

February 12, 2019

**IONA-HOPE EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**Minutes of the Vestry**  
**February 12, 2019**

**Attendees:**

The Reverend Ray Buchanan

**Vestry Members:**

Joe Mulino, Sr. Warden

Ray Zentis, Jr. Warden

Margo Farrara

Craig Reitan

Steve Walsh

Evelyn Reynolds

Bob Earl

Debbie Prather, Member/ Treasurer

Patricia Ingram, Clerk of the Vestry

Ken & Donna Owens, Church Staff

**Guests:** Fr. John Gamble, Various Members of the Congregation

**Absent with Apologies:** John Thomas, Robin Mills

**Opening Concerns & Prayers:** - Fr. Ray

- Fr. Ray welcomed members of the congregation who were present. Fr. Ray advised all are welcome to stay for whole meeting, or part, will advise when it is time for comments. Fr. Ray opened the meeting at 5:00 P.M. with An Order of Worship for the Evening Vestry Meeting. Fr. Ray asked for any prayers/intercession/celebrations. Fr. John asked for prayers for John who is having testing done on his brain, heart, and legs. Debbie asked for prayers for the Miller family who are in crisis. Maggie Minnick gave thanks for people of faith who are willing to be the leaders of this church. Steve gave thanks for Connie getting good news on her procedure.
- **Information:**
- **Approval of Minutes:** Fr. Ray asked members to review January minutes. Bob motioned to accept as submitted, Joe seconded, January minutes approved to be accepted as submitted. Fr. Ray asked for additions/corrections to the Annual Meeting minutes. Bob motioned to accept as submitted, Joe seconded, Annual Meeting minutes approved to be accepted as submitted.
- **Appointment of Sr. Warden-** Fr. Ray
- Fr. Ray appointed Joe Mulino as Sr. Warden.
- **Group Ministries and LIFE Report:**
- **LIFE-** Steve Walsh
- Steve advised they tried to get a meeting together with team leaders, not able to, have not been able to get agenda together, will have to get on the ball within the next few weeks.
- **Announcements:** -Fr. Ray
- Fr. Ray asked for any announcements- none.
- **Visitor Comments-**Various
- Fr. Ray advised there is one thing he would like to point out, a few others he would like to ask. Fr. Ray began by pointing out there is not a person in the room who doesn't love God, Jesus, Iona-Hope, and

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the other people in this parish. Fr. Ray advised everything we do is from that basis of love, and as we do it from that basis of love, we love each other especially when we disagree. Fr. Ray continued advising they have received emails and letters which have all been passed on to the Vestry. Fr. Ray added there were also comments at the Annual Meeting. Fr. Ray asked that those who have not yet spoken or sent an email or letter be allowed to speak first. Fr. Ray asked congregation members to be brief and address comments to Vestry and not each other.

- Gordon McIntosh shared that in 2017 he had a lot of medical issues, felt so bad one Sunday in church he prayed to God that if he died he would right there in church, he was very glad there was going to be a columbarium built, paid his pledge in full. Gordon stated he would like to see the columbarium built so when his family comes down to visit his ashes they will be in the columbarium. Gordon added he would like Vestry to do whatever is necessary, including eliminating the gathering space for a few years, to get it done. Gordon stated the only way we are going to get it done is by doing what was said would be done. Gordon added he and allot of other people will be very disappointed if it does not get done.

Fr. Ray thanked Gordon

- Larry Hanson advised when they open the management meeting each month at the Thrift Shop they always open with a prayer. Larry read one of the favorite prayers of the people attending that meeting. Larry read the definition of the word gift as defined in 1963 in Webster's dictionary as follows; something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation. Larry stated he would add without no strings attached. Larry added when he believes when we gave our gifts we gave them to be used in the original manner as when we did the brochure in 2017 when he was on the Vestry.

