

Sandy Mush Community Center

Minutes

October 19, 2021

Attending: Frank Barbara, Jean Barbara, Amanda Barnes, Kevin Campbell, Steve Duckett, Kurt Eckel, Diana Gates, Christopher Jayne, Bruce Larson, John Loyd, Amy Sue Moore, Ilsa Myers, Amy McMahan Surrett, Keith Wells, Lisa Beth White. *Fifteen people attended.*

The meeting was called to order by President Christopher Jayne at 6:06 pm.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

Minutes. The Minutes for September 7, 2021 and September 21, 2021 were prepared by Secretary Bruce Larson and distributed by email. **The Minutes were approved as submitted.**

Financial Reports. The August and September financial reports were prepared by bookkeeper Christine Magnarella Ray of Do Good Books, LLC with input from and oversight by Treasurer Bruce Larson, and distributed by email. **The financial reports were approved as submitted.**

Bruce drew attention to some additional items:

- Through the first nine months of the year, the Center's operations have effectively broken even. There is a \$93 deficit for the year.
- The September financial report has a new page, page 6, which provides detail on the Coal Room Project. Additional information on the Project, including income and expenditures, is provided on the last page of the reports package.
- A "Thank You" letter was received from the Come to Leicester Annual Artist Studio Tour. The Center is a sponsor of the Tour. In the letter, Sponsorship Coordinator Frank Barbara summarized the accomplishments of the 2021 Tour.

NEW BUSINESS

Master Plan Implementation. Bruce reported. At the September 21st Community Meeting Kurt Eckel suggested that the Steering Team declare the next step of the Master Plan process, which would include identifying a group to manage the work of the Master Plan. Toward that end, and with consultation of the parties involved, **the Steering Team recommends that "The Capital Improvement Team will manage the site Master Plan project and bring in members of other teams, the Board, and the**

community as appropriate.” The recommendation was moved, seconded, and approved.

Communication Team Fiber Concerns. Kevin Campbell reported. The recent week-long shut down of internet access at the Center is concerning. Although the matter was rectified, it has drawn attention to the importance of having responsive professional attention by our fiber optic provider and being considerate of existing volunteers. Since French Broad EMC now provides an alternative to our current provider, this is a good time to explore our alternatives. **It was moved, seconded, and approved to form a Fiber Optic Provider and Steering Team to explore fiber optic alternatives for the Center.** Kurt Eckel will head the team along with Kevin Campbell, Amy McMahan Surrett, and Bruce Larson.

Project Budget Proposal. John Loyd reported. He noted that the Board of Directors should consider an over-budget provision for future projects, suggesting that the Capital Improvement Team make a recommendation about an over-budget provision for future projects. Discussion ensued. Frank Barbara noted that pricing is always a challenge, especially under current circumstances. Kurt noted the importance of being in relationship with one’s suppliers and to be in conversation with them. Christopher noted that project funding frequently has two parts: grants and other monies. It was also noted that 15% is a figure that is sometimes held as a reasonable provision. In the end, it was clear to all that careful and frequent oversight of project expenditures is an important matter but putting a specific number to overages is challenging.

Nomination Committee. John reported. John and Kurt are on the committee. If you have suggestions for new Board members or officers, please send them along.

At this point, Kevin noted the importance of professionalizing Center activities. This will likely be a matter of continuing discussion.

ORAL REPORTS AND STATUS UPDATES

Haunted House. Amanda Barnes. reported. The Haunted House will take place at the Center on November 30th. Supplies have been purchased and many volunteers have come forward. On Friday, the 29th there will be a “rehearsal” of the event. For more information, see the Haunted House written report.

John and Keith Wells will be staffing the Big Sandy UMC outdoor shelter area in case of rain. Kevin will help coordinate parking that night as a private event is scheduled and many people are expected for the Haunted House and Trunk or Treat, too.

Jean Barbara suggested that the Center have private event and rental signs made.

Update on Coal Room Renovation. Frank reported. Before beginning his report, He noted that the new exterior doors are still waiting for transom glass. The Coal Room Renovation is underway, with the rooms cleared out and most quotes already received. The various elements of the project have been identified and prioritized, and \$19,790 is

in hand to further the project; expenditures to date have totaled \$5,029.35. Substantially more detail is provided in Coal Room Project Expenditures (19 October 2021). More information about the Project will be provided in November.

CIT Painting Contractor. Frank reported. With an eye to the future, he has obtained quotes for painting the gym and painting reglazing, caulking and painting the exterior windows and painting the exterior millwork. Although there are no immediate plans, this provides a benchmark for future work.

2022 Events. John reported. The 2022 events are in the process of being identified. If you have suggestions for 2022 events, please send them to John.

WRITTEN REPORTS AND STATUS UPDATES

The following reports were received:

- Food Pantry Report—Jean Barbara
- Youth Team Report—Peggy Baldwin
- Internet Reports—Mark Diaz
- Haunted House Report—Amanda Barnes

Jean noted that the Food Pantry continues to serve 70-90 families on the Fridays it is open. More volunteers could be used, however. One of the canopies used for the Pantry is no longer functional and it needs to be replaced. Jean noted that when previous canopies had been purchased, it was done in light of their being an item for use of the entire Center as a whole.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Beth White announced that Big Sandy UMC has received a grant from the NC Rural Center. More information about the grant will be forthcoming.

Steve Duckett noted that the North Carolina Farm Bureau was a good source of information and support for rural communities.

Frank noted that in his role as Sponsorship Coordinator he has learned a lot about grants and grant providers, especially corporate sponsors. As he learns more, he will share it with the Center.

Jean asked about the stairwell doors, in particular if there was a policy about locking them. Bruce indicated that the practice has been that the doors should be locked.

Bruce noted that Frank Ramirez has asked that the rental contact information on the SMCC website be updated. Bruce will take care of this.

There being no more announcements or comment, the meeting was adjourned by Christopher at 7:28 pm.