**CUMC/WESLEY FOUNDATION**

**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**November 23, 2020**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Members Present:** Brenda Allen, Adam Faeth, Jen Hibben, Mitch Hoyer, Jason Janssen, Jane Jacobson, Mary Lautzenhiser Bellon, David Orth, Mary Wickham, Steve Williams

**Members Absent:** Gerry Kennedy, Jennifer Plagman-Galvin

**Staff Present:** Lindsay Drake, Lauren Loonsfoot

**Actions Between Meetings**

An email vote to take action on the Byrne Grant requests concluded on November 8, 2020. The Byrne agreement requires grant awards need to be completed prior to the end of the year.

**A motion was made (Janssen) and seconded (Plagman-Galvin) to approve the Bryne Grant requests, as presented by the Bryne team. Motion passed.**

A second email vote to approve the recommendation of the Information Release / Directory Update subcommittee concluded on November 19, 2020. The subcommittee asked for an electronic vote so the policy on information sharing could be put in place immediately.

The subcommittee made the following recommendations:

We are confident that the church database in Planning Center will allow us to provide contact information in a way that honors individual’s comfort levels with privacy. Members will initially choose to enter their information in the database. Then they will select what information will be displayed in the electronic directory. The directory will be available to all members who listed their information. We propose the following approach:

1. Effective immediately: Upon receiving a request for member contact information, the church office will notify the church member. The member can then decide whether to honor the request.
2. In December, all CW members will be asked to add or update their contact information to the church database.
3. In early 2021, an electronic directory will be available for all CW members who entered their information in the church database. Individuals will be able to select what contact information they want to appear in the directory.

**A motion was made from the subcommittee to adopt the three recommendations above. Motion passed.**

**Call to Order**

Chair Orth called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and shared an opening devotion. The council took turns sharing answers to the question, “How is it with your soul?”

**A motion was made (Jacobson) and seconded (Hoyer) to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2020 meeting. Motion passed.**

**Strategic Planning Update**

Chair Orth said that Hoyer, Lautzenhiser Bellon, and he met to discuss hiring a consultant to help with developing the strategic plan for Collegiate Wesley. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that they met with three consultants so far who may be able to help guide the church through the process of developing a strategic plan.

The subcommittee recommended working with Kay Kotan because she is an expert in the field of church communities, and they thought she would fit well with Collegiate Wesley. She wrote several books on the subject and she is not part of the Iowa Conference, so she would not come in with any pre-existing opinions about the church. Kotan suggested beginning the process with a few sessions to start with our existing purpose statement and plan, and then come up with core values and look at the different dimensions of our congregation.

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that the cost of hiring a consultant to work on the strategic plan would be covered by a gift from an anonymous donor. Kotan’s initial bid for helping to develop a strategic plan was $2,500.

Wickham asked whether Kotan would provide any documentation at the end of the process. Hoyer said his understanding was that Kotan would help to prepare a written summary of the goals and objectives at the end of the process. Wickham also asked whether she had provided references and what those references said about her. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said she had provided references, but the team had not contacted them yet. Hoyer said she spent some time with the Missouri conference, a Pennsylvania conference, and other churches.

Williams asked how the subcommittee found Kotan. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that she contacted Jaye Johnson from the Iowa Annual Conference and he wrote glowingly about Kotan.

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said one thing to note was that Kotan was really into the notion of prayer partners and suggested having a prayer team to pray for the strategic planning process.

Wickham asked whether we wanted to bring the Council on Ministries and Administrative Council into the planning process. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said Kotan talked about the church leadership participating. Allen said she thought the three councils should all be invited to participate in the planning process.

Allen said she would suggest doing the sessions over time rather than trying to have a virtual retreat that is on one or two days. Jacobson said it might also help to include more people if the sessions were spread over several days. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said she saw where the proposed schedule could easily be broken into at least three sections. Hoyer said that one thing that might drive the dates would be the decisions about what kind of inputs for the core values we want to collect from the congregation.

Hoyer said he went through a strategic planning process recently and there was about a week between sessions where the facilitators sent out surveys between weeks. He said that gave people a chance to feel like they were involved even if they were not able to attend a session.

Jacobson said she thought it was really important to communicate with the congregation why we are starting a strategic planning process and what we are doing. Hoyer said that Kotan also emphasized the need to involve the congregation, so they feel ownership through the process.

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said one thing she liked about Kotan’s proposal was that it would give the church a structure for the conversations in a new framework because she would put it in the context of her background in the church lifecycle, and her experience in strategic planning. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that this process would also be timely as we start to think about reopening because the church may look really different once it reopens.

Pastor Williams asked if the strategic planning process could be stretched out a bit to help with planning what the church would look like upon reopening. He said it was almost like we would have two new beginnings: when we develop the plan, and then when we re-open. Jacobson said that she liked the idea of framing the strategic planning in terms of planning what a future looks like after the pandemic.

Chair Orth asked how the council would like to move forward. He suggested that we could gather some information from Kotan like checking with her references and asking about spreading the retreat out over a couple of weekends.

Allen said she thought it sounded like the council was on the same page and trusted the subcommittee to get a little more information. Wickham said she thought the proposal looked decent. Wickham said that one reason for talking to references was they might say she did a great job, but I wish I had known this going in, or I wish I would have asked her this.

Jacobson said that she would be supportive of this approach, unless we find something when checking references.

**A motion was made (Allen) and seconded (Wickham) to move forward with the strategic planning proposal from Kotan, subject to positive reference checks, and empower the subcommittee to work with her to develop a plan.**

Chair Orth asked whether the council would want to meet in December to get an update. Allen said if it was straightforward, we might be able to handle any discussion through email. She said if there was something that was more complex, or something we wanted to talk through, we might want to meet and discuss.

 **Motion passed.**

**COVID-19 Response Team Update**

Jacobson said the COVID-19 Response Team would meet Wednesday. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said the bishop sent out a directive asking all united Methodist churches to cease in-person gatherings. Later, she amended that directive to say that groups of 15 or less masked and socially distanced people could meet if the church felt it was safe.

**Nominations Subcommittee Update**

Drake said the Nominations Subcommittee made good progress, but she felt like the team should meet one more time to work on filling a couple more positions. She said one thing Lautzenhiser Bellon reminded her was to confirm the annual conference delegates.

Chair Orth asked if there were any suggestions for Chair-Elect for Church Council. Allen said she lost track of whether anyone asked Mike King. Drake said they had asked, and at that time he was talking about moving, but he was no longer planning to move.

**Leadership Development**

Drake said that Lautzenhiser Bellon and she were meeting to finalize leadership development training. She said the training would be pre-recorded and shared with the leaders to help them grow in their purpose.

**Information Release / Directory Update**

Drake said she and the subcommittee have been busy with things related to the directory updates. Chair Orth said the communication about the directory and information sharing policy went out to the church. He asked if the committee was going to continue to meet. Hoyer said that while the subcommittee did the heavy lifting of setting the direction, there were still some open questions about how to collect information from people through paper who did not have technology access.

Jacobson suggested the subcommittee’s business was concluded. Faeth asked if there was an existing cluster that might pick up the directory ownership and handle reminding people to update their information periodically. Drake said she thought the ongoing work was small and the staff could handle the updates in the future. She said she thought it might make sense to remind people to update their information when we remind them to update their giving.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m. and Pastor Hibben provided the closing prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Faeth, Secretary

Next meeting: December 21, 2020