Fr. Ray thanked Larry.,

- Maggie Minnick inquired if peoples' concerns are enough to make Vestry re-think their plans to the point where we will not be able to complete Phase I, will momentum be so shot that we will not be able to do a Phase II. Maggie advised this is just a question, does not know the answer. Maggie further inquired if putting the columbarium and the outdoor work first carefully thought through or a fallback because we the ECF advised us we could not raise enough for the buildings. Maggie added she does not know if it would not make a difference to her, but it might to others if they saw the order which things happened. Maggie stated these are just questions for the Vestry to ponder.

Fr. Ray thanked Maggie.

- Bill Shaw inquired if we have a collection of ashes building up waiting for the Columbarium to be built, and how many are there.
- Fr. Ray advised he has 2 in his office, there are at least 2 other people have been calling about, and others who said they want to. Fr. Ray advised they will not start selling niches until we have the Columbarium, nothing definite until then.
- Gordon suggested a pre-sale for the niches, so we could have some extra money, stated he will would write a check tomorrow.

Fr. Ray asked for any other comments-no others. Fr. Ray thanked parish members for their comments, all received, read, and appreciated.

Fr. Ray advised Vestry will move on with the meeting, all welcome to stay.

- **New Facilities** - Fr. John
- Fr. John asked for any questions regarding his Executive Summary.
- Bob inquired as the patio that was added, please describe.
- Fr. John advised the spaciousness in the existing gathering space was reduced in the new gathering space despite same seating. Fr. John continued advising he asked architect if we could add something to open it up more. Fr. John advised by Victor stated we could use court space, put same pavers we are

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using, which lets the water flow through, add hedges on three sides and add palm trees so as and when we do a Phase II we can relocate and use palm trees and pavers in Phase II.

- Bob inquired as to size.
- Fr. John advised they are estimating 800 square feet with a cost of about \$11,500.00. Fr. John continued advising they would have to remove much of the landscaping which they will try to save for use in another area. Fr. John advised they will pick out a hedge that will be high enough yet decorative.
- Bob inquired if this will affect handicap accessibility.
- Fr. John advised handicap will be the same. Fr. John added he spoke with Jim North who stated he will have no problem with entering the space.
- Bob inquired as to what will be added to make user friendly, so people do not have to stand to drink their coffee or tea.
- Fr. John advised we can put tables as we do inside and/or, if wanted, we could use picnic tables.
- Debbie added she also inquired about this and there will be steps on one side and a ramp on the other.
- Joe advised Debbie had brought up at the Finance Meeting if door will be a single door or if Victor is considering using a double door.
- Fr. John advised it will be a single door, wide enough for a wheelchair to go through. Fr. John added there will be panic bars on all new doors.

Fr. Ray asked for any questions.

- Steve advised all have read the emails which were sent. Steve continued advising that, although Robin's letter was read at the Annual Meeting, he does not feel we spoke to the opposition, thought Vestry was split. Steve stated Joe and Fr. Ray answered all the questions, he (Steve) made one suggestion, does not feel his view was properly presented the congregation. Steve stated he would like the opportunity to present his view.
- Fr. Ray apologized to Steve, thinks there must have been miscommunication, thought Vestry wanted to present to the congregation and listen to feedback from congregation, not give opinion. Fr. Ray continued advising that is why it was presented to the congregation in that manner, not intended to isolate anyone.
- Steve advised there were different expectations.
- Debbie advised she had the same feelings as Steve at the Annual Meeting.
- Craig advised he has been co-op boards for 30 years, been to many meetings such as the Annual Meeting. Craig continued stating it is his experience that you listen and if someone speaks up you listen to the reaction. Craig continued further noting all applause at the Annual Meeting came when people spoke of moving ahead as quickly as possible.
- Debbie advised she understands what Craig is saying, but the different opinions of Vestry members was not included in the presentation, felt she and Steve had difficult time getting a microphone, found a little offensive.
- Steve stated we did it the way we did, and here we are now. Steve continued advising he did hear the applause, feels he has valid reasons/concerns. Steve added we are together as a Vestry and he will support any decision made. Steve stated he would like visitors at this meeting hear his reasons- no objections
- Steve addressed visitors attending meeting and read his responses to the emails received (copy of Steve's responses attached): Steve began by stating he is not opposed to the columbarium or labyrinth, but his concerns are
  - Need new buildings as soon as possible
  - We use every single bit of space we have now, plan reduces space by 37%
  - No clear plan how long we will have the space reduction, how we will or how long it will take to reach the goal of \$2,500,000-\$3,000,000

