

Minutes of the Standing Committee of Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Date: March 3rd, 2022 at 6:00pm
Meeting held on ZOOM

Present: Mr. Michael Davis, Mr. Joseph DaBoll-Lavoie, The Very Rev's Leslie Burkardt, Ruth Ferguson, Kenneth Pepin; Mr. Floyd Bayley, The Rt. Rev Steve Lane

Absent : Mr. Jeremy Cooney; The Rev. Nita Byrd;

A heartfelt **opening prayer** was offered by Floyd

Each of us **shared** what we have been up to in the last month since we met.

We **consented** (by all members present) to the election of the Bishop of Ecuador after a brief conversation about its somewhat chaotic history and our wanting to support **efforts** toward progress.

We **consented** with one abstention to the election of the Bishop of Springfield IL, citing that the nature of the diocese of Illinois is a bit more conservative than Rochester but there were some concerns around the new bishop's views on LGBTQ+ communities. We were encouraged that the new bishop intends to support the teaching and discipline of the Episcopal church with regard to women's ordination etc..

Previous minutes were tabled as some members felt they needed to see them on the computer screen. Given this was not immediately ready to be transacted we tabled them until next month, with the added conclusion that in the future they should be available on screen for a vote of approval.

Bishop Steve brought us up to date on some pastoral concerns of our diocese. He focused a bit on his time listening to members of the diocese and is experiencing what he called the "firehose stage" of transition. He pointed out a need for healing among the diocese as there remains a mixed bag of feelings around the Bishop Singh's episcopate that we need to pay attention to going forward.

He feels that the diocesan staff are healthy and spoke that Sarah Herzog would serve as administrative assistant to the bishop.

We discussed the present model of **diocesan deans** and its structure within the diocese and some of the issues he is encountering in his efforts to bring more cohesion. He felt that it is certainly not an opportune time to restructure at this time but is working on bringing the deans together for a conversation.

He is working on a **Video Series** on the theme of Lent. Hoping this will be a good resource for the diocese.

He is in the process of putting together a **Day of Refreshment with clergy and also a Renewal of Ordination Vows** on April 5th.

He spoke of the Boiler Plate process we have concerning our **Necrology** which for some appears as divisive in it favoring some over others. He reminded us that the only way it works is someone needs to notify the office of a death in the diocese for this to be sent out. And some choose not to have the diocese informed.

The bishop will be traveling to the Province II meeting and the **House of Bishops in Texas**. Conversation pursued as to how he will be contacted while he is away. He will have Sarah be his point person and will communicate through her to the district deans if any pastoral needs arise while he is absent.

Bishop Steve then led us through a well constructed **PowerPoint Presentation** that included a phased process of Episcopal Transition.

His presentation outlined the steps and gave us a general scope of what is before us and how we might approach it as well as a timeline for the various stages to be accomplished.

Michael as chair asked Leslie to get the ball rolling by contacting Bishop Ousley in order to get us a copy of the **MANUAL** and to find us a consultant to lead us in this process. We discussed further ways we might begin to tackle this as a committee agreeing to give it a little time and prayer to see who or what dyad might take on the task of being the Standing Committee's point person(s). The bishop mentioned that the diocesan office could serve our administrative needs as hiring out would be too costly and not necessary. It was mentioned that we really need to pull together as a group and really begin to call each other to accountability as our task as a committee is moving into more Herculean territory. Michael agreed to talk with some of our missing members.

Roch Whitman is scheduled to be interviewed for candidacy at our next meeting on March 23rd. Michael and Sarah will coordinate what is needed for this and some of us clergy who have been through the process will explore appropriate questions. The bishop was very helpful in clarifying the distinctive roles of COM and SC with regards to someone in the process. In simple terms COM 's job is to help to prepare someone in the process while SC is interested in finding impediments or clearing someone to ordination.

St Peter's in Geneva proposal was tabled for lack of information and direction. .
Michael will reach out to Todd. It was suggested when we do vote on this proposal that we have our chancellor Paul Greene to guide us through this process.

Another question surfaced about the **Viability of the Diocese to hire a bishop**. We are viable but the bishop reflected on the dichotomy of resources clerical and otherwise between the Southern tier and the Northern portion of our diocese. We also might consider a sharing of clerical resources between ourselves and Central New York.

Words like informative, overwhelming, inspirational, deep dig, grateful summarized our feelings of how the meeting went.

Ruth closed with a **moving prayer**.

Our next meeting will be **March 23rd at 6pm via zoom**.

Thanks, your more or less humble servant Ken.