

Episcopal Diocese of Maine - Diocesan Council Minutes

June 9 and 10, 2016

Maine Seacoast Mission and St. Saviour's, Bar Harbor

Council informally convened for dinner at the Maine Seacoast Mission headquarters. Dinner was graciously provided by St. Saviour's. After dinner Maine Seacoast Mission Director, the Rev. Scott Planting, offered an overview of the history and ministry of this 110 year-old organization.

After dinner Bishop Stephen Lane initiated a lively discussion based on book, *Reconciling All Things*.

The Rev. Nancy Moore led Compline on the lawn.

Present: Elizabeth Phipps, Gail Chandler, Rita Steadman, Nancy Moore, Joseph Riddick, Tim Fleck, Liz Graves, Peter Bickford, Nina Pooley, Dick Rozene, Craig Hacker, Kim Wallace, Fred Fowler, Betsy York, Kevin Kinsey, Corey Walmer, Jane Schroeder, Bishop Stephen Lane.

Excused: John Balicki, Paul Beaudette, Laura Peckham, Lael Sorensen, Mark Spahr

Staff: Terry Reimer, Michael Ambler, Jane Hartwell, Heidi Shott

Diocesan Council members expressed their gratitude for morning hospitality and lunch provided by the Rev. Tim Fleck and members of St. Saviour's.

At 9 a.m. Bishop Lane opened the meeting with morning devotions.

At 9:16 Bishop Lane called to order Maine Episcopal Missionary Society Annual Meeting

Rozene moved and Pooley seconded the following: *Michael Ambler, Jane Hartwell, Stephen Lane, and Heidi Shott are authorized to sign checks on the Central Diocesan Fund account.*

Approved.

Moved and seconded to adjourn the Annual Meeting at 9:18 a.m. Approved.

Motion to accept minutes of the 5 March 2016 meeting approved.

Finance Committee report:

First Quarter 2016 Financials - Treasurer Rozene presented.

He offered his concern about late assessments. At the end of the third quarter, 13 congregations were one or two months in arrears; two congos in arrears for three or more months. By end of May, three were in arrears, including Saco and Lisbon.

Lisbon's situation, because they have not fulfilled their assessment in 2015, will have implications for their participation of lay delegates at Convention 2016.

Deer Isle (three months). They have requested a reduction in their assessment for the rest of the year. As much as half of their pledges for 2016 will not be fulfilled due to entrenched conflict in the parish. Bishop Lane stated that he does not think there is enough good will between the two factions to reconcile. Ambler states some people have left the congregation and are unlikely to return. Both are encouraged that those in leadership positions want to be in relationship with the diocese rather than ignore the situation. Reimer gave an overview of how we have dealt with congregations in similar circumstances in the past. Because they have paid their full assessment for 2015, their lay delegates are eligible to participate in the 2016 convention.

Bishop Lane suggested an investigation and to see how things go in the summer, generally their busiest time. Consensus of Council is to communicate with financial leadership and observe/evaluate over the summer, rather than turn down their request out of hand. Reimer, Pooley, and Rozene will be in touch prior to Ambler's visit in a few weeks.

Moved and seconded to approve quarterly report.

Approved

ECW funds - Chair Pooley

Finance Committee looked at this fund and the stipulations for using them based on Reimer's research.

The Diocesan Finance Committee moved that account 163103 combine Class 08 Sub Funds to form a new account to be managed by the trustees with the proviso that \$5000 be transferred to the Wolf Fund to be made available for lay education in support of congregations, with a particular focus on women's ministry and issues. Income from the endowment should be transferred to the Wolf Fund on an annual basis for the above purpose, subject to review of Diocesan Council.

Approved

Munjoy Hill fund - Chair Pooley

Finance Committee looked at this fund and what the stipulations are for using them based on Reimer's research.

The Diocesan Finance Committee moved that account 163100 be rolled into the endowed fund of St. Stephen's Dalton Memorial Class 07 Sub Fund 1440, and that income from this endowment be used for St. Elizabeth's Jubilee Center until such time as Diocesan Council decides otherwise.

