

Report of the TOWN HALL MEETING, October 14, 2018

Summary of Highlights

The meeting commenced at 12:30 with a reading by Reverend Thom while Insch Youth Leader Mo Fernandez lit the chalice.

Board president Jenny Warnasch explained that the Building Task Force had developed recommendations which the Board heartily endorses for moving ahead with the Building Project. She asked for feedback from the congregation as input to the Board's imminent proposal, which will be widely shared and discussed in November-December, then be the topic of final decision-making at a Congregational Meeting on January 13, 2019.

Construction Task Force co-chairs Brad Kosiba and Josh Socolar presented slides showing current project drawings and cost estimates (\$1.3M for the recommended scope, narrowed to encompass the new building with only critical renovations to the existing space).

Finance Task Force co-chair and church Treasurer Andrew Wright presented slides explaining the approximate \$200,000 gap between the project scope of \$1.3M and (having successfully paid off the old loan this past year) the forecasted balance in the Capital Fund of \$1.1M available for construction of the new building.

Andy Hencke, the Board's liaison for this project, explained that he will facilitate the collective development of a concrete plan for filling the financial gap. It will be a combination of strategies for swelling the balance in the Capital Fund and judicious borrowing, reflecting numerous creative ideas that are being offered by members of the congregation.

The meeting then opened up for questions and discussion, moderated by Mary Beth Powell and recorded by Sindy Barker and Gail McKinley, Communications Task Force leaders. After about half an hour of open exchange, there were no further questions. At 1:30, Gail closed the meeting with a reminder that **survey forms offering your feedback on the recommended strategy are due OCTOBER 21.**

Questions and Answers

1. **Melva Okun:** Thanks to everyone. Do you have statistics on who has given – the grey-hairs or the younger members? Or about those who have not pledged? What do the numbers look like? Can you do an analysis?

Andy: The Capital Campaign Task Force may have those numbers. We'll take this aboard as a suggestion.

2. **Sue Brewer:** The cost went up dramatically, both supplies and workers. How confident are you that in 2019 we will be guaranteed the price or are you going on good faith?
Brad: There are no guarantees. However, to hedge our bets, we asked for the best cost estimate with breaking ground in June 2019. The architect and the contractor came up with similar figures, and that congruence gives me confidence.
3. **Laurence Kirsch:** Will we have a locked-in figure when we sign the contract?
Brad: If you ask them for guarantees, they will give you a higher fixed price. If you are willing to take some risk yourself, then the risk is shared when it is time to sign the contract.
4. **Lynn Harmon:** The project's emphasis on kids is okay, but I deplore the poor conditions in the Jones Building, affecting everyone. The kitchen is a mess - you can hardly cook in it. Deliveries are inconvenient. The doorways are a real problem. A lot of the problems are diddly stuff. Emphasis needs to be broader community.
Mary Beth: We will note this as a comment.
5. **Allen Spalt:** I like what I see in the plans. However, do we need so many stairs?
Brad and Josh: The existing stairs were not adequate. We had to add a wider and safer stairway, located in the new building. Removing one of the old stairways, however, was a cost we opted not to incur at this time.
6. **Allen Spalt:** To what extent will this be a green building?
Brad and Josh: Construction standards have been raised to the extent that what is considered to be standard today was the "green" of yesterday. An example of a "green" feature is the incorporation of daylighting – e.g. the clerestory windows in the Multi-Purpose Room. The drawings give you an idea of what we are doing, but such details as window size are still negotiable. The architect will give us choices, which we'll decide when we get into the detailed design. We are committed to be in touch with the ECO group.
7. **Katie Heineman:** Is room-darkening included?
Brad: We are committed to being able to show projected videos in the daytime. There is not the same need to have darkened rooms as in the past because today's video screen projection technology does not require the same amount of darkness.
8. **Katie Heineman:** Is furniture included?

Brad: We will use what furniture we have now and purchase more later.

9. **Abbie Beasley-Crombie:** Is sprucing up the classrooms in the budget?

Brad: Building and Grounds does sprucing up all the time. There is money in the operating budget to refresh the classrooms. Buildings and Grounds is committed to doing a very thorough job fixing up the old rooms. Will be recruiting volunteers to help with this.

10. **Linda Thompson:** How do you know the pre-school will be out in nine months?

Andy: The board is doing a formal lease extension with the pre-school now with a May 31 exit date.

11. **Jill Baker:** Won't the south and west facing windows make the room hot?

Brad: We have had heavy talks with the architect about this. To mitigate heat gain, the architect proposes louvers along the south side, and we will use good-quality windows. Better insulated windows are now routine where they used to cost additional money.

12. **Krista Westervelt Rowe:** Will the current HVAC be adequate for both the old and new building?

Brad: The new building will have its own system.

13. **Krista Westervelt Rowe:** When the pre-school leaves will they be taking their play equipment?

Jenny: Part of our negotiations is what they will leave. The fence will stay because it has been put in concrete.

Marian: The preschool's playground equipment is meant for children up to age five. The Children's Ministry Team is already imagining equipment suitable for more ages and would welcome ideas.

Brad: The preschool's departure gives us an amazing opportunity to envision what we want to do with the rooms and the playground.

14. **Becky Wilkes:** What impact would the possible new loan have on the church budget, compared to the impact of the old loan?

Andy: Significantly less than the last time, as the new loan would be, like, one-third the amount of the last loan. Whether we will need a new loan (beyond a short-term construction loan) has not been decided. We will figure that out together. If our ultimate plan to close the funding gap includes a new long-term loan, we would be looking at a ten-year term and, for example, perhaps we could have fundraisers on an annual basis to pay off the annual amount. We want people to think creatively and bring forward their ideas for consideration (by October 21).

15. **Paige Smith:** It is a shame we can't move forward with everything, but this is a wonderful building. It is a responsible plan and is meeting a need. Perhaps we can get a work group to tackle the bathrooms off the sanctuary – at least to get heat in them.
16. **Susan Spalt:** I love the plan. Have we thought about asking the Endowment Fund to help out on this?
Andy: We will take that as a suggestion for one of the creative fundraising options.
17. **Jill Baker:** What is the difference between an elevator and a lift? Can a lift have a railing for people with balance problems?
Brad: A lift is significantly cheaper. It has a floor, a top and two sides. You can see the walls slide by on two sides. If you put your hand on one of the sides, the lift stops. You must keep your finger on the button the whole time you are riding the lift, or it will stop. It moves very slowly. Lisa Epner and others went with us to see an existing lift and were totally comfortable with it. A railing can be added. The lift will also allow us to move heavy pieces of furniture between floor levels.
18. **Terry Baker:** What size is the lift's footprint?
Brad: It depends on the amount of money allocated. That specification will be determined during the detailed design phase.
19. **Lynn Harmon:** What are we doing about ramps for people who cannot walk steps and don't want to ride the elevator?
Brad: Ramps take up a lot of real estate because the grade has to be very gradual. After much evaluation, we decided to go with a lift instead of an interior ramp. We are still considering the feasibility of a sloping pathway around the outside to serve as a ramp, eventually.
20. **Several people** (following the meeting): What are the renovation projects that are not included in the streamlined budget?
Answer: The only changes to existing space that are included are those that are essential to health or safety (removal of lower level plumbing and replacement of old electrical panel) or that provide passage between the old and the new space at each level. The larger projects, such as kitchen refurbishing, electric system upgrades, HVAC replacement, or Community Room acoustic improvements, are wait-listed as they have the potential to be undertaken singly (they needn't all be done at once) as separately funded projects in the future.