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## Meeting Notes

1. Background:
  - 1.1. This was a special congregation meeting with sole purpose to approve sale of a portion of the St. Stephen's land located at 1575 Charlton St., West St. Paul, MN.
  - 1.2. Sale of the subject property was explored multiple times over the last several years. Progress on the land sale is covered in notes from the congregation annual meetings.
  - 1.3. The current round was initiated at the January 2011 congregation meeting. Mike Butala of the Finance committee led this effort. Details of that effort are not covered here. Please refer to Finance committee meeting notes and land sale documents for details
  - 1.4. This meeting was called per the procedure outlined in the St. Stephen's constitution.
  - 1.5. A copy of the resolution to be approved at the meeting was Emailed to members before this meeting. Copies of the resolution were distributed to meeting attendees.
2. Call to order. Meeting called to order at 9:45 by President Debbie Pirkl.
3. Establish quorum.
  - 3.1. 70 members signed in. Reference attached sign in sheets.
  - 3.2. Per Article X of our constitution: a quorum is 5% of eligible members or fifty voting members, whichever is less. We have about 680 eligible members so quorum is the lesser of 34 or 50.
  - 3.3. Quorum: Actual attendance exceeds both criteria for a quorum. Quorum established.
4. Opening prayer: Pastor John Snider offered a brief prayer.
5. Agenda: Approve the resolution for sale of church property.
6. President Debbie Pirkl read the resolution (copy attached below). A motion to approve the resolution was made and seconded.  
  
Discussion (secretary's note: I did not catch names of many of those who asked questions or offered comments and chose to omit the names of those I did recognize for balance).
7. Mike Butala reviewed recent project history.
  - 7.1. We offered to sell the property to the City of West St. Paul. They declined.
  - 7.2. A buyer offered \$275,000 for the property.

- 7.3. We hired an appraisal of the property. They valued the property at \$390,000..
- 7.4. After multiple rounds of negotiation the buyer increased their offer to \$380,000.
- 7.5. We have not signed anything yet.
- 7.6. The finance committee thinks this is a fair offer.
- 7.7. We still need to do a survey of the property.
8. Is the buyer qualified? Mike: Their realtor says this is a cash offer.
9. What is the developer's intent? Mike: The property is zoned R1 (single family residential). We think they intend to develop it that way. It is possible they could petition the city to change the zoning after purchase.
10. What will we maintain for a buffer strip to the West side of our parking lot? Mike: the intent is to retain a 20 foot strip to the west of our parking lot. This would put the boundary between our parking lot and the gully.
11. Why are the expenses so high? They approach 10% of the sales price. Mike: This is an estimate. We have closing costs and realtor fees to pay. We also need to do a survey at estimated cost of \$6000. The estimate also includes costs for attorney review.
12. Does the parcel we are selling extend to Smith Ave? Mike: yes.
13. What will happen to the prayer circle on the ballfield? Debbie Pirkl: this was completed as an Eagle Scout project a couple years ago. The local troop decided to remove the circle because they chose not to maintain it.
14. What do we know about the purchaser? Debbie Pirkl: It is a family owned construction company. The family went to school at Henry Sibley.
15. Can we control how the land is developed? We don't want them to put a tavern on the property. Mike: the property is zoned R1. Putting a tavern on the property would require re-zoning.
16. Will the money go into the church foundation fund? Debbie: That has not been determined yet. Council will discuss this.
17. Comment: We need to stop and think. Once the land is gone, its gone. We should slow the process down and pray about this.
18. Comment: This discussion has been going on for 20 years. At least 4 committees have discussed sale and use of this property. Much thought and prayer has gone into the process. One group had a vision of building a retirement home on the property. A later group considered building a bridge over the gully. It's time to sell and stop paying taxes [secretary note: we are a non-profit and do not pay property taxes].
19. Why now? What is the plan for the money? Debbie Pirkl: This could fit into our 5 year strategic plan. We considered doing a church renovation 5 years ago but this was deferred due to the weak economy. This money could become a seed for future capital plans.
20. Is that the impetus for sale now? Pastor John: no. The process was re-initiated at the annual meeting in 2011. John recalled a meeting where Orville Johnson poured dirt on the table and asked what that dirt was doing for the mission of St. Stephen's? He was alluding to the parable about the talents... Two guys made a good return. One guy buried his in the ground.
21. Comment: why now? This land has been an asset for the church since 1959. It's something we can fall back on. St. Stephen's has gone through many periods of tough times and has not resorted to sale of property. The market is still depressed.
22. What does this property cost us? Debbie: we pay \$3000/year to mow it. We don't pay taxes. Pastor John: we do have to pay assessments when the city makes improvements. For

example, we had to pay \$20,000 once when the street was redone. Debbie: there is also potential liability if someone were to get hurt on the property.

