

# 2019 February Stewards Minutes

## SEEKERS CHURCH

### Stewards Minutes

February 10, 2019

**Stewards Present:** Marjory Bankson, Peter Bankson, Ken Burton (Moderator), Cynthia Dahlin, Joan Dodge, Michele Frome, Elizabeth Gelfeld (Angel), Judy Lantz (Meditation leader) David Lloyd, Sandra Miller (Angel), Trish Nemore (Recorder), Brenda Seat, Keith Seat, Margreta Silverstone, Deborah Sokolove, Glen Yakushiji.

**Steward Absent:** Vincent Shepherd

**Guests Present:** Kolya Braun-Greiner, Sharon Lloyd

**Meditation:** Judy read a Ted Loder poem, "Grant Me Your Sense of Timing".

**Housekeeping:** Stewards will next meet at 5:00pm on Sunday, March 3 at the church.

Moderator: Deborah

Meditation Leader: Sandra

Recorder: Marjory

Angels: Judy & Margreta

### **Opportunities for advocacy at the Maryland General Assembly:**

Kolya offered a quick primer on engaging with the Maryland General Assembly whose session lasts only through April. After informing us of a few specific events, she presented Seekers with three opportunities to lend our corporate name to issues before the Assembly.

1. Healthy Maryland Green Amendment is an amendment to the Maryland constitution – part of a nationwide effort to amend state constitutions similarly – stating that

residents have a right to clean air, clean water and other environmental protections. Development would be subject to assessments of its effects on land, water and air. Questions raised concerned whether there would be a review board related to the amendment and what its scope would be and whether a right to sue is included in the amendment. Kolya promised additional information and noted that there is a statement of support to sign should we decide to do so. She will also let us know when a lobby night is set for this initiative. We'll consider this further at a future meeting.

2. Forest Conservation Act to promote no net loss of forests/trees. We pointed out that we supported Dayspring in providing an easement with respect to some of its forest land for this purpose and agreed to support this initiative. Kolya will sign us on.
3. Statewide ban on use of polystyrene. Seekers had already signed a statement pledging not to use such products and Stewards easily agreed to this proposal. Kolya will sign us on.

### **Using Seekers name in policy advocacy:**

Trish handed out a one page (two-sided) summary of Stewards' work over the past two years to define a process for using Seekers name as a corporate body in policy advocacy. Six general areas of focus were identified in 2017 based on our stated values and our historic and current areas of interest: Women and Children; The environment; Race/Diversity/LGBTQ issues; Immigration; Homelessness/poverty/social insurance; Peacemaking. Our process is as follows:

- The stance being taken – in any of those six areas – is consistent with our values as a Christian community and consistent with our Stewards commitment statement;
- The position being proposed is supported by two or three other Seekers; it is not an individual stance;
- We check with the Servant Leadership Team (and Stewards

if there is time) before signing Seekers name to a position (other than as an identifier of our personal affiliation) or committing resources.

- As Stewards, we are considered ordained so can present ourselves as clergy in an advocacy situation.

## [19\\_01.14 Summary of Stewards Actions](#)

### **Final 2018 Budget**

Marjory gave us the final numbers for 2018 income and expenses and noted that part of our 2018 shortfall is due to an overage in 2017 from some people “prepaying” their 2018 giving due to a change in the federal tax law. [2018 Year End budget as of February 2019](#)

### **Preaching report for 2018**

Peter presented Stewards with a visual report on preaching in 2018. From Seekers, we’ve had 13 women, 10 men and three groups; from visitors, we’ve had one man and two groups. Some members of Celebration Circle preach more than others in the community in part because Celebration Circle members fill in when no one else has stepped up to preach. [2018 Preaching Summary for Stewards](#)

### **Building Use report for 2018**

Peter offered another visual reporting 801 non-Seekers events in the building during 2018. Eleven other worshipping communities have used the space during 2018 though not all of them are regular users and some may have drifted away by now. User contributions totaled \$40,263. (Document attached) In response to a question about our “close out” process with “regular” users who stop using the building, Time and Space reported that some groups seem to just fade away so there really isn’t a process. The entry codes can be disabled remotely so that is not a problem. [2018 Building Use Summary](#)

## **Supporting Individual Seekers needs or passions**

Dave presented SLT recommendations for a policy with respect to individual Seekers looking for financial support for personal needs or projects of interest to them:

- Solicitations should not be made for additional funds to an organization that Seekers is already supporting specifically through a direct line item in the budget or through the domestic or international giving budgets.
- A person requesting funds should be directed to contact the MSG to see whether the request would fit the Growing Edge Fund or to ask the SLT whether a request would be appropriate for the Holy Spirit Fund. If the request doesn't fit either of these, the requestor may explore the use of technology, such as GoFundMe™, to request from those on the Seekers listserv.
- New solicitations should not be made in a group setting such as circle time, announcements in worship, or the coffee hour. If a request has already been made through technology to the Seekers listserv, any announcement in a group setting should solely remind those present that a solicitation has been sent through the listserv.
- Children and youth may solicit funds for a fundraising campaign of an organization (such as scouting or a school) in a group setting or during coffee hour. Other requests from children and youth should be directed to the Mission Support Group (administrators of the Holy Spirit Fund or the Servant Leadership Team (administrators of the Holy Spirit Fund).

This proposal was generally accepted, after brief conversation, but without a formal vote. [19\\_02.10 Funding Solicitations at Seekers Church](#)

**Pastoral Concerns** were discussed among Stewards.

**Brenda and Cynthia** shared from their lives for the past year.

## Soul Talk