Keller UMC Board of Trustees

Zoom Meeting Minutes from April 21, 2020

On April 21, 2020 at 5:00pm the Keller UMC Board of Trustees conducted their monthly meeting via Zoom. Participants of the meeting included Paul Anderson, Tom Belter, Kathy Ezell, David Gerig, Becky Parks, Mickey Shelley, Brady Sterchi, Lou Tiner, Earl Teague, Pastor Jason Valendy, and Bob Whetson. After opening in prayer, Chairman Lou Tiner introduced our primary topic of discussion to agree on a list of cost reduction ideas.

Bob Whetson led the discussion on cost reduction ideas. Though it is related to finance, a suggestion was made to consider refinancing the loans affiliated with the church property to get a better interest rate. A refinance of the church mortgage at current rates could yield several hundred thousands of dollars in savings over the life of a new mortgage.

Lou agreed to present the re-finance idea to the finance committee during their meeting following the Board of Trustee meeting.

A topic of cost savings that has been discussed for a while are the lease payments for the picker and the front end loader equipment. The lease on the picker through Star Financial of Sunbelt Lease equipment will conclude in a few months and we will ultimately own the picker at that point. It was agreed that we should hold onto that piece of equipment since it is almost paid for and is used regularly. The benefit to sale does not exceed the use benefits of the picker. We are approximately half way through the term of the lease for the John Deere front end loader. It was agreed by the Board of Trustee members that there is not an opportunity to remove the church from the lease and it is not beneficial to sell the front end loader at this point. We are in communication with John Deere finance to see about delaying lease payments to help with any short term cost saving needs.

Another cost reduction topic that was discussed relates to SPR responsibilities. The suggestion was to rotate weekly furloughs amongst facilities staff. There was disagreement about how much money would be saved by initiating staff furloughs, and no general agreement about pursuing furloughs. During the discussion, it was reported by Lou as acting Facilities Director that the facilities staff is staying busy during the closure of the church with facility upkeep and repairs. Bob asked Lou for more detail about how the staff was staying busy but the board did not get into a discussion of details. The board generally agreed to forward to SPR the recommendation to keep furloughs as an option but only as a last resort.

Other cost reduction ideas of note that were discussed included to reduce the insurance coverage on the church property and assets, seek another tenant for some of the office space at the resource center, reduce utilities, reduce spending, use volunteers for lawn maintenance.

It was determined that looking at reducing insurance coverage would not be cost efficient for the church. It was agreed to look further into leasing the open office space at the resource center with consideration to particular limitations on who we could lease the space to. It was suggested to use a realtor, preferably a member who is a realtor, to help find a tenant. Recent repairs to the landscape sprinkler system and the lack of occupancy at the church has helped reduce water usage by 2/3. Other utility savings are expected due to the occupancy level of the church and the reduced need for utilities such as heating and A/C. There is a natural reduction in spending with the suspension of operations of the church; with the exception of paint expenditures to supply the needed repairs and upkeep of the church facilities. It was generally agreed that using only volunteers for lawn maintenance is not a workable idea due to difficulty in maintaining an ongoing lawn staff of volunteers, and to help with the cost of lawn maintenance the contract with our current lawn maintenance provider is being re-negotiated.

Trustee projects, including the drainage project, are still being planned; however, the projects will not start until the stability of the church budget is known.

Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the minutes from their March 19, 2020 meeting with the following underlined correction (from Tuesday to Monday).

***Beki Picus with the Resource Center was present for this discussion and presented the need to be able to retrieve about 2,000 lbs of food each Monday morning***.