23. Comment: Interest rates have gone up recently and it appears this is slowing sales of real estate.

24. Pastor John: no one has mentioned the tithe portion of the resolution. A church that only worries about its own needs is dead on the vine. Tithing to missions is right.

25. Vote: President Debbie Pirkl called for a voice vote.

Ayes: most of those present voted aye.

Nay: Two members voted nay.

Per the constitution, Article A.05.f (copy attached below), approval requires two thirds majority vote of all voting members present and voting at a legally called congregational meeting.

Conclude: resolution passed.

26. Adjournment. Meeting ended at 10:05. [No motion to adjourn. No closing comments].

Respectfully submitted,  
Andy Ruff,  
Secretary

## Proposed Resolution

### Resolution for the Sale of Church Property

Special Congregational Meeting  
Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**WHEREAS**, St. Stephen's Congregation having voted on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 to approve to move forward with the sale of the land at 1575 Charlton Street (westerly 6.8 acres on Wentworth Avenue), and,

**WHEREAS**, that the Council has received an offer to purchase this land from Goven Doyle Ventures, LLC for the sum of Three Hundred Eighty Thousand dollars (\$380,000) in Cash, and,

**WHEREAS**, that the following expenses, approximately \$32,800, are necessary to complete the sale and the net amount to the Congregation is approximately \$347,200 and,

**WHEREAS**, that this Congregation agrees to the terms in the Purchase Agreement, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the St. Stephen's Congregation approves the sale of this property, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this Congregation, in its continuing effort to do God's Missions, places ten percent of the net proceeds from this sale (approximately \$34,720) into the Missions Fund and the remaining balance to be dedicated to the Capital Reserve Fund, and be it futher

**RESOLVED**, that the St. Stephen's Congregation will be represented at the closing of this sale by Debbie Pirkl, President and Andy Ruff, Secretary, or a designated alternate.

## St. Stephen's Constitution, Article V... on Sale of Property

### ARTICLE' V POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purposes.

A5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and by-laws.

A5.03. The Congregation holds final authority on all congregational matters. Those matters not specifically listed below shall be dealt with by the Congregation Council. The Congregation is authorized to:

- a. Call a pastor.
- b. Terminate the call of a pastor.
- c. Approve the annual budget.
- d. Acquire real property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means.
- e. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purposes.

**,f. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its real property by any lawful means with two thirds majority vote of all voting members present and voting at a legally called congregational meeting .**

g. Elect its officers, Congregation Council, and Chairs of its Standing Committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions.

h. Terminate its relationship with the ELCA as provided in

## Attendance

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
Special Congregational Meeting, Sunday, September 15, 2013  
- Please Sign In. Thank you. -

1	Alice Mikel		
2	Don Muff	Pat Mast	18
3	Captain Kallen	Polly Sunde	19
4	Donna Boller	John Sunde	20
5	Norm Lorentzen	Grete Sunde	21
6	Bob Tuber	Jan Kamari	22
7	Ken Erickson	Janne Myr	23
8	Nancy Auker	Sonditt	24
9	Gerri McDowell	Janis R. Jorg	25
10	Cliff Kat	Patry Longard	26
11	Dorothy Culbert	Larry Longard	27
12	Carol Nelson	Andrew T. Ruff	28
13	Donald		29
14	Ann Anderson		30
15	Betty Lauritzen		31
16	Vina Younger		32
17	Chris Younger		33
			34

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
Special Congregational Meeting, Sunday, September 15, 2013  
- Please Sign In. Thank you. -

1	Norman M. Locantore	Betty Anderson	18
2	James K. Schoppa	Lynn Kuesel	19
3	Clare Summers	Jeff Tulach	20
4	Don Smith	Delores Wood	21
5	Stephen Haver	Vaughn Stair	22
6	Shirley Einfeldt		23
7	Dean Einfeldt		24
8	Carol Pagel		25
9	John Galini		26
10	Janice Donahue		27
11	Walter Pate		28
12	John Smith		29
13	Bret Scribner		30
14	Tina Scribner		31
15	Mike Bone		32
16	Mike Pate		33
17	Donald Henderson		34

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
Special Congregational Meeting, Sunday, September 15, 2013  
- Please Sign In. Thank you. -

1	Ruth Ann Stai	Jayne Roswell	18
2	Jean Roswell	Walter Roswell	19
3	Evelyn Elam	Susan Clark	20
4	Sarah Sather		21
5	Louie George		22
6	Don Stenkamp		23
7	Jan Stenkamp		24
8	Ed Perrot		25
9	Vicki Jacobson		26
10	Dorothy Lea		27
11	Sail Berger		28
12	Lynnda Berger		29
13	Tracy West		30
14	Arnel Meyers		31
15	Kathy Parker		32
16	Jim Parker		33
17	Neil Johnson		34

End of File