Approved

2017 Budget calendar:

Strategic Mission Support application is out. Deadline: July 15
Mission Priorities (Programs) application is out: Deadline July 15.
Budget meeting on August 30

2017 Income estimates:

Background: Parochial Report follow up work, NOI trending up last two years, and fewer parishes having to make up prior year assessments.

Estimates for 2017 income are based on proposed assessment and estimated gifts from summer chapels, prior year assessments, and misc. income (fees Trustees pay for diocesan staff services).

For 2017 the relatively conservative numbers of 2016 will be used as the basis for budget planning:

- 170400 - Summer Chapels \$25,000
- 170101 - Prior Year Assessments \$30,000
- 170500 - Miscellaneous Income (Trustees' staff) \$25,000

Proposed Assessment Rate Step Down - Chair Pooley

The Diocesan Finance Committee moved that the assessment rate be set at of 15.0% for 2017 and hold that rate steady for 2018, matching the National Church ask.

Discussion ensued and it was clear that the rationale and the relationship between the drop in rate by the Episcopal Church must be communicated clearly to the people of the diocese prior to Convention in October.

Approved.

New Initiative Second round of granting

Council agreed to use the same process as first round with a deadline of August 15

Jubilee Centers Report - Bishop Lane and Council Reps (Wallace/Schroeder)

On May 20, Bishop Stephen Lane, Diocesan Council members Jane Schroeder and Kim Wallace, and Canon for Advocacy Heidi Shott met at Loring House with four representatives of Jubilee Centers in the Diocese of Maine:

The Subcommittee moved:

1. *Jubilee Centers do not need to follow Mission Priorities budget guidelines to submit a budget request. They already fulfill the Seven Criteria for Mission by virtue of their mission.*
2. *\$10,000 should be allocated in the 2017 diocesan budget for Jubilee Centers to draw upon. Being included in the budget indicates that the diocese is committed to Jubilee ministry. The Finance Committee will recommend to Council a process by which the funds will be disbursed.*
3. *Encourage members of our churches to companion with one of the Jubilee Centers (if it doesn't already): take a field trip, volunteer, make additional donations of goods and services.*

Approved.

Moved and seconded: *That the Bishop's Office will inform congregations that the Jubilee Center designation is available for ministries in the diocese, outline the applications process and share the benefits of becoming one.*

Approved.

Rozene reminded members that at the 2016 convention \$5,000 was approved for the Jubilee Centers and that Council is yet to designate that funding. Finance Committee will make a proposal to Diocesan Council at its September meeting.

Diocese of Maine Bicentennial Committee (2020)

Council discussed the opportunities for celebrating the bicentennial:

Steadman - opportunity for spiritual renewal

Fleck - possibility of a Jubilee Year

Bishop - bishop election in the offing, great chance for a conversation about where we're going, invite Presiding Bishop

Graves - offered to work on a publication

Bishop Lane proposed pulling together an eclectic group to investigate and develop a plan to celebrate. Bickford suggested a member of Council be a member of that group.

Consensus on moving forward.

2016 Convention Outline

Convention Committee is working on the 2016 Convention and, at the Bishop's direction, looking to future conventions. The seven year cycle proposed by the Convention Planning Task Force in 2009 will come to an end with the 2016 convention.

One Day Convention - USM, Portland, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (possibly 4 p.m.) Saturday, October 22, 2016.

There are only six things required by Canon that Convention must do.

- Elections for diocesan office
- Adoption of a diocesan budget and assessment rates
- The Bishop's annual report
- Constitution and canonical changes, when appropriate
- Reception or dissolution of parishes and missions in union with the diocese, when appropriate
- Consideration of resolution by delegates (permitted by the right of delegates to address the Convention under Robert's Rules.

Elections

Secretary

Treasurer

Standing Committee Lay and Clergy

General Convention Delegates and Alternates

Provincial Synod

Diocesan Council-Lay Members

Assistant Secretary (appointed by Bishop)

Trustee

Pre-Convention Hearings Process

Proposal from Bishop Lane. This is the second time in two years Council has taken up the way the pre-Convention meetings function.

