

Forest Meadow Baptist Church Business Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2024

John Shadid called the meeting to order at 12:45 PM. Dennis Reynolds opened with prayer.

(We had lost electrical power during the worship service, so we proceeded with the box lunch and meeting in relative darkness.)

Quorum: We currently have 82 members. A Quorum is 15%, or 12 members. There were 29 members present, meeting the quorum.

Minutes of the December 2023 Business Meeting were presented for approval. They were approved without correction.

Ministry Reports:

1. **Kaleo College Ministry**—Mike Hernandez
Meeting on Saturday nights at the Hernandez home, they have steady attendance, including both students from our church and elsewhere. They have started studying Nehemiah.
2. **Parent's Bible Study (PBS)**—Mike Hernandez. The group is going well, they are faithful in attendance, and there are lots of kids. They just finished studying 2 Corinthians.
3. **Women's Ministry**—Jamie Selleck. The December Women's Christmas event was cancelled due to illness, but they basically moved it to January, combined with the Book Club Discussion. A new book was started in January. Lisa Bell has joined the Leadership Team, there are now six members. They attended the Baptist Convention of NM Women's Ministry Training in February, then met to plan the calendar for the remainder of the year. Future events: continue Book Club, a big fancy Ladies' Tea, Fall Retreat, Operation Christmas Child, Prayer and Fasting Event, and Christmas Party.
4. **Deacon's Benevolence**—one of the Deacons presented.
The fund has a good balance. Let Deacons know if you are aware of a need, inside or outside the church. Funds are provided for specific purposes only. Benevolence is not meant to be continuing support. Deacons discuss needs as a group, decide on actions to be taken, and if needed will provide or refer for counseling.
5. **Vacation Bible School (VBS)**—Alex McKee. This summer's date is June 17-21. It will be a farm theme, called "Let's Dig In." Jamie Selleck asked if the SummerFest event which is the next day, June 22, could be an outreach to VBS families who are not churching.
6. **Sunday School**—Isaac Parks. The program is going very well, we have great teachers. Volunteer helpers are always appreciated. The goal is still to have two teachers for every class, to provide both accountability and backup for absences. We use the Lifeway Gospel Project materials. July 7th will be promotion Sunday when children advance to the next age group when they are qualified. The "Goodbye Sunday" will be the prior week. Teachers have been given a book, "The Gospel" by Ray Ortlund, and will meet at the Parks' home to discuss the book and do future planning. Cherie Lucus noted that Promotion Sunday falls on the fourth of July weekend. Isaac said this date is firm due to the start date of the new curriculum.
7. **Children's Ministry**—Rebecca Parks. Pathfinders Store night was a big success, and the kids are even more motivated to learn scripture. They have been studying the Holiness of God, His righteousness, he is jealous, and is free to do as He pleases, but He chose to die on the cross for us. Many kids have been strongly impressed by this message. Enrollment is about 35, but attendance varies week to week. Isaac Parks asked how many parents attend. Rebecca reported that most of the helpers are Mothers of kids attending, and there are several that are new attenders at our church. Some were introduced to FMBC through Pathfinders. They can always use more volunteers, especially people to listen to kids say their Bible verses. Becky Brown mentioned that it would be great to have some men helping, as it sets a great example for the kids.
8. **Music Ministry**—Sam Bell. He is researching in-ear monitors for musicians to use onstage. There is money in the budget for this, and it would be very helpful. If anyone is interested in helping with music for worship, please let Sam know.

9. **Youth Ministry**—Sam Bell. The group is small, max of 7, but going well. They are studying John. They are enthusiastic and ask lots of good questions. He is planning some fun events, trying for once a month. Next bigger event is Sat. June 1, then a couple of lock-ins in August and October.
10. **Missions**—John Shadid. He is planning a summer mission trip in August (dates in first two weeks), probably in Cuahatemoc. Trips are usually six days due to Visa restrictions. If they go to LaMesa clinic in Copper Canyon for outreach, the trip could be longer. Speak to John if you are interested in going. Another Mexico trip is planned for January 2025 for Operation Christmas Child, probably around Jan. 9th. It is short in time, and a 12-hour drive, but very important to support this outreach in various villages.

Attendance Report: We show a steady increase in attendance, the past five weeks have averaged 130. We have added 43 more seats to the Sanctuary. People are encouraged to move in more to leave outside seats for latecomers.

There was no report for Sunday School Attendance.

Finance Report: Bill Miller

Without the ability to show data on the slides, Bill demonstrated our upward trend, with a long pole! We had been close to the projected income line, then we had an upward trend around Christmas, and are currently at \$16K above projections. In addition, our spending has been a bit lower than expected. We are in remarkable financial condition.

Chelsea Hernandez remarked that the offering plates were heavy today with change donated by children, at the encouragement of Rebecca Parks to give toward a special mission offering. We will collect this for several weeks. Today there was \$38 in change!