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- His understanding was at the annual meeting different opinions would be presented, thought Vestry was about 50/50 split on proceeding, consensus was lacking
  - Presentation was not, in his opinion, as accurate as it could have been, sections of existing structure we will continue to use are in as bad or worse condition as the gathering space and will need significant repair and maintenance if we are planning to continue to use for the next 7-10 years
  - We are spending money to remodel the multi-purpose room and added offices that will be temporary
  - Building the Columbarium and Labyrinth on the open space was rejected for 2 reasons; We would limit the usable future building space, Steve questioned if we are doing that by building now, same square footage; and Safety, which is a serious consideration, he understands the sheriff's suggestion of a fence, why can't we put a fence at the end of the existing office buildings, the space is more visible from the parking lot of the library at the library, next to the church, and what about the privacy in the woods, it is intended to be a quiet and contemplative area which the distance from the road would enhance.
- Steve apologized for his long dissertation and appreciates all listening to him and added he feels strongly that taking away the gathering space will have a serious negative impact on the future of the parish. Steve stated he is attempting to fulfill his responsibilities as a vestry member by expressing his concerns.

Fr. Ray asked for any other comments.

- Craig expressed his concern that if we put this on indefinite hold, we may never get a new building because we made a commitment people of what we are going to do and if we don't do it we will be letting them down, Joe agreed.
- Bob stated we could postpone, not necessarily indefinitely, have a time frame.
- Craig stated with no plan it is indefinite.
- Bob advised back in December Debbie asked for a visionary plan for the next 7-10 years, believes the parish needs to know where we are going, if you look at our statistics we are not growing people wise or financially, if we are looking to raise 2.5 – 3 million, money raised from campaign only \$600,000 - \$700,000 without the \$500,000 matching gift, parish is not getting any younger, wallets not getting thicker, worries where money will come from. Bob continued stating we have structure repairs that need to be done urgently, mold problem needs to be addressed.
- Steve advised he had suggested at the very end of the Annual Meeting a compromise. Steve continued advising he spoke with Gordon, who wants that columbarium, asked him if it matters where it is, Steve advised Gordon stated he does not care where it is located, down end just as usable, would fulfill commitment to parish to build columbarium and labyrinth, and have some money to put aside towards new office space or upkeep of current buildings, seems to him to be a prudent decision..
- Craig advised this was all discussed in depth 3 years ago and rejected.
- Margo advised she has voiced concerns, was not on Vestry when the Capital Campaign was going on, only started thinking long range recently. Margo stated the hard part for her is the removal of the gathering space for 5 years, she is a member of an outside meeting that comes in, there are two different meetings in one night, both organizations have brought allot of fellowship to Iona-Hope. Margo continued stating she has listened to what everyone has to say, spoke to allot of people, her feeling is yes, we need to move forward with this. Margo added she believes Vestry should have looked deeper before at the fact a building should have been built first. Margo advised she feels we need to move forward with what the congregation wants and with what the brochure and Capital Campaign said. Margo stated that everything Iona-Hope does will always land on its feet because that is the community we are, does not want to see this community fall apart over this, says move forward despite reservations in her heart, leave in God's hands.

