

## 9/19/2010 TOWN HALL MEETING

Jane McCoy opened in prayer. Rob Merriman was roped into taking notes. Official protest filed to no avail.

Opening Remarks: Char Hejmanowski. Char went through the outline as listed on the power point presentation.

Following the opening remarks, Char opened the floor to questions and Jane passed out cards to each table so people could write down questions.

**Question #1:** Bob Hilton. (Don't know if you want to post the names up of the people who asked the questions. I didn't ask for permission to do so, but I'm including their names for additional information.)

"If we merge, how will the commuting issues be handled by the FPC Staff to cover both FPC and SPC?"

**Answer:**

Dana: "Staff has looked at this issue and has come up with some creative ways to provide for the ministerial needs of both congregations." (Sorry, but I was still catching up on my notes at this time. I think Dana said something to the effect that we could flip pastors and choirs as an example of how we could provide coverage.)

Char: "Staff believes they can conquer this challenge. SPC also has an all-volunteer staff that should be able to take up a lot of the staff duties."

**Question #2:** Judy Willers.

More of a statement than a question, Judy remarked that the money currently going to the Interim at SPC should continue to go SPC once the Interim is gone.

**Response:**

Char said that could be approved but also made the point that the extra money could allow for more programs.

Bruce Laird: "This is not a 'them' and 'us' proposition, but a 'bigger' us." Bruce mentioned that the extra funding could allow for more programming at both churches.

**Question #3:** Michael Holt.

"What's the merger timeline?"

**Response:**

Char: The MOU outlines the timeline process which was laid out by the merger task-force.

Jane pointed to the MOU hand-outs that people could take after the meeting was over.

Scott Plummer: Scott mentioned timeline drivers, such as extending the interim pastor's contract by 6 months and a reluctance to go to a month-to-month contract afterwards. He also mentioned that SPC's lease is up in June.

**Question #4:** (Didn't get the name)

"What programs does SPC have? Is there a list so we could get excited about it?"

**Response:**

Jane directed people to SPC's website so they could take a look at the programs SPC offers.

**Question #5:** Bill Carlston.

"If our two congregations merge, where do we then meet?"

**Responses:**

Char: This is open-ended and there's a congregation task-force looking at this issue.

Scott Plummer: The answer isn't known yet. However, a factor to consider for SPC is that their lease negotiating power is better at the end of the lease than it is right now.

**Question #6:** "Will hard feelings over past events at FPC--which provided the initial motivation to form SPC--be a challenge to merger?"

**Responses:**

Scott: Most of the session at SPC was not around when this was happening and is therefore not aware of these issues. Scott also felt this was the case at FPC.

Jane: Jane mentioned that she was on Session when this was taking place and that SPC was chartered out of 'joy and love' and not as break-away church.

**Question #7:** Pat Reid.

"How will the merger vote be taken?"

**Responses:**

Char: By written ballott of active members. A two-thirds majority is necessary for a "yes" or approved vote.

Russ Reid: The merger details are not finalized yet so it's still not definitive that there will be a vote until then.

Bruce Laird: The merger is not a 'done deal'. Session has been talking about this for 15 months. This is not an attempt by Session to ram-rod the merger through. If it were, we wouldn't be holding the Town Hall meetings.

**Question #8:** Ted Shafnitz.

"What's the financial health of SPC?"

**Response:**

Char: SPC has a \$180K budget per year and they make their budget. SPC also has \$16K/year in taxes on their property. SPC pays one-third and Presbytery pays the other two-thirds. SPC's expenses are clearly layed out in their budget and include the tax assessment, facility costs, the Interim Pastor salary and costs for supplies. Therefore, FPC won't incur any unknown liabilities by merging with SPC.

**Question #9:** "Does the church have a connection in tracking the progress of Project Neon?"

**Response:**

Char: Charlie Vaughan is our NDOT Liason and a member of staff attends the NDOT Meetings regarding Project Neon. There are three phases to Project Neon and the expansion of I-15 that are targeted for 2012, 2015 and 2018. By the 2015 phase, FPC will really be effected because the side-street bordering the east side of the church will go away. Plus there are plans to widen Charleston that will make it more difficult to access FPC. Pastor Jim has met with the city extensively regarding these plans and is effectively integrated into their communications.

Jane: Jane made the comment that her daughter Jana attends a church in California that has two campuses but one staff and that the distance between the two campuses is greater than the distance between SPC and FPC. However, things are working out well and both ministries are thriving.

**Question #10:** Bill Carlston.

"Does merging of all ministries include the Deacons, etc.?"

**Responses:**

Bruce Laird: Once the merger's formally approved, the process would allow for a meshing of both Sessions and other groups. Plus there are more Town Hall Meetings to come, so more questions can be brought up about this process.

Char: The whole thing is up to the congregation and is not a done deal. As things progress, these questions and answers will be posted to our website.

**Question #11:**

"Where is SPC?"

**Response:**

Bruce Laird: The property is near 215 and Town Center. SPC currently meets at Hualapai and Peace.

**Question #12:** Ted Shafnitz.

"Do we know where the current members of FPC and SPC live?"

**Response:**

Char: Char showed the map where members of each congregation live and Jane directed people to take the map hand-outs after the meeting was over.

**Question #13:** Samantha Morgan.

"Where will the bus stop once Charleston is widened and all the changes are made with Project Neon?"

**Response:**

Char and Jane: It's hard to know where the bus stops will be located once those changes are made. RTC will be responsible for relocating the stops and informing the public of those changes.

Char closed in prayer.