Discussion ensued about how best to share the meetings and the possibility of using ballots for elections at Convention. Question of having nominations of the floor.

The following proposal was moved and seconded:

1. *That there be two or three regional Pre-Convention meetings: one in the greater Portland area, one in the greater Bangor area, and one other, if desired. An effort to fully staff these meetings will be made. Interested Convention delegates may attend the most convenient meeting.*
2. *That the first of these meetings will be fully videorecorded, and the recording made available online for viewing at any time by Convention delegates and anyone else.*
3. *That the current practice of nominating Area representatives by nomination forms that anyone may submit be continued, but that the deadline be changed so that these nominations be circulated with the Convention materials.*

4. *That elections for Area representatives take place at brief Area Caucus meetings held during the Diocesan Convention.*

Hacker called the question.

Approved.

Bishop's Report -

Bishop Lane turned the conversation over to Ambler to talk about the Missional Network - Living Local/Joining God initiative.

Joining East Tennessee, Southwestern Virginia, and Connecticut in a series of experiments in each diocese that will allow each diocese to learn from all efforts.

Ambler outlined the purpose: A subversive undertaking. The age of experts is over. It is a commitment to try a series of experiments. No canned, definitive program. We will learn from what we tried and then try more new stuff. Try to make friends with people in your neighborhood. Try to get reconnected with those around us.

An event in Gardiner was held on May 21 to roll out the Living Local/Joining God. As many congregations as would like to may participate are invited to engage in the fall experiment. From there a smaller number of congregations will commit to doing a series of experiments over the next 18 months.

Hartwell emphasized the relationship-building among people from other congregations that is built into the experiment. As a group, people will learn to process and discern.

Both the words *experiment* and *neighborhood* might be replaced by words that work better in Maine.

Bishop Lane -

Cathedral and Loring House progress. Entire east wall of the Cathedral is repointed and stabilized. Current work involves rebuilding buttress and rosette of the rose window. The project is on schedule to be completed on time. When it is completed, the Cathedral will assess how of the capital campaign funding much is left over to do other priorities.

Loring House - Most of windows have been removed and staff huddled behind plywood or plastic. Windows are in good shape, frames are not. Work is well along. Repointing is well underway. Reapplying mortar. Starting on the roof next week. Anticipating most of the work by the end of the summer.

Bishopswood - Very pleased that Bishopswood will open on time and the new system will be fully functional. Low flow showers and toilets are being installed this week. The final cost of the

project was \$260,000, significantly more than the original estimate. A beneficial byproduct of the project is that, in the effort of investigating the finances, Bishopswood has a good amount of underutilized financial resources.

Province I news and updates

Province 1 is one of the few (of the nine) provinces that still has a paid director. The Episcopal Church through an Executive Council task force is investigating the future of the provincial structure. Seven dioceses in New England have decided not to cut funding through 2018.

Networks are no longer based by province, e.g. Bishops United Against Gun Violence and the Connecticut River tour. The dioceses across New England are cooperating in many ways.

Trustees - Among the Trustees the conversation about “socially responsible investing” aka “sustainable investing” has continued since the Convention of 2014. Bishop Lane is very pleased that the trustees have been galvanised to continue substantive conversation on the topic. More to come.

New Deacon Formation Program -

Under leadership of the Rev. Lynne Orville - though slowed down by serious illness - the new program will pick up in September. The new process is highly structured with an increased amount of reading and writing. It is still a two year program but considerably more demanding. The move to quarterly meetings from monthly is meant to make it easier for people with families to participate.

News around the Diocese

Joseph Riddick reported on the latest positive development St. Mark's, Augusta, regarding property and legal issues related to St. Mark's Home.

Nina Pooley reported that she attended a conference for women who are leaders in the Episcopal Church. Bishop Lane was acknowledged as one of three supporters of the conference.

Moved, seconded, and approved to adjourn at 2:30 p.m.