

**Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes**

*Pending approval at the November 2023 Board Meeting*

*Our faith in a God of love leads us, by the power of the Spirit, to follow Jesus in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.*

**Board Members Present:** Ada Schmidt-Tieszen (Moderator), Brad Kohlman (Moderator-elect), Mary Ann Boschmann, Judy Friesen, Tim Hodge, Doug Penner, Karen Penner, Margaret Toews, Jon Zerger

**Board Members not present:** John Kliewer, Lois Preheim

**Staff Present:** Nathan Koontz (Pastor), Roger Neufeld Smith (Interim Pastor), Mike Claassen

**Staff not present:**

**Others attending:**

1. **Welcome and Opening Prayer** – The board read the mission statement together and Ada Schmidt-Tieszen offered a prayer for the meeting.
2. **Consent Agenda** – Doug Penner offered a review of Consent Agenda minutes by focusing on the Faith Formation Commission meeting minutes. They are looking for a service opportunity for the youth locally for next summer. Doug expressed gratitude for their passion and competence. Mary Ann Boschmann made a correction to the board meeting minutes of September saying that Diane Born has not been part of the Audit Committee since 2020 so is available to serve as Assistant Treasurer without conflict. **Judy Friesen moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mary Ann Boschmann seconded the motion; approved by consensus.**
3. **Financial Report** – Mike Claassen reported that he didn't have anything to add to emailed summary of the financial reports. Ada asked for an update on the BCMC Express. It is being managed online as it was last year. Pledges have been declining since 2019 with no clear reason why. The 2024 budget is close to being ready for review. Insurance premium estimates are the biggest unknown at this time. **Tim Hodge moved to approve the Financial Report. Brad Kohlman seconded; the motion carried.**
4. **Creation Care Solar Project Proposal.** Margaret Toews, board liaison to the Solar Project Subcommittee, shared a revised version of the Sept. 26 proposal sent to chairs of the board, Witness Commission and Creation Care Committee. Points in a lengthy discussion included:
  - Need clarification of numbers in proposal
  - How much is the pledge amount needed so the Finance Committee would feel good about the congregation making \$97500 available from the Bequest Fund?
  - How to find out whether the congregation is behind this – straw poll? Vote at brief congregational meeting after worship? Email?
  - The Finance Committee does not want fundraising to start until after BCMC Express.
  - Proposal from King Solar for final cost may increase if a contract is not signed soon (by January 1?). Jason Nisely of King Solar has said in an October 5 email to Margaret that he

didn't think the "pricing will change much if any" if a proposal was signed in 2023 but the down payment was not made until January.

- To avoid possible cost increases, should the Church Board simply recommend that the congregation vote soon to approve borrowing up to \$97,500 so that a contract with King Solar can be signed soon, rather than wait for pledge to come in as the Finance Committee has recommended?
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Jon Zerger volunteered to create a short, clear presentation of questions to be put before the congregation. He hopes to have this presentation ready early in the week of October 9. Should someone attend a meeting with the Finance Committee on October 10?

**5. September 10 Congregational Meeting: Post-Meeting Feedback.**

Did not discuss because of lack of time.

**6. October 7 Leadership Retreat: Last Minute Review and Planning.**

Details are in place.

**7. Reports and Announcements**

- Update on work of the Credence Report Task Group – will be shared and discussed at Leadership Retreat
- Communication among commissions – will be shared and discussed at Leadership Retreat

**8. Executive Session**

**9. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm. Next meeting will be held November 2, 2023 at 7:00 pm.**

Submitted by Margaret Toews, clerk

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