

## **Report on the 2022 Actions of New Castle Presbytery Trustees**

*863<sup>rd</sup> Presbytery Assembly, November 19, 2022*

### **January 6, 2022 (Special Meeting)**

- Approved project bid by G. Fedale Roofing for Port Deposit Presbyterian Church with allocation of up to \$125,000 for roof replacement with conditions of Port Deposit responsibility for maintenance in compliance for full warranty coverage.

### **February 2, 2022**

- Ratified prior email votes:
  - Extension of the COVID loan program through the end of 2021.
  - Costs associated with Review and Acquisition of Coastal Highway Property (*Rehoboth of Midway PC*)
  - Approval of choice of roofing contractor recommended by project manager for Port Deposit Presbyterian Church.
- Approved manual amendment to eliminate the requirement that Trustee email votes need to be ratified during an assembled Trustee meeting.
- Approved to accept the recommendation of Merrill Lynch financial advisor to accept the Blackrock option, using single stocks for the large US equity exposure and ETFs for the remainder, with further recommendation to screen out based on Environmental, Human Rights and Fossil Fuel concerns.
- Approved to authorize J. Hunter to explore a possible Scope of Work and costs associated with hiring a dedicated project manager.
- Approved to spend \$1,000 to enter into a temporary month-to-month agreement with Stanley Properties through J. Hunter and D. Scully to provide necessary inspection services to ensure continued soundness of the Port Penn property. Additional funds for maintenance and grass cutting services will be required.
- Approved to ratify repurposing up to \$2,000 of 2021 budgeted funds for a new entry “speaker system” to NCP’s offices.
- Approved to authorize Connectional and/or Missional Presbyters to allocate funding from the Conferences and Scholarships funds, within the yearly individual and congregations limitations set by NCP.
- Approved to enter into a mowing contract for the Zion Cemetery property for 2022.

### **May 11, 2022**

- Elected as Secretary of the Corporation, Connectional Presbyter/Stated Clerk Cindy Kohlmann.
- Approved recommendation to PNC investment advisor to move George Speer Trust assets to PNC’s Responsible Investing Portfolio on February 28.

- Approved two loan requests from First Presbyterian-Newark through Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program and acted as co-signer as required: first loan for \$300,000 approved March 15; second loan for \$75,000 approved on April 27.
- Approved the expenditure of up to \$6,000 for out-of-pocket costs associated with the February 2022 insurance claim for water damage to the Hayloft on April 21.
- Approved the financial review audit for 2021 with presentation to Presbytery at the May 24 meeting.
- Approved recommendation from Merrill Lynch investment advisor to move \$100,000 to impact investments.
- Approved Scope of Work for a dedicated Property Manager for the Presbytery and securing of proposals.
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- Approved Port Penn appraisal of property/associated costs and grass cutting service
- Approved title search expenses for Hayloft title search.

#### **August 10, 2022**

- Voted to add language to the Manual appointing the Stated Clerk as Secretary of the Corporation and term of the President: “The Stated Clerk shall ordinarily serve as the Secretary of the Corporation. No person shall serve as President for more than two (2) consecutive years.”
- Approved expenditure of \$4,200 for the appraisal of the Campus Ministry (LUMOS) property.
- Approved expenditures for the Hayloft: Title search regarding the boundaries of the property (\$386); repairs to the “shed” (\$700); preventative plumbing maintenance agreement (\$252); future repair to water capacitor in fall of 2022 (\$728.82); and amount not to exceed \$2,500 for pruning. (I thought we moved forward on \$ for painting as well – have to ask Donna
- Voted to narrow the focus of our impact investments to housing and alleviating poverty locally in line with our Matthew 25 commitment.
- Voted to authorize the Treasurer to investigate the possibility of establishing a group insurance policy that would include churches in the Presbytery in order to secure favorable rates.
- Voted to propose that the 2023 per capita be set at \$30.
- Voted to accept the recommendation of the Committee on Leadership and Presbytery Staff to close the physical Presbytery office and move to a remote work arrangement. The space at Head of Christiana Presbyterian Church will be completely vacated by June 2023 with an openness to vacating sooner if requested to by the Session.
- Voted to appoint two Trustees to a special task force to work with COL and COMC to propose a percentage increase to staff compensation for the 2023 budget with a

cap of the projected COLA rate of 10.5% to then be approved by the Trustees by email ahead of the September Assembly meeting.

- Voted to approve the 2023 Proposed Budget as presented excluding staff compensation numbers, which are pending. Approved 2023 Proposed Budget with staff compensation numbers on September 11, 2022.
- Voted to authorize the Treasurer to engage a real estate broker to explore options for selling the Port Penn property with preference given to a broker of color.

**August 23, 2022 (Special Meeting)**

- Approved transfer of the Hood Property to the Rehoboth Presbyterian Church of Midway if there is no transfer tax and upon receipt of an updated and acceptable set of church bylaws.
- Approved seeking a sketch of the DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship project adjacent to the Rehoboth Presbyterian Church of Midway and written confirmation of the work to move forward with agreement upon receipt of that confirmation.
- Approved that the ministry of sabbath and respite of the Hayloft will be continued at this time with a review in three years.
- Approved the ability to extend the rental season and availability, to set an increase in rental fees to address additional expenses related to the use of the property and to begin to build a repair/maintenance fund.

**October 11, 2022 (Special Meeting)**

- Approved entering into an attorney-client relationship with Gallagher, Evelius, & Jones, LLP, a law firm experienced in religious liberty and First Amendment cases, as detailed in the letter of engagement regarding Perryville Presbyterian Church. The \$5,000 retainer fee as required by the letter of engagement was validated in the approval.
- Approved moving forward in conversation with Pastor Juan Lozada and Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal M.I. Ram El Shaddai to establish a rental agreement of the Port Penn Presbyterian Church building and grounds, with an openness to explore the “rent to buy” possibility.
- Approved an increase in 2023 rates for the Hayloft as follows:

	2022	2023
March 26-May 27 ( <i>off-peak</i> )	\$1,100	\$1,190
May 28-Sept 9 (peak)	\$1,225	\$1,325
Sept 10-Nov 12 ( <i>off-peak</i> )	\$1,100	\$1,190

**November 9, 2022**

- Approved \$130,000 be withdrawn from the Merrill Lynch account to cover the shortfall in the Speer Trust Distribution for 2023.
- Approved up to \$5,000 be allocated for legal fees to petition Chancery Court of the State of Delaware to change the language governing the usage of the Speer Trust to solely rely on 20 trailing quarters.
- Approved Ron McKinney be elected as President of the Trustees beginning in 2023.
- Approved an additional \$5,000 be allocated for the current situation with the Perryville PC and the legal counsel previously approved.
- Approved Shannon Hanson be authorized to sign Land License Agreement with the City of Rehoboth on behalf of the Trustees.
- Approved amended lease agreement for Port Penn PC to include full responsibility for the utilities.