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- Fr. John asked to respond to Steve's commentary. Fr. John advised when we originally started potential layouts we had locations in the front, locations all in the way in the back and each was areas of discussion when Victor brought them forward, Vestry voted no. To try to put the Columbarium singularly between two structures -no can't do it, transformer has to move, only way to get things done is to remove the existing gathering space. Fr. John added all of this was brought up very early on.
  - Steve advised he believes he was here when this was all brought up, and at the time, this is the missing link, we were going to move the Gathering Place, we had a plan, we had a budget, we were going to physically pick it up and move it. Steve continued adding that when inspections of the buildings were done it became clear that structurally this could not be done
  - Fr. John added not only that, but very early when the existing gathering space was going to be shifted, that was going to be \$40,000- blew it right off.
  - Steve inquired how much we are going to spend for the new office and remodeling, are we not spending that kind of money to do that.
  - Fr. John stated that purely from a structural issue the gathering space cannot be moved.
  - Steve advised he is suggesting we move Phase I construction to the end.
  - Debbie advised she has some remarks to make. Debbie read from her prepared comments labeled "REALITY CHECK" (copy of Debbie's comments attached). Debbie gave a timeline from the first service at Iona-Hope on January 10, 1999 in a rented space at the Ft. Myers Bridge Club off McGregor Blvd., she attended her first service there on January 24, 1999. Debbie advised the temporary buildings we now use as gathering and offices were bought, delivered and configured to the current design in Jan/Feb/Mar 2000. These temporary building have a 25-year life span expiring 2025. Debbie continued advising we moved into the current sanctuary in December 2005, total cost of the church 1.8 million dollars for which we currently have a \$800,00 mortgage with the diocese at 3.25%. Debbie recalled the first meeting in 2015 -early 2016 of the Vestry and leadership where it was determined the need to replace the temporary buildings by 2025. Debbie stated the current plan for an outdoor narthex is excellent and well developed, designed and within budget, this plan evolved from discussions with the congregation and an extremely successful Capital Campaign. Debbie continued advising the brochure was written and designed as part of the contract with ECF, the goal of a master plan for Phase II has a concept of an 8,000 to 12,000 square foot simple block building which, at current commercial construction costs in Fort Myers as reported by Compass Construction, and verified by Debbie with Chris-Tel Construction, would be at the low end of square footage \$2,000,000. Debbie continued advising she is not opposed to the construction of the outdoor narthex, it does not however bring us closer to replacing the temporary buildings with a permanent one. Debbie recognizes the majority of the congregation wants the current plan to move to completion, through the brochure and the Capital Campaign we have made a commitment to them to do so. Debbie advised she is submitting this report as a reality check to the Vestry of the responsibility in front of them to replace the temporary buildings and maintain the part of those buildings that are not being demolished, and the sanctuary. Debbie advised income and attendance is flat at Iona-Hope, goes up one year, down the next. Debbie stated these are serious issues and demand the Vestry's constant and full attention. Debbie stated she is a woman of faith; the hand of God is in all we do.
- Fr. Ray asked for any further questions or comments.
- Ray Z. commented on attendance and income being flat. Ray stated we are the fastest growing county in the country, we have yet to try to understand that, look at ways to bring people in.
  - Fr. Ray agreed we need to look at that but asked to move forward with current discussion.
  - Margo motioned to move forward with Phase I construction as it has been presented, Evelyn seconded, vestry voted, and motion passed with Steve opposing.
  - Debbie motioned that within the next calendar year Vestry engage in strategic planning, completed by next February, Joe seconded, approved unanimously.

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Fr. Ray asked for any other motions or discussions relating to new facilities

Fr. Ray thanked Vestry for their honesty and openness with each other in this process.

Fr. Ray asked Fr. John if he had anything further on new facilities, Fr. John advised not just yet.