Virgil Dugan reported that the staff IRA's will become active soon, and participants will receive matching funds from the church. This is intended to be a retirement fund.

An unfortunate error was found in accounting, and Mike Hernandez was paid \$6000 more than budgeted. Kefauver accountants have rectified the error as of Feb. 1. We now have \$6000 overage in payroll. Mike and Chelsea left the room to excuse themselves from the discussion on the resolution of this error. Virgil Dugan noted that when we approve the compensation for Mike it was \$78.4K for the year. Part is taxable income, part is pastoral housing allowance (not taxable, but a reimbursement). The communication with Kefauver was misinterpreted and the total was implemented as taxable. We paid him \$1500 more monthly than we intended, for four months. This error was discovered when the year-end W2's were generated.

This issue was brought before the Elders. Mike was excused from this discussion, and Isaac Parks and John Shadid consulted the Finance Committee. They concluded that they would like to move to increase the FY24 line item for Mike's salary by \$6000 and consider the increase as a performance bonus. Mike has done a fantastic job, we are grateful to the Lord for his service and the increase in people coming to hear the Good News.

Several questions were asked for clarification, and it was confirmed:

- Their monthly compensation will return to what it should have been. They have already paid taxes on this income. They do not need to pay any funds back; it will be considered a bonus. Even with this accounting error, our budget will not suffer. Mike is agreeable with this resolution.

A vote was taken and the motion passed. (A second was not required since it was presented by the Elders.)

Elder Report—John Shadid. The elders have met with several people interested in baptism. We have had four baptisms since the last business meeting. Three people will be presented for membership today, and there are others in process.

The church has ordained 2 Elders and 2 Deacons this year. There is a good timing in the expiration of terms so that they are phased gradually. Mike's term ends in 2024, John's term ends in 2025, and Isaac's term ends in 2026. Each term is three years.

Playground: The Elders have appointed a Playground Committee based on previous recommendations of the Space Utilization Committee. Alexis Lynch is Chair, and members are Greg Brown, Robert Bell, Chad LeMoine, and David Beutler.

Facility Use Request:

The Elders have had a request from Bernalillo County to use the church facilities as a meal site for the Senior meal program. Whispering Pines Senior Center is required to close due to water issues. There was a joint meeting with six representatives from various county and state organizations, with Mike H, Kathy MG, and Jamie Selleck. There were many questions asked.

Our facility wouldn't replace theirs. They have been open 5 days a week, and we could not provide that much access. Our facilities are used more than most of us are aware. They would work around our usage.

Discussion ensued, including various concerns about liability, building code, insurance coverage. The County used our church facilities for this same purpose sometime in the past. We think the past usage was during Bill and Lillian Lincoln's time, about 30+ years ago.

The Elders have consulted our insurance company about the issue. There are ways to deal with coverage, but the County needs to provide their own insurance coverage as well.

The County officials are not being demanding but want to find out if we can accommodate even part of their existing program. It would involve serving lunch, delivered by the County (not prepared onsite), plus some extra socialization time. There is potential for outreach here, and interested members of our body could participate with them. Currently they have about 7 regular attenders.

No decision was proposed. We are asked to pray about this, to determine God's will for such a ministry. It could be beneficial and create opportunities for outreach. The Elders want the congregation's input, and ultimate support if it is proposed that we move forward.

Old business:

Mike reported that progress has been made on the drinking water situation. Allen Lucus and several others have helped to resolve the water nitrate. In the Fellowship Hall kitchen, use the small spigot for Reverse Osmosis water for drinking water and coffee pots.

New business:

1. **Membership:** The Elders presented three people for membership, following discussion with these individuals.

Allen Lucus has presented himself for membership. He was accepted by acclamation.

Michael and Carrie Fraim – transferred from Rio Rancho First Baptist. They were accepted by acclamation.

2. Playground Committee Report.

Mike: The Playground Committee was spawned by the Space Utilization Committee. We need to replace dead/dying/decaying equipment.

They are considering Costs/Timeline/other parameters, considering all options. Playground equipment is very expensive. John, Mike & Isaac also helped find low/med/high price options. The mean of the low is about \$23K. Medium is about \$38K, high is about \$56K.

We would like for such expenditures to be able to be used for outreach, to bless our community, and build relationships.

John S added that part of our budget overage from last year was set aside for this use, about \$28K. People could add to this if we started a special fund. The goal should be to minister to the kids/parents of the church, and to reach out to others in the community.

Much discussion ensued. Some clarifications included:

Cost estimates include installation. Maybe we could do some of the installation.

Existing equipment that was dangerous has been torn down and removed. It is a potential to move the location of the playground. We would plan to install security cameras, better fencing and gates. Possibly make the playground accessible to the public during the week in daytime hours. It could be a ministry to the community. We need to seek wisdom and pray before any decisions are made. Please bring comments/questions/concerns to Elders or the Playground Committee.

Alex McKee closed the meeting in prayer at 2:16 pm.