

Old First Annual Meeting – January 26, 2025: Minutes

1. **Opening Prayer** – Joanna Robinson
2. **Motion to Give Voice to Non-Members** from Kathy Sykes, motion to approve by Julie S., seconded by Beth W. and approved by All, none Opposed.
3. **Welcome** (Kathy S.) and a reminder to sign the Attendance List (attached to Minutes). Kathy reviewed our blessings over the past year including members' time, talent and resources. OF is in a good place and we are grateful. We are a congregation of spirit led collaborative decision making consistent with our mission and with God's help.

Last year we struggled to fund our Outreach mission after many years of providing overnight entry level shelter and now the building of Old First House, permanent supportive housing. We needed resources to fund the ongoing work and the congregation responded with generous pledges. We will report on last year and the ongoing challenge of sustaining this work.

4. **Outreach** (Beth Walker and Deanna Salpietra)

Deanna – She served as Volunteer Coordinator and Program Developer for the last year. We hosted 5 service camps over the summer, developed new marketing materials and built in structures, including information packets for future use. Deanna reported that she developed a learning program for groups with interactive discussions addressing social, economic and racial issues. She also emailed close to 100 past service groups with information and invites and has updated our pricing. We also developed feedback forms and did outreach to multiple partner sites including Broad Street Love, St. Francis Inn, several food pantries and other locations.

Beth mentioned our partnership with Christ Church for Sunday night dinners and clothing drives. We are planning to increase our community partnerships overall. We always need more clothes to distribute on Saturday mornings. Our goal is to transition to a sit down Saturday morning breakfast, and to provide service information (go deeper). There are multiple opportunities to serve. Dianne mentioned the Amazon wish list.

Plan for 2025 (Beth) – We will be hiring a new Volunteer Coordinator and Deanna will help to recruit, with the goal to hire someone by April. There will be some overlap with Deanna.

A round of applause received from the Congregation for the great Outreach work.

5. Old First House – We heard from OFH Associate Director Michelle Abbruzzi, Depaul USA. Michelle said that they had 15 PHA applicants who are waiting on approval and that the housing units are still under minor construction. The residents will be folks with some mental health and substance abuse diagnoses. A congregant asked about getting a tour of the residence before moving in and the answer was Yes, as soon as the initial occupancy certification is obtained. Per Michelle, a tour is a good idea and they are looking forward to talking and meeting with the residents. The folks will be facing some challenges and especially those who have been long term, chronically homeless. A welcoming spirit will be helpful. There is some challenge getting folks lined up to move in as many potential residents are transient and vulnerable, so we are meeting them at their current locations.

DePaul has a connection with Old Pine Community Center who will likely work on meal deliveries and, possibly, assist OF with meals and other service opportunities. In response to a congregant question, Michelle said that OFH will have 24 hour staffing, including herself (Associate Director & Case Manager), another FT case manager, a PT case manager, several resident assistants, and a maintenance person. It will take some time for the residents to feel comfortable in the new housing and DePaul staff will be assessing their needs. They will likely have food specialist consultants. There are 34 efficiency apartments with individual bathrooms and kitchenettes. OFH goal is to house those experiencing chronic homelessness and with diagnoses/disabilities, some of the City's most vulnerable residents.

David LaFontaine, Community Ventures spoke briefly about looking forward to this partnership with Old First and DePaul.

*****Stretch and brunch break! Pastor Michael asked folks to sign up for service opportunities posted around the Sanctuary. He highlighted the Sanctuary Use Committee, headed by Shelly Stackhouse.*****

6. Budget (Dianne J.) – Dianne became Treasurer in July 2024 due to an unexpected vacancy. She thanked the Elders, Admin, Jonathan V., Adam, and Casey for their great help in getting acclimated. Also, OF offers a huge Thank You to Dianne for accepting and jumping right in.

2024 Budget: We exceeded last year's member giving by a few thousand dollars. Expenses were down partly because we stopped janitorial services, also we had no serious building breakdowns.

2025 Budget: For Outreach position funding, \$5,000 was transferred to the 2025 budget, membership giving toward this effort was more than expected. Property expenses have increased due to use of a cleaning service. Building insurance costs increased (to be discussed) and also the usual 3.4% staff cola increases. The proposed budget is looking

good, assuming no unexpected breakdowns/property expenses. In answer to a question from a congregant, per Adam, there is an approximately 4.5% increase in member giving to date.

Property Insurance Coverage (Pam) - Our building had been appraised at \$3.6 million for full replacement value and, after reaching out to our broker, we learned that the new historic appraisal is \$15 million and we are way under-insured. After extensive consultation with the Philadelphia Insurance Board and our broker, we are proposing a functional replacement policy for \$10 million at an annual cost of \$30,000. This would reflect somewhat of a trade-off and would be in line with OF priorities. Per Megan G., there would be some limits as far as historical rebuilding in the event of a total loss and OF could be removed from the historical record in that event. But, in the more likely event of a partial loss, we would likely be able to do full historical preservation, and the building would look the same from the outside. Pastor Michael confirmed all.

**** Beth D. moved that we approve the 2025 budget as presented, Jane A. seconded. Motion approved by All, None opposed.****

7. **OF 300th Anniversary Celebration** (Dave K.) – Dave is serving as chair of the planning committee and invited others to participate. They are currently brainstorming and have lots of ideas.

8. **Annual Reports and 2025 Slate of Elders and SLG Chairs** (Joanna R.)

****Bobbie B. moved to approve the 2024 Annual Reports, Richard K. seconded. Motion approved by All, None opposed.****

****Bruce C. moved to approve the 2025 slate of Elders and SLG Chairs, Richard K. seconded. Motion approved by All, None opposed.****

9. **Meeting Adjourned** – Joanna Robinson