

APPENDIX P

Gainesville Ministry Center Recommendation and Background Information

The Coordinating Council of the Presbytery of St. Augustine has made the following recommendation for consideration at the 2019 Winter Stated Meeting:

Create the “Gainesville Ministry Center” of the Presbytery of St. Augustine at the location that was most recently occupied by the Highlands Presbyterian Church in Gainesville, Florida. This center will specifically include the Gainesville Counseling Center (Rev. Larry Green, Director) as a focus and will also include current and future non-profit tenants including the church tenant known as Enduring Faith Ministries. The property will be conveyed to the Presbytery of St. Augustine, Inc., and the Coordinating Council recommends that presbytery approval include all related legal filings and documents, authorization for the Trustees of the Presbytery of St. Augustine to oversee ownership, approve leasing, and oversee all management issues. The Trustees are authorized to delegate that authority to sub-committee(s) it creates, and the Trustees may incur reasonable and necessary legal fees. The presbytery will review the Gainesville Ministry Center on an annual basis, and it will otherwise relate to the structure of the presbytery through the Relationship Coordination Committee.

History

The Highlands Presbyterian Church of Gainesville, Florida was chartered in the 1960s. Its church property is located at 1001 NE 16th Ave. In 2016, after 63 years of ministry, the congregation asked the presbytery for assistance as it prepared to hold its final worship service. In the Spring of that year, the presbytery appointed an Administrative Commission (AC) to work with the session to review the process and to gain an understanding of various aspects of their ministry and the use of their buildings.

The original AC consisted of Larry Green (Moderator), Steve Crowley, Ruth Elswood, Charles Freeman, and Karen Hardesty. (Since election of these five members, Karen Hardesty resigned, and Ruth Elswood has transferred to another presbytery.)

The final worship service was held on May 16, 2016. The AC assumed “original jurisdiction” of the session and continues to function as the session. In 2016, the main tenants were a school and the Enduring Faith Ministries congregation. The office of the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Network was also housed at the Highlands church property.

The Presbytery Trustees ordered an appraisal of the property, and the AC reported that it anticipated marketing the property for sale. The lease with the school tenant was not further renewed, and it moved out in the Summer of 2017. At the 2017 Winter Stated Meeting, the presbytery concurred with the request the property be sold. The AC continued to manage the property, oversee repairs, interview potential real estate agents, and work with tenants and others who used the building.

During 2018, the Presbyterian Women and others asked that the AC approve a one-year lease with Days for Girls, which it did. Some of the other uses of the property in the past year have been hosting the Community ID Drives for the Humans Rights Coalition of Alachua County, training events for the North Central Florida Family Therapy Alliance, and meeting space for six different non-profits serving East Gainesville. In January, 2018, the presbytery began paying the mortgage payment of \$1051.56 per month and the insurance premiums of \$1635.00 per quarter. (The loan is with the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) and has a balance of \$45,665.66. as of January 23, 2019.) The rent from the church and users pays for the utilities and pest control.

During the time between the 2017 Winter Stated Meeting and the 2018 Winter Stated Meeting, a proposal was raised to use the Highlands property as a new ministry center rather than selling it to a third party. This proposal came from a group of teaching and ruling elders in Gainesville and included the proposal that the lead tenant for the property be the non-profit Gainesville Counseling Center which would have Larry Green as its director. (A summary of the current proposal is included in this document below.)

Beginning late in 2017, proposals including business plans and financial implications were submitted to the Finance Team of the presbytery (and its predecessor), the Trustees, the Strategic Issues Team, and other groups within the presbytery. Letters of support were also provided from the Covenant and Grace churches and eventually from local government representatives.

The Coordinating Council referred the proposal to the Relationship Coordination Committee of the presbytery, which recommended that that the the proposed use of the Highlands church property be approved. The Coordinating Council then referred the matter back out to its committees. The proposal was further developed in response to questions that had been raised. At the January 17, 2019 meeting of the Coordinating Council, recommendations in favor of and opposed to the proposal were presented. The final action of the Coordinating Council was to recommend the proposal to the presbytery at the Winter Stated Meeting.