### **Discussions:**

- **Senior Warden Report** - Joe Mulino
- Joe advised we are moving forward with Mardi Gras, sales are great, sponsorships lagging, urged all to please reach out.
- Joe advised sponsorships important as that along with the silent auction add to the profits benefitting Gladiolus Food Pantry.
- **Annual Meeting**- Fr. Ray
- Fr. Ray. asked if there was anything further anyone wanted to say regarding the Annual Meeting. No further comments offered
- **Stewardship**- Bob Earl
- Bob advised nothing new.
- **Finance/Finance Committee** – Debbie Prather (Treasurer’s Report and January Financial Statement attached)
- Debbie reviewed Financial Statement with Vestry, advised financials seems to be in order, accountant will be making adjustment for January/February payment to Diocese.
- Debbie advised looking at income areas from last year to this year, pledged, non-pledged and plate, which is the income needed to operate the church, there is a net loss of \$149. Debbie continued advising pledges were up, non-pledges down and plate was up. Debbie advised these are the tools she likes to use to get a grasp of what is going on financially.
- Debbie asked for approval for Dees & Dees to conduct the 2018 audit for Iona-Hope with a cover letter from the Vestry requesting audit completion in July 2019. Debbie advised fees are \$4,000, plus expenses, same as last year.
- Fr. Ray advised this is an active motion on the floor from the Finance Committee, Bob seconded, approved unanimously.
- Debbie requested instructions, if any, for investment of \$119,000 in the Capital Campaign Account. Debbie advised she was given instructions by the Vestry to keep that fund at \$60,000 and investing the rest. Debbie continued advising Vestry voted last month leave money in there, would like instructions moving forward. Debbie stated there are some 12-month CDs with a minimum of \$25,000 at 2.3% as well as on line with Synchrony Bank, which is Amazon, at 2.8%.
- Fr. Ray cautioned Vestry these are funds just voted on to use for Phase I construction, investment would need to be short term.
- Joe suggested money market account as an alternative, couple of banks offering a money market account, minimum of \$25,000 as well, which would not tie up the money at all.
- Steve inquired if money would be insured. Joe advised it would be.
- Debbie advised she will check with our Bank regarding money market.
- Bob advised TIA Creft is paying 2%.
- Joe advised he has seen 2.5%.
- Bob advised TIA Creft may be higher now.
- Joe stated we can check with our bank, but he does not think they will be competitive.
- Bob motioned that Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer move forward with investing balance of monies in the Capital Campaign fund in a money market account.
- Craig inquired why we are leaving \$60,000 in a non-interest-bearing account.

