

# APPENDIX D

## Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center

### Contents:

- (1) Board and Operations Report
- (2) The Visioning of Montgomery Center

## Montgomery Center Executive Board and Operations Report to Presbytery

2016 Fall Stated Meeting of the Presbytery

**Actions and Operations of The Montgomery Center Executive Board:** The Executive Operating Board of Montgomery Center approved the final Strategic Plan or Vision Report submitted by its consultant, Run River Consultants of Tully, New York. The report has been submitted for approval to the Presbytery Trustees.

Per the recommendations within the Vision Plan, the Montgomery Board has put forward several actions to the Presbytery Trustees for approval. The Board has designed two, soon to be three, Fund Raising plans, a number of changes to the bylaws, and several new policy statements pertinent to Montgomery Executive Board Member performance standards.

The Montgomery Center Executive Board suffered numerous resignations in the last several months after the new Board Member Performance Standards were unanimously approved by the full Board. The remaining Board members are grateful for the participation and contribution of the Board members who resigned. Their participation through the visioning process was valuable and most appreciated. The honest self-assessment of the resigned member's ability to contribute in the future, though the remaining Board members are saddened by the losses, allows for the Vision to move forward. They remain our cherished Christian brothers and sisters.

The Montgomery Center Executive Board remains hopeful, grateful, and eager to pursue the Vision for the camp as a Mission of St. Augustine Presbytery, to which it is greatly indebted.

**Operations Report of The Camp:** From our Executive Director, Terry Patterson: Thank you for all your prayers this summer. It made a difference in the lives of the young people and families who attended camp, the counselors and staff.

### SUPPORT

A) Dubo Roofing, Orange Park, have decided to make a weekly donation on behalf of their business to Montgomery. Their son, Noah, attends summer camp and they simply wanted to give back. \$125.00 donated weekly.

B) Donation of pontoon boat, trailer, and bunk bed set completed from past member at Lakewood Presbyterian. We deeply appreciate this gift from the Gardner family. The pontoon boat was used throughout the summer, as there were issues with the Larson (boat). It will be repaired this fall.

## SUMMER CAMP

A) Montgomery Center hosted 419 campers this past summer. Down from 448 in 2014. Most of the reduction in campers is attributed to the Korean Presbyterian Church, as there were visa issues entering the United States.

## FACILITIES

A) Another construction dumpster has been delivered to the maintenance area to deposit all of the unusable items from that area. We have to this point eliminated 8 dumpsters full of debris.

B) Lighted sign at the front entrance has been repaired. Copier replaced as old contract expired, COMCAST dealt with multiple internet outages.

C) Fencing around the backside (parking lot side) of the dining hall and water damage to lounge entrance has been repaired.

D) Cabin restoration almost complete. Getting estimates for installation of instant hot water heaters, door hardware, and mats. Cabin 10, which has been out of service for almost 4 years, was in use this summer.

E) The dock at Big Crystal, which allows access to the floating dock, has been completed and is functional. Presently working on permit through FWS for elimination of weeds and grass in section of waterfront. Determined too big of a job to do by hand.

F) Waiting on estimates on computers and rugged golf carts.

## PERSONNEL

A) Staffing issues from summer. Communicated with the Personnel Committee and the Executive Presbyter regarding personnel issues during the summer

B) Annual Review and Compliance with American Camp Association (ACA) completed and approved on-line.

ACA visits were conducted at Magicamps July 27 and Florida Diabetes Camp on August 3.

Camp Montgomery will be host site for Southeastern Kitchen Convergence ACA event on November 15 and 16, 2016.

C) Camp Montgomery was contacted by Susan Worbler, regarding Camp Abilities group and article in upcoming Presbyterians Today publication.

## PLANNING AND VISIONING

A final report has been received and vetted by Montgomery Executive Operating Board and working on marketing presentation for use throughout the Presbytery and region.

Budget work began in June and draft asking budget was presented.

## **THE VISIONING OF MONTGOMERY CENTER**

**A Note to the Reader:** This two-page document is a summary of approximately 1200 hours of work, 1500 pages of documents, charts, graphs, reports, and e-mails by the Montgomery staff, the Montgomery Board, the Vision Team, our consultant, Run River, and other people who were peripherally involved with the task of producing a strategic master plan or “Vision for Montgomery Center.” The Board members of Montgomery Center extend heartfelt thanks to St. Augustine Presbytery, all persons who contributed to the Visioning of Montgomery Center, and of course to our Loving God in Jesus Christ.

**Genesis:** At St. Augustine Presbytery’s Fall meeting in 2015, the body voted to approve a \$30,000 expenditure to hire a consultant to assist the Montgomery Board in developing a strategic plan for the future of Montgomery Center. After reviewing the qualifications of three consultants, the Montgomery Board hired Run River Consultants of Tully New York to assist us in producing a strategic or master plan, hereafter called the Vision. Run River had previously completed over 100 strategic plans for Christian camps.

