

June 11, 2020

Minutes of the AD-HOC Pine Orchard Union Chapel donation request committee meeting.

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 @7PM via Zoom videoconferencing application

**Present:** Richard Greenalch, Linda Sachs, Robin Sandler, Stephan Ariyan, Peggy Taylor and Barbara Colley. Eric Rose joined the meeting later in the discussion.

**Absent:** Hap Storer

**Background:** The Pine Orchard Chapel stands in disrepair. Significant work needs to be done to bring the building up to code and allow it to serve as a meeting place for future events.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by POA President Robin Sandler.

There three Agenda Items

**1. Elect a chairperson**

A motion was made by Richard Greenalch to elect Robin Sandler as committee chair. The motion was seconded by Stephan Ariyan – there were no other nominations and the vote was carried.

A secretary was also called for (to take minutes) and no one volunteered. Robin Sandler asked if the POA office manager (Peter Robinson) would take minutes for this meeting.

Stephanie Faber made a point that the secretary should come from the committee. Her point was acknowledged and a permanent secretary from the committee will be assigned going forward.

**2. Set a meeting schedule**

It was proposed by Robin Sandler that the committee meet every other Tuesday and at least twice before the July 6<sup>th</sup> POA annual meeting, so the committee can present a status report to the association. The committee agreed to meet on June 16<sup>th</sup> and again on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**3. Discuss the Pine Orchard Union Chapel request that the POA donate \$50,000.00 to the fund for the restoration of the Chapel.**

- Bob Dahill had asked past POA presidents if the POA had ever donated tax revenue to the chapel. Both the living presidents and the POA minutes going back to 1950 show no such donations being made.
- Jennifer Aniskovich provided an overview on the proposed three (3) phases for the proposed renovations:
  1. Some time in September 2020, \$25,000 will be committed to elevate the building so foundation, structural work to the underside of the building and repairs to the cupola can be done. This event will start the phase One process which will cost a total of \$200,000 to complete (the \$25,000 is included in that number). To date the Chapel has raised \$120,000 in gifts and has received a \$100,000 grant from the state of Connecticut. The grant funds are paid at the end of the Phase One effort (after they have raised and spent the initial \$200,000).
  2. No start date was given for phase 2 & 3, it's a function of funds received and what they can accomplished in each phase. Total estimated costs are \$588,000 for all three phases. The Chapel expects to receive an additional \$200,000 from the State or Connecticut for phase 2 and 3 of the renovation. As with Phase one, State Grants are paid at the completion of the renovation.

- Stephan Ariyan feels (and most of the call attendees agree) that the chapel has done it due diligence on the three building phases and have a good handle on fundraising. The issue at hand are:
  1. Is this a good cause for the POA to support given our fiduciary responsibility to the community?
  2. Should POA Tax revenue be used to fund this effort or should POA member volunteers support the effort. This can be determined by taking a poll or vote on the issue by the association.
  3. If it is determined that the tax funds are to be used, should we give them the funds or loan them the funds to offset the State Grant payment terms.
  4. Could the POA assist the Chapel in raising funds outside of a gift of TAX revenue.
  5. The AD-HOC committee needs to give a recommendation to the POA executive committee on next steps.
- Linda Sachs brought up her concerns, as Treasure for the POA, that there are competing big ticket items for POA funded efforts, namely sidewalks, seawall maintenance, repair of access points, future storm damage. She feels that the Chapel fund request be put to a vote by the association. Linda also expressed a concern that such a payment might set a precedent that future boards will have to deal with. Lastly, she pointed out that \$100,000+ of POA funds were spent back 2012 to service shore-line damage due to hurricane Irene.
- Robins Sandler covered how the POA By-Laws in section 2 gives broad authority to the Executive Board on how to spend tax funds as set out in section 2 & 8 of the POA Charter. Robin will defer the issue to POA counsel (Peter Berdon) who will make a formal determination on whether the POA can give tax revenue to the Chapel.
- Eric Rose provide a detailed overview of the work needed and stated that each phase of the effort can stand on it own. There is no time or project-dependency requirement between phases.
- Stephanie Farber expressed her personal objection to using POA Tax dollars to fund what she perceives as a "Historic Christian" building.
- Robin Sandler ended the meeting by summarizing as follows:
  1. The AD HOC committee will provide a recommendation to the POA Executive Board on July 6<sup>th</sup>. That recommendation will be vetted by legal counsel.
  2. The board will meet again on Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> to review the opinion of legal counsel.