**Homestead Presbytery Council Agenda**

**July 19, 2022**

COUNCIL MEMBERS (Quorum 1/3 plus moderator)

P-Present, A-Absent, E-Excused

***By Virtue of Chairing Committees:***

P-Kris Brammer – Program & Grants

P-Charity Potter – Commission on Ministry

E-Joyce Douglas – Administration & Finance

P-Carl Eskridge – Administration & Finance

P-Teresa Bartlett – Nominating

A-Jane Holtzclaw – Preparation for Ministry

P-Chris Peters – Disaster Response Team

VACANT – New Worshiping & Church Vitality

***By Virtue of Office:***

P-Steve Earl (Interim Executive Presbyter)

P-Erica Nelson (Interim Stated Clerk)

P-Ed McClymont (Treasurer)

P-Terri Sherman (PW & Presbytery

Moderator)

VACANT (Presbytery & Council Vice

Moderator)

P-Steve Piper (Council Moderator)

***At Large:***

P-Steve Pointon (Class of 2022)

P-Joan Berglund (Class of 2023)

P-Teri Wendel (Class of 2024)

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**Call to Order and Opening Devotions**

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 pm. A quorum was established, and Steve Pointon led the council in opening devotions.

**Check in** – so-good’s and no-good’s (celebrations and concerns)

**Consideration and Adoption of the Docket**

**Approval of Minutes** *(all minutes are on the homestead website)*

1. Council Minutes – April 26, 2022

2. Presbytery Minutes – May 19, 2022

Approval of the January Council Meeting minutes will need to happen at a later date, as we do not yet have them to review.

Both sets of minutes were approved as presented.

**Discussion Topics**

1. Presbytery Finances – what lays ahead regarding presbytery finances
2. Strategy Team – responding to our financial future
3. Bridge Executive Presbyter following Stephen’s departure

**Presbytery Finances:**

Administration and Finance met last week to set the budget. We are in a significant deficit position, and we cannot continue going in this direction, as the pot will run dry. The largest expense in our budget is staffing. The other big item is a long-time mission commitment to Camp Calvin Crest. The committee is looking at a way to staff the presbytery going forward.

Demographically, three years ago we were at almost 6000 members but now we are under 5000. Part of this is churches cleaning up their books. The trend is still in decrease, though we hope by not that much. We generally collect 80% of per capita. When we collect that and after we send off what goes to Synod and GA, we are left with about $150,000. Last year our personnel budget alone was $180,000 so this is a big discrepancy.

We have big reserves, so we have some time to figure out how to move forward. However, it would be concerning to continue to tap into our reserves at the rate we will need to.

**Strategy Team:**

The Strategy Team was made aware of this financial situation last week. Given this information, they are now going to readjust their staffing model to reflect this financial situation. They are already working on what that will look like, but they don’t have anything solid yet. They will have something to present at the August presbytery meeting. There is also consideration for needing to merge with other presbyteries, though those conversations have not started.

The Strategy Team will need an implementation committee to work on job descriptions and things like that. They will want some names to submit to presbytery.

They are hoping to do the first reading of the new plan at the November presbytery meeting, and the second reading at the February presbytery meeting.

**Bridge Executive Presbyter:**

Stephen’s contract is up at the end of the year. There are presbyter’s whose job it is to help keep the wheels on the car while we continue moving forward. Personnel group talked about this; there are two ways we can go about this. There are people who specialize in this work, and they can do this work virtually, or we can ask an elder or minister to do this work for a couple months.

We don’t yet have a good sense of the responsibilities of such a person. A lot of it is communication and crises management. At this state, we also don’t an idea of whether they will be working full time or less. A person who serves remotely as a bridge presbyter usually works 3-6 months. If we need longer than that, we will want to get someone more regional.

Thinking about the trust building we have been trying to do as a presbytery, having someone virtual/remote does not help with what we are trying to accomplish. Having someone who can be here on the ground would be much more beneficial.

Stephen will meet with the personnel committee to talk about what we need to move forward.

**Staff, Officer & Commissioner Reports**

1. Presbytery Moderator - Terri Sherman

2. Council Moderator - Steve Piper

3. Synod Commissioner – Duane Westing or Maggie Horak

4. Treasurer - Ed McClymont

5. Interim Stated Clerk - Erica Nelson

6. Interim Executive Presbyter - Stephen Earl

The treasurer reported. There were no further questions about the state of the budget. We discussed the recent rediscovery of some funds being held for Hispanic/Latino ministries within the presbytery. They are currently being reported to Rev. Jim McNeal of First Presbyterian Church in Wymore NE and he would like administration of these accounts to be taken by the presbytery.

