

Special Congregational Meeting

January 22, 2023

To consider the purchase of a Solar Panel System

The meeting was called to order at 11:20 by Council President Scott Potts. He then informed all present that there can be no modifications made to the Proposal. There were three vote choices: yes, no, or abstain.

Pastor Kelli led us in opening prayer for guidance, wisdom and community with one another.

Scott then made introductions of other meeting leaders: Jane Cahill Wolgram, Parliamentarian/facilitator; Pastor Kelli, Facebook live; Sarah Schutt, Moderator; Ryan Harkens, Solar Implementation and Design

Scott Potts then thanked the two task forces for all their work of gathering information and putting together this Proposal for a solar panel system. The task forces were Solar Research and Solar Implementation.

Sarah Schutt then laid out the ground rules for the meeting. 1) All will use the microphone, 2) When you want to be recognized, raise a white card, 3) comments are limited to two minutes, 4) formal presentation will be on video screens, 5) vote will be by confidential paper ballot

Sarah Schutt went over the scope of the project indicating we are called to care for God's Creation and one way is to reduce our carbon footprint. The project will also provide energy costs savings for MLC. She also explained that MLC has a dedicated bequest and other pledges. There is a Solar Panel grant from Solar for Good along with a Focus on Energy Rebate and an Inflation Reduction Act Direct Payment available.

Following is Proposed System and Anticipated Results:

- 57 panel (30.78 kW) Solar System
- 50-kW Inverter
- Synergy Renewables preferred vendor
- Utility savings of over \$4400/yr.
- Eliminate 60,000 lbs/yr of CO2 emission
- Est. \$200/yr maintenance cost
- Est. \$520/yr additional insurance cost

The specific Costs and Funding:

COSTS

Solar Panel System	\$ 82,000
Roof re-shingle	\$ 14,012
Roof contingency (10%)	\$ 1,401

Other costs (inverter warranty, insurance) \$ 1,170
Total Cost \$ 98,583

FUNDING

Bequests and gifts on hand	\$ 82,520
Solar For Good grant	\$ 10,000
Sub-Total Funds Available	\$ 92,520
Temporary Funding – MLC Reserves	\$ 6,063
Focus on Energy Rebate (2-3 months)	\$ 4,348
[Remaining Funding Gap	\$ 1,715]
Anticipated Inflation Reduction Act Payment (2024)	\$ 20,296
Total Project Funding	\$117,164
Project Net	\$ 18,851

Questions from Congregation:

From last week's listening session, a question was asked about the ability to expand the system. Answer by Ryan Harkens: Yes, we can double the system with the Inverter quoted.

Another question was about the financial health of our congregation and funding for the proposal. Answer: There will be No fundraising at this time.

Question: Is this the right thing to do right now given that there are other property needs? Answer: Yes, it is important to remember we are not being asked to choose. The funds available are dedicated for solar only.

Question: What kind of maintenance and damage should we expect. Answer: Ryan explained he has not seen damage to panels by hail because of their integrity. Also we have a 25 yr warranty. Ryan does not feel their will be any maintenance necessary.

Question: What is the rush? The Task Forces have done a lot of work gathering all the information and putting together this proposal. We are locked in on the roof reshingle quotes. We have available funding and some of the rebates and grants will expire at the end of May. We know what is available now. The costs can and probably will go up.

MOTION to the congregation: To proceed with the purchase of the Solar Panel System as outlined by the Solar Implementation Task Force and endorsed by the MLC Council.

Jeff Gehrke moved the motion. John Booske seconded the motion.

Further comments: Gary Toboyek commented on the other energy needs in the MLC facilities.

Jane Licht acknowledged the work on the Task Forces and commented that the idea originated with the Care of Creation committee.

Ernie Theiding asked if the roof could handle any future add-on panels. Ryan Harkins replied some additional panels can also be placed on other areas of the roof.

Jessica Schuster asked if the quote was a fixed amount given today's supply chain issues. Ryan stated that the panels are actually in Deerfield, Wis.

Gary Toboyek asked for a verification of the roof reshingle quote. Ron Vandeberg verified the quote

Kathy Buechel asked about the life expectancy of the panels. Ryan Harkins explained the panels will not degrade for 25 years. The proposal includes an additional warranty extension to 25 years for the Inverter.

Sharon Mylrea explained the voting procedure of Yes, No, or Abstain. Paper ballots were handed out.

While the Pastors counted the ballots, Sharon handed out a brief questionnaire for everyone to fill out.

Scott Potts reported the voting results: 73 yes; 7 no; 4 abstain. Of a possible 86 votes, 84 were cast.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jeff Gehrke; seconded by Linda Swenson

Pastor Naomi led us in closing prayer which included the Prayer of the Day from our morning services.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Porter-Quam