

**Gulf Cove United Methodist Church**  
*Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus*  
**Finance Leadership Team Meeting**  
**March 17, 2014 – 7:00 PM**

**Attendees:** John Furtado (Chairman), Rick Starck, Ken Priest, Ilene Sokolich, John McGuire (Vice-Chairman), Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly, Karen Current, Joan Priest, Dawn Tesauro

The meeting was opened with the lighting of the candle representing Jesus Christ, followed by a prayer by Rev. Bill.

**CORRECTIONS TO PREVIOUS MINUTES**

There were no corrections proposed to the minutes from the February 18, 2014, meeting.

**REPORTS**

*Overall Financial Report:* Year to date, we are running slightly ahead of the same time last year. We still have not met our budget amount of \$37,000 in spendable income each month. However, we are actually spending less than our budget.

*Reserve Fund Balance 2/28/2014:* \$16,871.86. When amounts received during March are included, the balance currently in the Reserve Fund is \$23,322.86.

*Mortgage Balance March 2, 2014:* \$22,099.04. The total received from the 1% Club year-to-date is \$2,075. The new Debt Reduction challenge runs through the end of May; if the congregation raises \$9,000, the “challenger” will match up to \$9,000. If you add our regular, monthly, mortgage payments to that \$18,000, the total mortgage will be paid off by the beginning of June. Currently, a total of \$5,012 has been received under the debt reduction challenge, making \$7,087 available to reduce the mortgage.

**OLD BUSINESS**

*Super Boat Grand Prix:* Because of complications that became apparent during discussions of this program with the event’s organizers, it was decided not to pursue this outreach.

*Small Business Health Care Tax Credit:* Dawn reported that the paperwork for this credit for the years 2013 and 2011 was recently completed and the forms have been mailed to the IRS. The credit was previously claimed for 2010 and 2012. The amount received from 2012 was close to \$3,000, and she thinks we received about the same amount for 2010.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*BP Oil Spill Settlement Fund:* Rev. Bill advised that a letter was recently received from a law firm advising that, if we can prove that our receipts fell in the year following the BP oil spill, we

may be able to receive something from the settlement fund. Those present expressed the opinion that this should not be pursued by the church.

*Staff Salaries:* SPR has already started talking about salaries for 2015. They are leaning toward increasing the base salaries to a competitive level. The concern is that if employees leave their positions, the current salaries are so low that hiring quality employees will be difficult.

*Major Office Purchases:* A discussion was held regarding the proper procedures to be followed when the office determines that equipment needs to be replaced. The question arose when it became apparent that the youth director's computer needed to be replaced, since it was crashing on a fairly frequent basis. The money was available in a wish-list fund, which included computers. During the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- Trustees are responsible for the church building, maintenance, improvements, and assets.
- SPR is responsible for hiring the right people and ensuring that they have the tools they need.
- If money is available in the appropriate account, it may not be necessary to consult with Finance.
- The office should have flexibility, but with limits, on what they can purchase. They currently do this with the day-to-day operations of the church without going to any other leadership team; one example is purchasing the appropriate amount of paper for the copiers.
- The office's authority should include actions necessary to properly run the church's office.
- This issue was recently considered as it relates to the Trustees at the January 27, 2014, Administrative Council meeting. Those Ad Council minutes provide: "After discussion, it was agreed that the Trustees should have the ability to incur and pay for necessary expenses if the total cost is less than \$1,000. If the total cost is more than \$1,000, bids should be pursued. The dollar limit should be re-considered annually and also when there is a change in board membership."
- Currently, the office budgets for consumables, certain supplies, copiers, etc., but it does not budget for major equipment replacements.
- When asked whether a plan is in place to upgrade computers every three to five years, the answer was "no." We should consider establishing an account for that purpose.
- It might be better to consider renting certain equipment (such as the projectors used in the sanctuary) rather than making an outright purchase. Upgrading such items might be cost prohibitive if upgrading occurs every two or three years. By renting, someone else is responsible for any necessary repairs.
- A "capital" account could be established for the office, to be used for major purchases and upgrades. This capital account should actually be funded so it is ready when needed.
- While two signatures are required to pay with a check, only one signature is required to purchase using a credit card. This is the reason that Conference urges churches to have no credits cards, or at least as few credit cards as possible.
- The Trustees (or other appropriate leadership team) should formulate reasonable ground rules, including appropriate limits, for the office to use.

*Administrative Council:* Although not a direct Finance matter, Rick advised that he and Rev. Bill have been discussing a more effective use of Ad Council meetings. As a result, Rick would like to start handling Ad Council meetings a little differently:

- While some administrative things need to be addressed, the Ad Council should be more of an executive body, leading the church in visions and implementation of those visions.
- There currently is good communication at Ad Council meetings. We go around the table and each team makes a presentation. However, the meetings fall short in that there is never sufficient time to actually discuss “vision” items.
- It should be emphasized to the members that ALL minutes and reports should be studied prior to the Ad Council meeting. Only red items and resolutions which need Ad Council attention will be discussed.
- Consider changing the name to what the Book of Discipline calls that body – the Church Council.
- Issues regarding resolutions ideally will be included in minutes so every Ad Council member has sufficient background prior to voting. However, this is not meant to stymie further discussion of the topic.
- One possibility is to email all resolutions to Ad Council members for their vote, instead of waiting for the next meeting. A concern regarding email, however, is the volume of emails that are generated when “reply all” is used.
- Perhaps an “Executive Team” could be established with a minimal number of members whose sole purpose is to address the vision items of the church.

**SUMMARY**

*Finance Committee Lights for Ad Council:*

Red:	➤ None!! ☺
Yellow:	➤ Presenting the scams and fraud programs.
Green:	➤ Progress in the Reserve Fund and Debt Reduction.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm with a prayer by Rev. Bill. The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 21, 2014, at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Hanson