Right now, there is one active Hispanic ministry in the presbytery which is with Columbus Federated. They just restarted a month ago, after Covid. There is also a Hispanic group with Schuyler, though they are not as connected as the Columbus group is. There are three separate accounts; two that are grant money from the General Assembly for Hispanic/Latino ministries, and a third that was gathered from offerings from the Hispanic congregation in Schuyler. We can take the third account and give it to the Hispanic ministry in Columbus. But we will need to check with the GA to see if they need us to return us the funds since we didn’t use them or if we can absorb them and designate them for ethnic ministries.

At a minimum, we will take control of the money, so it is no longer controlled by someone not involved in it. The treasurer will continue to reach out to figure out what we need to do with the GA funds and will check with the Hispanic/Latino

It was moved and seconded to assume control of the Hispanic/Latino Ministries accounts to be held in a separate designation for supporting racial/ethnic ministries within the presbytery. The motion carried.

It was moved and seconded to assume control of the Hispanic/Latino offering funds to be placed on the books for dispersal after consultation with the Hispanic/Latino ministries within the presbytery. The motion carried.

The Interim Executive Presbyter reported. The move to the new presbytery offices was seamless. The hospitality from Westminster Presbytery Church is greatly appreciated. Jes, the presbytery’s administrative assistant is leaving at the end of August. She is leaving to go off to school; and there is no malcontent in her leaving.

His priorities for work over the next five months are: working with the Strategy Team to continue their vision, supporting COM with their reorganization, supporting the work of the AC for closing churches, and working with the administrative work of the presbytery.

**Committee & Organization Reports**

1. Administration & Finance - Carl Eskridge/Joyce Douglas

2. Commission on Ministry - Charity Potter

3. Committee on Preparation for Ministry - Jane Holtzclaw

4. Disaster Preparation Response Team - Chris Peters

5. New Worshipping Communities & Church Vitality Development - Vacant

6. Nominating - Teresa Bartlett

7. Presbyterian Women - Terri Sherman

8. Programs & Grants - Kris Brammer

The chair of Admin and Finance reported. Related to Jes leaving, she was with us for five years and that deserves a reward. They thought $100 a year, so a gift of $500 total. Melodie had an idea of a pastor in Idaho who has developed a plan of getting people excited for paying per capita, as not a sort of tax but rather a gift to the denomination. Eastridge is bringing him to the area in October and this might be a good time for the presbytery to join in. The presbytery would pay for his transportation and Eastridge would pick up the rest. If there’s more than one church involved, Programs and Grants can step in and they can apply for some funds. For this calendar year, there have been conversations going on around Camp Calvin Crest and our relationship with them. They may have something more concrete to report at the next council meeting.

The chair of COM reported. There are a couple of churches in transition that have elected their PNCs. They are working on building relationships and one of the things they are experimenting with is having their COM meetings at different places around the presbytery. The last meeting, they met at FPC in Schuyler and then after the meeting they had dinner with the session. Meetings will alternate between zoom and in person. COM is also working with several churches to partner with LeaderWise to improve those churches vitality.

The chair of the nominating committee. They are making a motion to presbytery to officially nominate Charity as moderator of COM, and there are two people being nominated to COM, Kris Adler Brammer and Tom Osborne. They will be starting soon on the classes of 2025. Theresa rolls off this year and is not eligible to continue. Nominating committee needs more members and a chairperson.

The chair of Programs and Grants reported. They will have some additional items to report to presbytery.

**August 19 Presbytery Meeting:**

1. At Calvin Crest, training for new commissioners at 9:30 am, call to order 10 am
2. Designate Recipient of Offering
3. Worship – Repentance and Reconciliation
4. Education – led by Strategy Team
5. Agenda – Time needs of committees, commissions, and others

We will be meeting at Camp Calvin Crest in the Prowitt Center downstairs in the Nelson Halls. The morning will be a worship service around the theme of reconciliation. There will be education at round tables, and we will invite people to sit with folks they don’t know again.

It was moved and seconded to designate funds for PDA, 50% for Ukrainian Relief and 50% for general disaster relief. The motion carried.

**New Business**

1. TBD

**Adjournment with Closing Prayer**

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 5:10 pm by Ed McClymont.