

New Hanover Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2024
7:00 pm

1. Call to Order at 7:07 p.m.

2. Attendance: (* = excused absence; ^o = late arrival)

Becker, Edward	Gross, James *	Staub, Pastor Scott
Becker, Monique	Hauser, D. Martin	Wise, Jeff *
Eisenhart, Steven	Peto, Yvonne	White, Nancy ^o
Geiser, Scott *	Rothermel, Todd	

3. Devotions

a. Pastor opened the meeting with a prayer.

4. Approval of Minutes from the September Regular Council Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved: Marty Hauser motioned; Pastor Scott seconded.

5. Committee Reports: (* = report on file; ^o = no meeting/no report; ⁺ = no report submitted)

a. Audit ⁺	h. Fellowship ⁺	o. Mutual Ministry ⁺
b. Building Fund ⁺	i. Finance ⁺	p. NYG ⁺
c. Cemetery ⁺	j. Flutter ⁺	q. Personnel ⁺
d. Christian Ed ⁺	k. Garden of Hope ⁺	r. Property ⁺
e. Constitution ⁺	l. History & Archives ⁺	s. Stewardship ⁺
f. Endowment ⁺	m. Memorial Fund ⁺	t. Swamp Picnic ⁺
g. Evangelism ⁺	n. Mission Svc/Social Min. ⁺	u. Worship & Music ⁺
		v. 325th Anniversary *

6. Committee Action Items

- a. Committees - please work with your Council liaisons/chairpersons to bring Council pertinent information to meetings.
- b. Please provide all scheduled meeting information (onsite, offsite/online) to Susan Gutshall or Todd Rothermel to add to the church calendar (Google Calendar)
- c. If your Committee/Board has a recommendation for Council, or something that needs to be discussed with the Council, please let Todd Rothermel know in advance of the meeting. He will add it to the agenda.
- d. Keep Committee work at the committee level. Council meetings are not where Committee/Board work should be performed.

7. Staff Reports

- a. Pastor highlighted the following from the staff reports: Aging Grace-fully adult learning series, mobile food events, NAP grant, and that a youth choir is being formed.
- b. Pastor noted that the paper product distribution is coming to an end.
- c. Pastor stated that he has lots of folks who are in need of counseling and asked that the council pray for them.

The staff reports were unanimously approved: Monique Becker motioned; Marty Hauser seconded.

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8. Treasurer's Report

- a. Ed reported that the total deficit as of September 30 was \$61,000.00. This appears worse than it is because there were no offerings counted for the last Sunday in September due to the counters not available to do so. This missing income will be reflected in the October Treasurer's Report.
- b. He also noted that income at the end of September (75% of the year) was at 84% and expenses were at 80%.

The treasurer's report was unanimously approved for audit: Marty Hauser motioned; Nancy White. seconded.

9. Unfinished Business and Prior Meeting Action Items

a. Parking Lot:

- i. Food Ministry Space Usage (Jim)
- ii. Additional Sound System Training (Steve)
- iii. Benevolence vs. Debt (Finance)
- iv. Directional Signage – (Steve)
- v. Reconciling in Christ (Pastor)
- vi. Solar Energy research (Property)
- vii. Unconventional Building Usage Requests (Jim)
- viii. Pictorial Directory (Nancy)
- ix. Historical Record Digitization (Steve)

b. Completed Recently:

- i. None this period

c. Ongoing Actions:

• Property

- Marty reported that the Property Committee has proposals for the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall air conditioning work and are working to qualify them.
- Todd noted that the Property Committee recommended that the contracted cleaning services should increase 5% for 2025.
- Todd noted that there have been some recent facility security risks and that a security protocol document for facility users should be prepared by the Property Committee.
- Marty noted that the dishwasher has not yet been ordered

• Learning Center

- Todd reported that the Traffic Study has been completed and submitted to Township for review. The study suggests minimal impact to the main roads surrounding the church, but Township could assess impact fees up to \$300,000 because of the increased impact on Lutheran Road. Because this is a gating factor for Learning Center, Attorney Jeffrey Karver submitted a letter to the township requesting a waiver from these fees. The request will come before the Planning Commission in November and the Board of Supervisors in December.
- Ed noted that continues to work on Financial loan applications.
- Steve reviewed the building permit application process, including the \$300.00 review fee that must be submitted when the drawings and permit applications are

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submitted. By having the review conducted now, should the township waive the traffic impact fee in December, construction can begin immediately upon favorable vote of the congregation of move forward with the project.

The \$300.00 permit review fee was unanimously approved: Steve Eisenhart motioned; Yvonne Peto seconded.

- Food Ministry Board
 - Todd reported that the Loaves and Fishes budget is moving into the red. He will continue to look for grants to support the ministry.
- Garden of Hope Expansion
 - Pastor and Todd reported on the following grants:
 - NAP grant (\$25,000 from Martin's Stone Quarries) – if received, disbursement will be in January 2025.
 - WW Smith Grant - has been applied for.
 - Pottstown Health and Wellness - will be reapplied for.

10. New Business

- a. Todd noted that there will be three existing council members going off at the end of 2024 (Jim, Steve, Jeff). The Executive Committee has created a slate of names that could be approached to run in 2025. The council is encouraged to think about other folks to ask.
- b. Todd reported that he gave Nikki approval to replace her failed computer monitor. She did so for a cost of \$63.59.
- c. Ed reviewed the draft of the 2025 budget. Considerable discussion ensued about how to balance the budget due to the fact that General Fund cash reserves have been gradually reduced to a point where it cannot cover the anticipated 2025 budget short-fall. Ed was directed to adjust the numbers to reflect a 2.5% cost of living increase for the staff, remove benevolence giving retain the 2024 program, property and payroll-related items. Options to make up the difference are increasing the endowment distribution level to above 4% and taking loans from Funds will surplus monies.

11. Correspondence

- a. Thank you letter from Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities for our \$500.00 donation on July 15, 2024.
- b. Thank you letter from Frederick Living for our \$500.00 donation on July 10, 2024.

12. Council Highlights (from this meeting)

- a. Finance continues to monitor the 2024 Annual Budget against actuals. Currently we are running a total deficit YTD as of September 30 was \$61,000.00. Total income at the end of September (75% of the year) was at 84% and expenses were at 80%.
- b. If you unlock a door for church access, lock the door behind you. Doors have been left open causing a security risk.
- c. Giving/offering envelopes - if you do not need offering envelopes please see Scott Geiser or Susan Gutshall (Simply Giving, other electronic giving)
- d. Space utilization - please let Susan Gutshall know if you are planning to use any church space for events and meetings.

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13. Next Council Meeting: Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

14. The Council Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

The adjournment was unanimously approved: Marty Hauser motioned; Ed Becker seconded.

15. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.