

Minutes of the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester
Zoom Meeting 6:30 – 8:30 pm
May 24, 2023

Present: Mr. Floyd Bayley, the Rev. Nita Byrd, Mr. Jeremy Cooney, Mr. Michael Davis, the Rt Rev Stephen Lane, the Rev. Cam Miller, the Rev. Ken Pepin, Ms. Elizabeth Salamone

Absent: the Rev. Ruth Ferguson

OPENING PRAYER: Cam Miller led us in prayer.

READING OF COVENANTAL PRACTICES AND ROUND ROBIN: The group took turns reading a portion of the covenantal practices, then went around sharing what's happening in their lives.

TODD RUBIANO AND ASCENSION DISCUSSION:

- Fr. Abi John, Chris Haller, Dyson Gay attended from Ascension
- Requesting \$50,000 10 year plan at 4.5%, \$518/month with right to prepay in case of windfall in order to make money available for others through Sibley revolving fund.
- Sibley fund is a restricted fund meant for construction/repair/capital improvements. Todd noted that there are no prepayment penalties and only modest demand in the past 5 years. Bishop Lane noted that the fund currently has some margin so the Ascension request will not deplete it.
- Ascension has had some unusual infrastructure issues and needs which have required attention. They are projecting a continued deficit over the next several years, but with Fr. Abi's leadership are hopeful that these investments will pay off in the future. Their refugee ministry is of particular note and they have had more baptisms recently than in past years. They are committed to their community and their building.
- The Standing Committee will discuss further in order to make an informed decision.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Led by Liz; Michael motioned, Jeremy consented.

CONSENT DISCUSSION:

- Update on Florida's Process: A few groups want to have SC reconsider their vote.
- Bishop Lane recommendation: Michael Hunn, Diocese of New Mexico presentation in "The Living Church" talks about consent procedures. Look for it on Facebook.

BISHOP'S REPORT

- Two deaths in diocese - Rev. John Kevern, Rev. Sandra Arrington.
- Rev. Ruth Ferguson is on sabbatical
- Christ Church Pittsford: Wonderful sendoff for Rev. Ron Young, with thanks to Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith for being present. Rev. Julianne Buenting will start as interim rector on July 1.
- Rector interviews in Gates and St. John's Honeoye Falls, 4-5 applicants each
- Council Workday was productive. Changes are coming in the diocese budget; everyone should look at the draft budget. Budget review meeting 5/31. Cap on congregational development grants coming. Half time regional minister is included in the budget to allow viable operations in communities where there's no possibility of calling a rector (e.g. corners of the diocese).
- PPP money may have disguised decreases in stewardship, which started showing up last fall.
- Pro bono research project (John Taylor, St. John's Canandaigua) - Harvard didn't accept his proposal. Harvard apparently really wanted CEOs. John has applied for other programs so hopefully the data gathering will commence in September with a different program.
- NYS Council of Churches asked us to sign on to legislation which called for clergy as mandated reporters. We have already taken that step decades ago so we support it. Clergy and Standing Committee members can sign it.
- Delegates voted by a slim margin to hold an online convention on October 28. The electing convention will be in person, probably at Hobart on 2/24/24. A third party auditor will certify ballots. Two resolutions will be introduced for the fall convention.

DISCERNMENT AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:

- Ken is sharing the reports as they come out. He attended the session at St. Paul's and was impressed by how well Columba S., Val J., and Julie G. presented and answered questions.
- Cam attended the first session and said that participants were forthright and facilitators did a great job.

FOCUS GROUP REPORTS:

- Liz: 5 lay and 3 clergy have applied so far for the Transition Committee so far. Deadline is 5/31. Could use a few more people. Ken has a list from Troy that he would like to contact. Bishop Lane would like to follow up with some of the rectors. Bishop Lane reiterated that we need people good with planning, are organized, and have liturgy skills who can commit to fall 2023 - summer 2024.
- Cam: No progress in their focus group (write the charge for the Transition Committee).

CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON SC LIAISON ROLE UNTIL THE NEW ELECTION

Ken is willing to stay on as liaison if needed after the next president is elected, to provide continuity throughout the process. Cam suggested revisiting next month.

UPDATE ON TRANSITION APPLICATION AND CALENDAR WORK

We need to decide who's going to be on the transition committee in the next couple of weeks after the application closes on 5/31. We will need to meet to get a slate together in early June (working on a meeting date) and invite the transition committee to meet with Gary. Ken will work with Kristy on logistics details. Looking for about 8 people with 50% lay/50% clergy mix.

Ken and Floyd will work together on a salary recommendation for the new bishop.

HOW DID THE MEETING GO? The Standing Committee commented on the productivity of the meeting and the need for more discussion and reflection on the Ascension request.

CLOSING PRAYER: [Nita Byrd](#) led us in prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.