Proposal

The following details of the proposal come from the Rev. Larry Green, who will be directing the Gainesville Community Counseling Center:

*In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.*

The Gainesville Ministry Center will be a multi-faceted ministry which serves the needs of East Gainesville and brings to life the expressed vision which our brothers and sisters of Highlands have always had for the property.. The GMC will house the Gainesville Community Counseling Center as the primary tenant. The Counseling Center will provide low-cost professional mental health services to economically disadvantaged individuals, families, and couples while also accepting full-rate self-pay and insurance clients. The Counseling Center will employ licensed mental health professionals as well as offer training and supervision to interns. The structure of the building also allows for the Counseling Center to provide group therapy opportunities as well. In addition, the Counseling Center will work with Montgomery Camp and Conference Center to host couples retreats.

The Gainesville Ministry Center will also be a space where other non-profit organizations can rent space and host meetings, events, and training opportunities. Days for Girls and Enduring Faith Ministries will continue to host their ministries at the church. In addition, we will become a central meeting location for the Gainesville Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

NAMI provides training opportunities for mental health professionals as well as for the general public, and will be a wonderful referral source for the Counseling Center. Additional user groups are the North Central Florida Family Therapy Alliance. Momma's Club, the Human Rights Coalition of Alachua County, and local individuals and families.

The vision for the property also includes collaboration with the University of Florida-IFIS-Horticultural Therapy program to create three distinct gardens: the prayer garden, a plant garden, and a vegetable garden. The gardens will be used to serve various populations, such as veterans suffering from PTSD, victims of sexual assault and sexual abuse, at-risk youth, and people who suffer from depression, bipolar, and other mental health issues. The research surrounding the efficacy of horticultural therapy indicates it has significantly positive results. The gardens will become places of spiritual and emotional healing, and possibly even physical healing as we can also incorporate occupational therapy into the overall program. The gardens will be funded through sponsors, donors, and grants.

This ministry also allows us to provide space for developing a 1001 Worshiping Community. Several possibilities exist in this area. There is a possibility of developing a Hispanic ministry with the assistance and guidance of the coach of Nueva Esperanza. The community gardens can become a space for developing a 1001 Community focused on addressing the food desert. The ministry center could develop a 1001 Community based on organizing and managing mission teams. There are PCUSA grants available to do all this and more.

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Financial Implications

The financial implications to the presbytery from the Rev. Larry Green:

2018 expenses for Highlands

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Attorney Fees | \$ 192.50 (one time) | \$ 192.50 |
| Mortgage payment | \$1051.56 (monthly) | \$ 12,618.72 |
| Property Insurance | \$1635.00 (quarterly) | \$ 6,540.00 |
| | | \$19,351.22 |

2019 expenses for Highlands

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Mortgage Payment | \$1051.56 (monthly) | \$12,618.72 |
| Property Insurance | \$1635.00 (quarterly) | \$ 6,540.00 |
| Property Manager | 10% of rent (July-Dec) | \$ 1,080.00 |
| | | \$20,238.72 |

2019 Income from Highlands

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Counseling Center | \$1,800.00 (Aug-Dec) | \$ 7,200.00 |
| Property Insurance | \$1,635.00 (2 quarters) | \$ 3,270.00 |
| | | \$10,470.00 |

2020 expense for Highlands

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Mortgage Payment | \$1,051.56 (monthly) | \$12,618.72 |
| Property Insurance | \$1,635.00 (quarterly) | \$ 6,540.00 |
| Property Manager | 10% of rent | \$ 2,160.00 |
| | | \$21,318.72 |

2020 income from Highlands

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Counseling Center | \$1,800 (Monthly) | \$21,600.00 |
| Property Insurance | \$1,635.00 (quarterly) | \$ 6,540.00 |
| | | \$28,140.00 |

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Concerns and considerations from the Finance Team:

1. Unbudgeted item that will need support from member churches in 2019 and future
2. Opportunity Cost
 - a. Sale of property \$700,000 net of debt repayment
 - b. Annual income generated approx. \$35,000 per year
3. Day to Day and Maintenance Costs (Property inspection 2/5/2019)
 - a. Roof (near end of useful life) repairs needed
 - b. Air Conditioning - 7 of 8 units at end of useful life
 - c. Minor repairs needed including electrical, plumbing
 - d. Ongoing maintenance expenses
4. Unclear property tax exemption status
5. Unclear federal income tax status
6. Property management burdens
7. Major shift in strategic role of Presbytery to active commercial property owner and manager and profound impact of that change