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- Debbie advised account is used for paying fees and paying Diocese apportionment.
- Joe advised we can always invest more later if desired.
- Vestry voted, and unanimously approved Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer move forward with investing balance of monies in the Capital Campaign fund in a money market account.
- **Air Quality Report and Proposal-** Fr. Ray
- Fr. Ray referenced Report, asked Fr. John to update Vestry.
- Fr. John advised he received a call from Fr. Ray to see what could be done to reduce costs regarding the After-School kitchen and gathering space. Fr. John advised he contacted Tim Kelley of Serve Pro and advised him, if Phase I is approved by Vestry, we will be in the next 4-5 months be taking existing gathering space down. Fr. John advised he was advised by Tim that at in that case he recommends not doing anything in school kitchen, take out any/all equipment and close off and seal it.
- Fr. John advised Tim suggests running a fog of ozone in the gathering space at a cost of \$250.00.
- Fr. John advised we would save \$1,790 eliminating the general cleaning of duct work in the gathering space, we would save all the money, \$1096.16, in the school kitchen, and in the gathering space we would save \$1,356.23 for a total savings of \$4,241, add in \$250 for fogging the room, new cost estimate \$5,081.03.
- Fr. John advised, if approved, he can bring Serve Pro back in, go over details of what has been approved by Vestry and let him reevaluate what we're taking out and what we are leaving in.
- Fr. John advised that cost of the remediation has to be gone through and changed, will do when Serve Pro is brought back in. Fr. John continued advising he has advised Fr. Ray remediation work can be done by Compass Construction during Phase I at a lower cost than what Serve Pro would charge.
- Fr. John advised he wants Vestry opinion on bringing Serve Pro back in, going through the costs, taking out what we should take out.
- Fr. John advised he has spoken with 2 other firms, Serve Pro lowest price. Fr. John additionally stated he worked with 2 other firms on the air quality test and Serve Pro was lowest and stayed within the \$1,000 budget Fr. Ray gave him.
- Fr. Ray inquired in the \$5,081 includes sealing off back kitchen.
- Fr. John advised yes, door should be closed and locked so no one goes in.
- Debbie inquired where we are moving the coffee to.
- Fr. John advised we will have to figure out where to move coffee, all must come out.
- Steve inquired if Serve Pro will treat and Compass Construction repair.
- Fr. John advised yes, that is his suggestion, numbers will change.
- Bob inquired if by closing off the kitchen we are locking in the mold and we can breathe safe.
- Fr. John advised yes. Fr. John continued advising Serve Pro has recommend that after the treatment we have air tests run, one over the door near the kitchen and one over the middle.
- Steve inquired if after the remediation we would be water tight.
- Fr. John advised yes they will remove, replace and paint. Fr. John additionally advised the carpet affected will have to be replaced and/or cleaned.
- Steve commented there is no drainage at the back of the buildings.
- Fr. John advised carpet will come up, flooring will be replaced.
- Fr. John inquired if he may now proceed with Compass Construction and Victor and get construction documents going.
- Fr. Ray advised yes, with the vote by the Vestry it is authorized.
- Debbie advised she is still hung up on the coffee.
- Steve advised he does not think it will be a major problem, just need a source of clean water.
- Bob motioned to accept report as submitted from Air Quality and their recommendations and move ahead with Serve Pro as one of the contractors, Joe seconded.

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Fr. Ray asked for any further discussion.

- Debbie inquired where it will be paid from.
- Bob suggested maintenance.
- Debbie advised it could be paid from Maintenance Fund.
- Vestry voted and unanimously approved.
- **Annual Report**-Fr. Ray.
- Fr. Ray asked for any questions on the annual Report.
- Bob inquired as to Page 2, line 6, Others who are active, 2017-174, 2018-459.
- Fr. Ray advised this is taken from ACS, will go back and look at, thanked Bob for catching, need to correct. Fr. Ray added what he needs from Vestry is to accept, need to correct and send in by 1<sup>st</sup> of March.
- Bob motioned to accept report as submitted with one correction, Joe seconded, unanimously approved.
- **Junior Warden Report** – Ray Zentis
- Ray advised Jr. Warden team moving forward.
- Ray advised they have mystery floor, got wet last storm, looking at disconnected down spouts, may be the problem, hopes that is the problem.
- Ray advised there are about a dozen items open that he has assigned to people.

Fr. Ray asked for anything further.

- Debbie inquired about communicating Phase I decision, allot of people will want to know what was decided, obvious way is bulletin this weekend, anything sooner.
- Fr. Ray advised there will also be an email going out this week.
- Joe advised he thinks both email and bulletin.
- Steve added it could be included in the announcements, does not want anyone to miss.
- Fr. Ray advised yes if Vestry wishes, he does not want it to be too much, keep it simple.
- Bob suggested it will also be in the Executive Summary.
- Debbie advised there will be some pastoral issues, some people will be very disappointed with decision. Debbie added she can report she has spoken with Robin and he is very supportive of the Vestry's decision, no matter what it is, he and Jan love Iona-Hope and will continue to support.
- Steve advised people he has spoken with stated they will support Vestry once decision is made.

Fr. Ray asked for anything further. Fr. Ray expressed his gratitude to the Vestry, loves all and appreciates the time and effort put in. Fr. Ray thanked members of the congregation for attending, it is important to hear from them and they are welcome any time to discuss anything that is before the Vestry.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned with closing prayers at 6:20p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A Ingram  
Clerk of the Vestry