

DFUMC Church Council Agenda

Date & Time:	Dec 10, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
Location:	Room 207
Pastors:	Revs. Dalton Rushing, Blair Setnor, Laura Rappold
Council:	Council Chair Clair Hope Wallace, Vice Chair Davis Edwards, Finance Chair Tom Barefoot, Lay Leader Rick Gillig, Staff-Parish Relations Director Kate Merrihew, Trustees Director Josh Andrews, Connect Team Chair Chris Opstad, Grow Team Chair Madeline Ledford, Worship Team Chair Sybil Davidson, and Treasurer Julie Childs, Story Keeper Karen Horace, Engage Team Chair Michael Black
New 2024 Council:	Ruth Brown, Jim Kiernicki, Marion Dearing, Cindy Petersen,
Guest:	Gary Garrett

Agenda details:

- I. Opening prayer (2 min) – Dalton opened the meeting in prayer at 12:25pm.
- II. Approval of November meeting minutes (2 min) – Rick made a motion to approve. Josh seconded the motion and the minutes for November were approved unanimously.
- III. Avondale Pattillo – Laura / Josh (5 min) – Laura and Josh gave an update on Avondale Pattillo. Josh, as the Trustees Chair, has been appointed by the council to lead discussions with the city of Avondale Estates and with the non-profit organizations who are interested in partnering with us to purchase, use, or lease a portion of the property.

IV. Solar Panels – Rick/Michael/Josh/Cindy (10 min) – Rick gave an update on the solar panels. There has been a lot of discussion about the total system size. If we stay under 250 KW, we can sell our excess solar generation back to the grid. If we install a system over 250 KW in size, we would not be able to sell back any power, but we would be offsetting more of our current power consumption. Rick noted that the UMC social principles include language about caring for the environment and creation. Gary noted that one of the next steps would be for us to get site visits from the vendors to confirm the quotes we have been provided. Rick noted that we have financing options, including meeting with the congregation to vote on approving a withdrawal from the Sycamore proceeds account. Dalton noted that we may want to have some conversations with individual congregation members about the rationale behind this initiative before we have the congregational vote. Daniel stated that we expect the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) to provide an estimated \$270,000, though due to slow IRS processing times, we do not expect this credit benefit to arrive for more than six months (according to advice from our auditors at Carr Riggs & Ingram (CRI). Josh noted that we should keep in mind our future planned consumption to allow for additional growth. The act of planning future energy consumption requires us to reconsider our master plan and the anticipated use of our buildings (e.g., Urban Recipe operating out of our gym starting in 2024).

- V. Financial Report – Tom (10 min) – Tom gave the financial report, starting with the October financials. Clair motioned to approve the October financials, Rick seconded the motion, and the October financials were approved. Tom gave an update on the November financials. Tom noted that the pledged offerings are continuing to come in over what has been budgeted, and we have strong income coming in from our parking relationship with Emory (which pays to use the DFUMC parking lot on weekdays). Tom motioned to approve the November financials, Rick seconded the motion, and the November financials were approved. Tom reviewed the balance sheet and noted the difference between a “budgeted surplus” and our “cash on hand” (i.e., the balance in our operating checking account). Tom also noted that we now have a new banking relationship with Live Oak bank, which is a high-yield savings account where we can hold some of our designated funds that are used infrequently.
- VI. 2024 Budget – Tom (20 min) – Tom reviewed the budget. We have multiple income lines for congregational giving, including “Pledged Offerings,” “Pre-paid pledges,” and “General contributions.” Tom noted that the council approves a budget in December based on all pledges received to date, but will pass another budget in January to reflect any pledges received up through that time. On the expense side, ministry area spending has been reviewed with clergy and ministry program staff. Tom noted that our staff is very good at managing expenses and we should continue to encourage staff to expand or launch new programs because cash flow is good. Daniel noted that the Café Decatur program is budgeted to have a net loss of \$10,000 for 2024. The council agreed that this is a valuable program and our expectations are realistic for income and expenses for Café Decatur. Josh noted that we should cancel the internet service at Avondale Pattillo now that the Music Man performances are complete. Cindy asked about our plans for the Avondale Pattillo property overall. Laura and Josh and Dalton described the key tenets of our strategy for that property, including that we are exploring partnerships with non-profit organizations.

VII. SPR – Kate (10 min) – Kate moved that the council enter executive session, Davis seconded the motion and the council went into executive session (see notes in Separate document). The council came out of executive session. Tom motioned that we approve the budget as adjusted in Executive Session. Clair seconded the motion. The council voted and the budget for 2024 including staff compensation was approved.

VIII. Old or new business - (5 min) –

- a. Council vacancies: Dalton mentioned that Julie Childs will be stepping down from the council in 2024. The Nominations committee has already nominated an individual to serve as Council Secretary in 2024.
- b. Sunday morning bus drivers. Rick brought up that we have some older members who are losing their driver's licenses, and made a suggestion that we hire someone to drive the church bus to pick people up and bring them to church. The council agreed that this would be a good idea. Daniel will contact our insurance provider to explore any vehicle insurance ramifications for this.

IX. Closing - (2 min) – Dalton closed the meeting in prayer at 1:40pm

Next Meeting: Jan 21 (3rd Sunday)