formed quickly. Someone said the preferred mix would be two Vestry members and two non-Vestry parishioners (relevant bylaw sections are 3.1, 3.2). Barb requested input on potential non-Vestry members by Friday (March 31) and will consult the Vestry on names provided. Barb Thomson notes that the Vestry ballot will be determined by the Nominating Committee according to the bylaws. The committee may, but is not obligated to, nominate more people than there are openings. Parishioners may submit petitions for nominees according to bylaw requirements (section 3.5) until 2 weeks before the Annual Parish Meeting. If there is only one nominee per Vestry opening, the ballots can be submitted as a slate and voted on. (For further clarification, see our bylaws, Article Three—Nominations and Elections.) Father Jim recommended that people on the nominating committee be regular church attendees who are baptized, lay voting parishioners.

#### *D. Parish finance meeting*

Tom Sibson (as the Accounting Warden) would normally present the budget and finance report to the Parish at the General Parish Meeting, but he is not available on Sundays for in-person meetings, so offered to have someone else present the report. Father Jim suggested that we hold the General Parish Meeting on April 16. Harry noted that presenting the budget and finance report promotes transparency. Despite the presence of other events scheduled for later in the day on April 16—a POWER mayoral forum, and Under God—it was agreed that the General Parish Meeting will take place on April 16 directly after the 10:30 service. Barb asked for feedback on the in-progress Interim Phase graphic that was sent out just before the meeting, and received positive comments from the group.

### **III. Finance**

Tom Sibson did not share his screen for the finance report (already provided to all Vestry members before the meeting) but said we are in a great place financially and are in monitoring mode. Motion to approve the finance report was put forth, seconded, and passed unanimously.

### **IV. Stewardship**

David Dieck was absent, but updates on Stewardship continue to appear each week in Field Notes. Father Jim reported that identifying people who had not pledged or had not fulfilled their pledge has been fruitful. Harry is pleased and gratified to see some unexpected pledges. Father Jim noted that some people have not felt disaffected so much as ignored by St. Martin's—just not in touch. He hopes that continuing the outreach work that Kate Maus's team is doing will yield robust results, bringing people into engagement. Barb praised Father Jim and the Stewardship Committee for identifying some previously unknown pastoral issues. Father Jim says that he and Laura Palmer are not asking for money but are reaching out pastorally.

### **V. Properties**

In light of Carol Horne Penn stepping down as Properties chair, Father Jim reported. He observed that the Properties Committee is a large group but has not met in a while. Father Jim has an idea for a new chairperson but needs more information. Urgent issues include weak flooring under radiators and the boiler needing repair. Father Jim is trying to get bids on various issues rather than just using the usual contractors without question.

He says parishioners should approach him first with questions and issues regarding the Properties Committee and its work.

## **VI. Interim Rector's Report**

### *A. Transition work findings*

Father Jim has been getting questions regarding the roles of various leaders at St. Martin's. He pointed out that he is in charge but likes teamwork. He thinks these questions stem from anxiety regarding the transition. He noted that Kate Maus has a team of 20 people to launch a membership survey via phone calls. Father Jim is grateful to Kate, David Collins, and Barbara Dundon for their work on this. Carolyn asked whether they plan to call each parishioner or each household. Barb clarified that if a household has more than one person, the caller will ask who else they should speak with. Kate has also organized about 10 volunteers for the Parish lobby welcome desk to do tasks and provide friendly faces. Victoria asked if those conducting the phone survey can help with the Parish Profile. Father Jim says the survey results will definitely feed into the Parish Profile and Stewardship work.

### *B. Committee updates*

Father Jim is setting up a new iteration of the Governance Committee because St. Martin's has much to do policywise before a new rector comes. Eugenie Dieck has agreed to chair the new incarnation of the committee. Father Jim has four other people in mind. The new Personnel Committee met last night (Carolyn Green, David Adams, and Paula Wineland).

### *C. Worship schedule*

A parishioner is proposing a single service to bring the parish together, rather than having several services. Father Jim has visited Cathedral Village, where a number of St. Martin's parishioners live, to discuss possible ways to facilitate participation in worship. He wants to bring people together more, as at the former Sunday Forums. Discussion ensued about services for children and youth and the need for parental input. Father Jim requested that Vestry members think about the worship schedule.

### *D. Pastoral care*

Father Jim is having many conversations with parishioners on many issues. He says that Carol Duncan, Laura Palmer, sometimes Anne Alexis (engaged with the Under God team), and Tyrone (with choir members) are all doing pastoral work. Four people are scheduled to be baptized. Father Jim is encouraged to see new people coming in; lots going on during Holy Week and he hopes we'll engage.

## **VII. Next Month's Agenda**

No items were suggested for next month's agenda other than what has been decided in this meeting. Father Jim expressed gratitude for the Vestry. The upcoming Cabaret was mentioned.

Rob Jennings provided his own food-based prayer to pray us out. We look forward to hearing his upcoming composition of a musical version.