

Cabinet Report to Presbytery
17 September 2016
Emrys Tyler, Cabinet Chair

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: “Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

*Then the word of the LORD came to me: Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.
~ Jeremiah 18:1-6 (NRSV)*

The work of Cabinet reminds me that we are worked and reworked, continually by the Spirit of God. I hope and pray that with every throw of the clay and kick of the wheel we are coming closer to the image of Christ.

Items for Action:

1. The Cabinet recommends adoption of a revised job description for the Treasurer (see [#4A]). This version incorporates changes suggested at the 21 May Assembly meeting.
2. The Cabinet presents a revised Personnel Policy [#4B] for the Presbytery for a first reading and **questions on the floor at this Assembly**; with the intention of **voting on the Policy at our November Assembly**. All former versions of the Personnel Policy have ascribed an essential role to an Executive Presbyter; thus the present revision is necessary to allow for clear policy guidance in the absence of an Executive. The present Policy also amends the use of “minister,” preferring instead “pastor” in order to include a broader range of Elders serving in pastoral roles.
3. On behalf of the Ethiopian Partnership Team, the Cabinet recommends that the Presbytery approve a renewed Partnership Agreement for 2016-2021 [#8A] (to be approved during EPMT report).
4. The Cabinet recommends that the Presbytery endorse the General Assembly Energy Loan Application of United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton, in the amount of \$208,000 for energy efficiency (updated furnace controls, windows, and lighting).
 - a. Cabinet accepted Finance Sub-Committee’s assessment that United Pres has sufficient financial reserves and has planned diligently so as to make this a good and responsible decision.
5. The Cabinet recommends that the Presbytery approve a loan of \$70,000 from the Presbytery’s Revolving Loan Fund to First Presbyterian Church of Johnson City for a term of 5 years at 3.25% interest.
 - a. Finance Sub-Committee assessed that First Pres is in a good financial position, and noted that a recent \$45,000 loan from the Presbytery was faithfully paid off early.
6. The Cabinet recommends that the Presbytery approve the proposal of Valley United Presbyterian Church to: 1) renovate the Waverly building; 2) enter into a mortgage of up to \$500,000 at up to 5% interest (which would be secured by the assets of the congregation); and 3) place the Athens building up for sale.
 - a. Finance Sub-Committee assessed that Valley is in a good financial position and has done diligent planning so as to make this a good and responsible decision.

Items for Report:

1. The Cabinet happily responded to a grant request from First Presbyterian Church of Delhi by granting \$30,000 from Congregational Development Funds toward the construction of the Kirk Thrift Shoppe. This ministry will engage the gifts of that congregation toward serving the poor and suffering in the Delhi community.

2. The Cabinet formed an Administrative Review Team, at the request of the Committee On Ministry, to review the records of Hobart Presbyterian Church, to be completed by the end of September. That deadline was then extended until the end of October.
3. The Cabinet granted the Christian Nurture Team \$4,000 in Cluster Grant money for this year's trip to Presbyterian Youth Triennium.
4. The Cabinet has arranged for changing the instructions to congregations hosting Presbytery Assemblies so that only a light lunch is prepared for 30-40 people. Former instructions called for 70-90 people at Presbytery meals, which has far exceeded the attendance at the last few Assembly lunches.
5. The Christian Nurture Team is taking up the task of refining a Child Protection Policy for the Presbytery. The Cabinet plans to have such a policy ready to present to the September Assembly for reading and comments, then a vote at the November Assembly.
6. The Cabinet decided to have a necrology at the September Assembly (it was omitted at the spring meeting).
7. The Cabinet permitted the Stated Clerk to sign a document of "Pre-Possession," which allows the Guilford Historical Society to occupy the Guilford Center building before all the legal paperwork for the sale is completed.
8. The Finance Sub-Cmte of Cabinet reported that: Mondorf and Fenwick has begun its annual review of the Presbytery's book for 2015; it is reviewing a request from First Pres Johnson City for revolving loan fund monies; it is reviewing United Pres Binghamton's request for a GA energy loan (to which the Presbytery would be a guarantor).
9. A revised Personnel Policy has been drafted and circulated in the presbytery for comment in advance of the September 17th Assembly.
10. The Cabinet appointed Cynthia Walton-Leavitt to serve as Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee of Cabinet from 18 September to 31 December, since Emrys Tyler will be stepping down after the 17 September Assembly.
11. The Cabinet confirmed that Patty Wolff (Presbytery Moderator) will serve as Chair of Cabinet for the remainder of 2016, when Emrys Tyler steps down from that position.
12. The Cabinet referred to Finance Sub-Cmte the request from Valley United Pres to authorize borrowing \$500,000 to complete renovation of its Waverly campus.
13. The Cabinet decided against donating Cabinet funds in memory of deceased relatives of Presbytery members; rather, announcements may be emailed broadly when occasions for memorial donations present themselves.
14. The Cabinet decided on the following dates for 2017 Assemblies:
 - a. March 18th (First Presbyterian Oneonta); May 20th (Owego); Sep 16th (probably Waverly); Nov 18th (location TBD)
15. The Cabinet placed Patty Wolff in oversight of the transfer to NYSEG and phone bills from Guilford Center to the Guilford Historical Society.
16. The Cabinet agreed to pay for Recording Clerk Lynn Shepard's attendance at the Fall Polity Conference.
17. The Cabinet voted to recommend that the Presbytery, at its November Assembly (to coordinate with budget approval), transfer \$40,000 from the Revolving Loan Fund to the Pastoral Care & Support Fund.
18. The Finance Sub-Committee will make some changes to financial reports starting in September 2016, in order to give them greater clarity. It will also present Cash Flow reports beginning in that month.
19. The Cabinet encouraged the Nurture Team to nominate candidates for Synod Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs) at the 17 Sep Assembly.
20. The Cabinet decided to send the Presbytery's Disaster Assistance Fund monies (\$11,000, line 30022) to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, in light of the fact that they were sitting unused in our coffers.
21. The Cabinet approved a schedule of medical benefits for Presbytery employees in 2017, as required by the Board of Pensions, the details as follows:

<i>Benefit</i>	<i>Cost to Presbytery</i>	<i>Cost to Employee</i>
Participation in Pension Plan	\$3,197	\$0
Retirement Savings Plan 403(b)	\$0	Variable
Death & Disability Insurance	\$291	\$0
Medical Options, all PPO		
Member Only	\$10,780	\$0
Member + Spouse	\$12,548	\$1,739
Member + Children	\$11,692	\$904
Member + Family	\$13,196	\$2,308
Dental	\$0	\$1,161
Min Cost of 2017 Package	\$14,268	
Max Cost of 2017 Package	\$16,684	

22. As reflected in the 2017 Proposed Budget, the Cabinet recommends 3% cost-of-living pay increases for the Presbytery Administrative Assistant and the Stated Clerk.
23. The Cabinet approved compensating Emrys Tyler for travel expenses incurred to return to the Presbytery for the September Cabinet meetings and Assembly, in the amount of \$375.
24. The Cabinet received a verbal report from Emrys Tyler on the Residual Roll for First Presbyterian Church of Endicott (dismissed August 2015), and voted to pass on oversight of this roll to Mark Piedmonte.
25. Next Cabinet meeting was set for 12 Oct, 5:30pm, at United Pres Binghamton.