**The Process:** Simultaneous with the search for a consultant, the Presbytery put a call out for members who were willing to serve on the Vision Team. In the end, 12 members of Presbytery participated on the Vision Team, each of whom are named in the final report. Eight members of this Team are or were members of the Montgomery Board. The Vision Team and the consultant’s team, which numbered four persons with expertise in finance, camp management, architecture and maintenance, were assembled at four weekend meetings (Friday evenings through Saturday afternoon) beginning in December 2015 and ending in May 2016. Each meeting began and ended with scripture, a hymn, an appropriate litany, and prayer. Through the conversations, controversies, prayers, discussions, witness of others and guided by our consultant, a draft Vision report was issued to the Montgomery Board in July. The Board made comments and edits to the report, and the final edited report was issued in July and approved by the Montgomery Board at its conference call meeting on September 20. Copies of the final report were distributed to the Presbytery Trustees, the Council and staff.

**Foci of Discernment:** In the development of the final Vision, through the weekend meetings, e-mail and phone conversations, our consultant led us through a number of critical subject areas that included Mission and Identity and its use in the camp, Organizational Capacity, Board Responsibilities, Increasing Resources, Training, and Accountability. We explored programing to include discussions and analyses of the Summer Camp, church and outside guest groups, new partnerships with other organizations, expanding current and new programs, and guest retention. We discussed Resource Development, Donor Support and Fund Raising Campaigns, and Expanding Volunteerism. Under “Operations” we analyzed Data Evaluation systems, Cost Containment, reducing financial dependence on Presbytery, Current Finances, and understanding the most Critical Aspects (priorities) for staff and Board oversight. Last but not least, we looked in depth and critically at the Site and Facilities with regard to clean-up, needed renovations, and developed a master plan for new facilities and programs for the future.

**Strategic Discernment and Decisions:** Aside from the detailed operational decisions that underlie the above mentioned foci, several key strategic decisions were made in developing the Vision for Montgomery. First, it was decided after serious discussion that Montgomery Center would continue and not, as some argued, that camp be closed and the property sold. That decided, It was further agreed that Montgomery would remain a Mission of St. Augustine Presbytery, as a Christian Camp with Jesus Christ as its head, and a place that welcomes all people. In opposition, it was discussed that the camp move away as an entity of St. Augustine Presbytery and become a secular operation. It was further agreed that the name Montgomery would remain as part of the facility’s name to honor its founders, its history, and the spiritual affinity that so many have for the camp. It was also understood that Montgomery would abandon the words “Conference Center,” as the property is not well suited to accommodate conferences.

**The Vision Realized:** Within the next 20 years, imagine a guest to Montgomery Center, perhaps you or a family member, arriving at Montgomery Center and, as you turn your car off of old Highway 100 through the new welcome arches and onto the paved road, you proceed 50 yards to the Welcome Center on the left. There at check-in, you are welcomed by a host who provides you with your specific program agenda, a map, a written history of Montgomery, a snack bag, and a bottle of water for each one in your party. Depending on your specific program, some guests head to the newly renovated Williams Lodge, which has been reconditioned and up graded with loft family rooms as well a large camper dormitory downstairs. The bathrooms and kitchen and cooking areas are modernized. Other families and individuals head farther down the road to the INN, where hotel style accommodations are ready to serve guests with modern comforts. Other family and groups take up residence in the cabins that have been restored by member churches, while yet another group heads off the grid on dirt roads to camp in the new Yurt Village. All the accommodations are ensconced in the wonderful place called Montgomery with its Spanish Moss hanging off the low slung tree branches that have always added to your love for the place.

Traveling down the road to enjoy dinner in the renovated Dining Hall, you notice the Craft Center (the current maintenance shop) that has been pleasantly decorated on the outside by previous guests and volunteers. The Camp Director's and Associate Director's homes are shielded from sight for privacy by attractive fencing, flowers, and foliage. While dining with your group that evening you find that the food is a balanced excellent meal, and after dinner you and all the others are invited to join a formal welcome and orientation by hosts, the Camp Director, and Board members in the now enclosed and air conditioned Eppert Hall. In Celebration of the first night at camp, all are asked to attend an inspired worship service at the new outdoor pavilion that sits overlooking Crystal Lake.

The next day, and depending on the program that you and your party or family have selected, young people head over to the new Environmental Educational Center for a morning of information presented in a fun way by a qualified environmental scientist. Other young people gather in the new Youth Activity Center for bible study. Families gather in the Family Retreat Area for a family worship time, while others walk the labyrinth. In the afternoon some groups enjoy the new expanded kayaking adventure program off site, while others go swimming, blobbing, do the ropes course or just relax. These and additional new and better developed features at Montgomery Center give the reader an initial idea of the Vision for the future. Welcome to Montgomery Center of 2035!

**Challenges to the Vision:** There are formidable challenges to the Vision for Montgomery Center. The first comes from within, and the Montgomery Board recognizes that the Presbytery Trustees, the Council and the Presbytery must approve what we have envisioned and approved. Anyone who visits the camp sees that the facility is in need of repair and beautification, although the current staff has made great progress with scarce resources. Those who are involved with the property know that maintenance is severely underfunded and understaffed. Many know that Montgomery is burdened with about \$800,000 of debt and has run in the red even after substantial Presbytery funding support. There has been no consistent fund raising done in many years, and staff and Board members are weary. The Montgomery Board is currently struggling to reorganize and begin Fund Raising.