



MEMORANDUM

To: Town Council

From: Matthew Sturgis, Town Manager
Kathy Raftice, Director of Community Services & Fort Williams Park
Debra Lane, Town Clerk

Re: Spurwink Church – Announcement of New Reservation Process and Church Greeter

Date: February 1, 2022

For years, the Town of Cape Elizabeth has been fortunate to have Church Greeters represent the Town in accepting reservations, fielding questions and attending events (primarily weddings) at the Spurwink Church. In most recent years, Janet Hannigan, Theresa Hannigan and Becky Malley kept a watchful eye on the church, taking pride in their work, and personal interest as if the church were their own.

At the beginning of last season, Church Greeter Becky Malley announced 2021 would be her last season. Following the announcement, the Town reviewed current procedures for the administration of the Spurwink Church, keeping in mind ways to streamline the rental process.

We are pleased to announce that Community Services will now accept reservations for the Spurwink Church. With the function of accepting reservations and payments already in place for other town-owned facilities, it makes sense to incorporate the administration of the church within Community Services. Renters will obtain church information from the town's website and by calling Community Services during office hours. Reservations and payment options similar to those already available for other programming will now be available. The town's website will be updated to reflect the changes along with more information including pictures of the inside of the church.

To ensure continuity and the availability of staff at functions, seeking a Church Greeter was preferred in lieu of scheduling a supervisor within the rotation of staffing other events.

We are pleased to announce that Patricia Rzeszutko, 6 Waumbek Road has agreed to serve as Church Greeter. We are confident Tish will carry on the tradition of caring for the church and representing the Town very well. Community Services will coordinate the schedule of events with Tish. She is excited about the opportunity and we thank her for agreeing to serve.

Amendments to the Provisions for Use of the Spurwink Church is before the town council for consideration. Suggested amendments are to reflect the new protocols.

Draft Motion:

ORDERED, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council approves the amendments to the Provisions of Use of the Spurwink Church, draft dated February 1, 2022, to reflect changes in the administration of reservation procedures, and responsibilities of the Church Greeter.

From time to time, the town council asks about the use of the Spurwink Church. The events remain primarily weddings and memorial services/funerals. The church is seasonal, without inside restroom facilities or a reception space, located on a sharp curve with parking across the street.

The number of events began to drop approximately 15 years ago. Couples began holding ceremonies and receptions in non-traditional settings such as barns, along the water's edge, country clubs and hotels. A shared ceremony/reception venue is popular, however not possible at the Spurwink Church.

Years	Average # of Events
1997 - 2002	54
2003 - 2008	33
2010 - 2016	19
2017 - 2019	9
2020	2 (Covid)
2021	5 (Covid)

Closed for renovations 2019. Missing statistics for 2013.

Postponed or canceled ceremonies in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 were no surprise. It is unknown what the level of interest will be for the church or wedding ceremony trends post-pandemic. We will continue to monitor the activity of the Spurwink Church and suggest changes as needed.

Thank you very much.