

**RICHLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2013**

Members Present: Ben Barr, Rob Barr, Dave Brandes Scott Hardman, Mot Hedges, Kathy Killand, and Dave Larkin

Members Absent: Sandy Steele

Advisory Members Present: Pastor Ernst, Rich Olsen

Guests: Joanne Woehle

The Regular monthly meeting of the Richland Lutheran Church Congregation Council was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2013, at 7:03 p.m., President Mot Hedges being in the chair and the secretary being present. The meeting was opened with prayer by Mot Hedges.

Staff Visitor – Joanne Woehle who is the Church Secretary, discussed what her role and tasks are for supporting the church ministry. One of her biggest task is producing the bulletins but she also keeps records of changes in membership, baptisms, funerals, etc.

Lead Pastor's Report - Pastor Ernst presented the Lead Pastor's Report:

1. Attendance - The average weekly attendance at worship services through March, 2013 was 348 compared to 351 for the same period during 2012. Easter attendance was 650 this year compared to 629 last year.
2. Seeking volunteers for leading the Block Party, more cashiers, support help for the wedding coordinator position, cashiers, and A/V operators.

Financial Officer's Report – Rich Olsen presented the financial report showing that income through March for 2013, was \$170,359 as compared to \$199,095 through the comparable period in 2012 and was below the expected budget assumption of income of \$181,600. Expenditures to-date totaled \$210,804, which is above the budgeted \$205,673. The net cash-flow for the year to-date is a negative \$40,445. The budget for 2013 is based on an assumed income of \$800,000.

Common Consent: Council approved the following common consent agenda items:

- **Approved the Regular Council Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2013.**

Old Business

Bylaw and Policy Reviews Bylaw reviews for Chapter 11 & 12 are complete with no changes required by congregation, and no comments on the Common Consent Agenda, Council/Staff, and Executive Limitations policies.

Director of Corporate Worship Job Description

- **Council approved the position description for Director of Music and Worship.**

New Business

2013 Ministry Plan – Discussed items that are at risk of being completed due to the loss of a key staff member. The probability that not all actions will be accomplished was recognized but no formal changes were approved to the plan.

Staff Employment Policy – A policy summarizing the authority and process for hiring staff as provided by the Constitution and Bylaws was reviewed. The policy adds flexibility by delegating to the Lead pastor the authority to hire temporary staff to fill vacant positions for up to three months. Council approval is required for longer periods.

- **Council approved the Staff Employment Policy as amended to replace the term “permanent staff” with “regular staff.” [See attached approved policy]**

Use of Designated Funds for Carpet – Council discussed a request to use previously designated funds for hallway artwork and carpeting. It was agreed that a total of \$2,002 from Vernita Murphey and Al Miller did not require Council approval to be used for hallway artwork since family members supported the use of these funds for that purpose. Similarly, use of \$250 from Palmer Knutson memorials could be used for carpeting without Council approval because this use was approved by family members.

The request to use \$5,071.27 from Ruth Laidler memorials for carpeting was determined to require Council approval because her family has not been contacted for approval and their whereabouts is unknown. Council did not know the original designated purpose of the Laidler funds but if they were not “unrestricted” then by the policy proposed by the Finance Committee RLC would need to file an order with the court and seek approval of the Secretary of State to redirect the use of the funds. If the funds can be redirected for other use then Council needs to prioritize what would be the best use of the funds. In consideration of these factors **Council decided to table further consideration until the May meeting** and invite Karin Nikola to that meeting to better understand her proposal and plan.

Foundation Fundraiser

- **Council approved a proposed Fundraiser event for the Richland Lutheran Church Foundation.**

Funding for Pastor Steve’s Education

- **Council approved contributing to the funding of pastor Ernst’s DMin Program in the following way:**
 - For Calendar Year 2013 – up to \$6K (100% of Pastor Ernst’s costs from available scholarship funds)**
 - For Calendar Year 2014 – up to \$8K (2/3 of Pastor Ernst’s costs as a line item in budget)**
 - For Calendar Year 2015 – up to \$6K (2/3 of Pastor Ernst’s costs as a line item in budget)**

In return for this support Pastor Ernst would agree to remain at Richland Lutheran Church through the year 2018. Should he leave prior to this date, then the above funding needs to be repaid at the time of his departure or per plan approved by Council.

[Subsequent to the meeting it was learned that the educational program would not end until May 2016 with some small additional costs during that year. Revision of the funding plan is expected at the May meeting.]

The meeting was closed with praying the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 10:04 pm.

Dave Larkin,
Secretary

Church Staff Employment

I. Introduction

Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. This division of authority includes the authority for hiring and terminating church staff. (Constitution C4.03)

II. Called Pastors

- A. **Authority** - The congregation retains to itself the authority to:
 - 1. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 8 of the Constitution;
 - 2. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 8 of the Constitution;
 - 3. call or terminate pastoral or rostered staff. (Constitution C4.03)
- B. **Process** - The process for calling a pastor is as follows:
 - 1. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the congregation. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly-called pastor. (Constitution C12.04)
 - 2. If a staff member through education and relevant experience achieves certification by the associated denomination, then upon recommendation of the Congregation Council, the Congregation may vote to extend a Call to the staff member as an Associate pastor. If the duties of the Called position are substantially similar to the duties of the staff member's current position then a Call Committee would not be required as the staff member would not be filling a vacancy.
 - 3. In the event of a vacancy in the Lead Pastor's position, then a Call Committee shall be required to seek and recommend the best candidate, even if an Associate Pastor on staff is under consideration for the position.

III. All Other Staff

- A. **Authority** - The authority for hiring, discipline, and termination of all other staff is delegated to the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment of the salaried and hourly lay workers of this congregation. (Constitution C11.07)

However, the daily supervision of work of all salaried and hourly workers is delegated to the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor may delegate this authority to other professional church staff. (Bylaw C11.07.01)

- B. **Hiring** – The process for hiring all non-Called staff is as follows:

1. **Assistance during Staff Absences** - The Council delegates to the Lead Pastor its authority to hire temporary staff, if required to perform the normal functions of the church's ministry, while regular staff are on vacation, sick leave, or on study leave. This assistance may be for up to six weeks in length.
2. **Temporary Filling of Vacancies** - When staff vacancies occur, the Congregation Council shall provide for temporary assistance in the affected areas of ministry. (Bylaw C11.03.01.f) Council delegates to the Lead Pastor its authority to hire temporary staff assistance for a vacancy for up to three months. Council approval is required for longer periods.
3. **Permanent Filling of Vacancies** - The Executive Committee, along with the affected supervising Professional Staff, shall be responsible for seeking and recommending to the Congregation Council candidates to permanently fill non-Called staff vacancies. (Bylaw C12.01.01.d) The Executive Committee may appoint additional members or staff to assist with interviewing and evaluation where specialized skills are required.

C. Staff Discipline and Terminations – The Executive Committee shall review all staff disciplinary issues. (see Personnel Policy and Guidelines)

1. The Lead Pastor may take disciplinary action including leave with pay for up to five days without prior Council approval. This provides for required immediate action until the Executive Committee can meet, particularly in the event that the safety of other staff, facilities, or the public is in danger.
2. The Executive Committee may approve staff disciplinary leave with pay for up to thirty days. This provides for disciplinary action with a broader review until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.
3. The Congregation Council must approve all further staff disciplinary actions up to and including all terminations.
4. Termination of a Called staff member can only be authorized through the recommendation of the full Council and a vote of the Congregation.