

Episcopal Diocese of Montana
Minutes of Diocesan Council Zoom Media Meeting
August 20, 2022

The Diocesan Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Montana held a video meeting via Zoom Media, beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 20, 2022.

Attendance. Council members present were The Rt. Rev. Marty Stebbins, The Rev. Stephen Day, Keith Kuhn, The Rev. Mary Alice Jones, Jean Buer-Mott, The Rev. Heidi Jones-Magee, Rick Harden, Leo Schuman, Hope Stockwell, The Very Rev. Scott Anderson and The Rev. Randy Pendergraft. Council members Hank Tuell and The Rev. Jaime Leonard were absent. Also in attendance were Mark Dvarishkis, Diocesan Treasurer; Barb Hagen, Canon for Administration and Finance; and Gayle Gallik Archey. Council members welcomed The Rev. Canon Mikayla Dunfee to the meeting, who is the Canon to the Ordinary and Diocesan Deployment Officer.

African Bible Study. Rick Harden led an African Bible Study with a reading from John 15:7-11 (Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux day). Following the reading, Rick asked, "How does this passage touch your life today?"

Call to Order / Adoption of Agenda. With a quorum participating, Bishop Marty opened the meeting with prayer. The agenda, as previously distributed, was accepted.

OLD BUSINESS - REQUIRES VOTE.

Minutes of June 11, 2022 Meeting. Upon motion duly made by Rick Harden and seconded by Steven Day, the Minutes of the June 11, 2022 Diocesan Council meeting were approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS - RECEIVE INFORMATION.

Finance Department Minutes. Council members acknowledged receipt of the Minutes of the Department of Finance meeting held June 1, 2022.

Financial Statements. Council members reviewed the June 30, 2022 Diocesan financial statements. Barb Hagen stated although investments were down in June, they are coming up in July. All churches are up to date with their assessment payments. As anticipated, Barb reported funds were withdrawn from budget reserves to cover income deficits.

Update: New Roof on Diocesan House. It was announced that 50 year asphalt shingles have been installed on Diocesan House. If solar panels are installed in the future, the roof will accommodate them.

Follow-up: St. Mark's, Havre. Bishop Marty stated she and Mark Dvarishkis are still trying to secure a Realtor to move forward with the sale of the Church property. Mark stated he will begin the process to obtain an appraisal of the real property.

Follow-up on Safeguarding Policies. Stephen Day reported the Safe Church Task Force came up with guidelines for in-person training for Safeguarding. However, there are no in-person training materials. Therefore, in-person training will not be available for another year or two. As for right now, Safeguarding training is only available on-line.

Diocesan Website Update. It is anticipated the update of the Diocesan website will be completed by the end of this summer.

Solar Subcommittee Report. The application deadline for the solar grant is November 1, 2022. A value plan needs to be determined. Holy Spirit in Missoula recently installed solar on the roof of their Church building, and has provided the Diocese with all information regarding the installation. Barb Hagen stated she will post this information on Teams, so it is accessible to everyone.

NEW BUSINESS - REQUIRES VOTE.

Update: New Dollars program for Partners for Sacred Spaces. Bishop Marty announced the Diocese has been "ghosted" by Partners for Sacred Spaces. In May 2021, Council agreed to set aside up to \$20,000 from the Vickers or Faber Fund to pay expenses associated with this program. Advisors from Partners for Sacred Spaces were supposed to come to Montana last September/November to offer advice to older and smaller churches, but never showed. Upon motion duly made by Rick Harden and seconded by Mary Alice Jones, Council unanimously voted to unencumber the \$20,000 previously set aside for this program.

Diocesan Audit Policy Annual Review. Council members reviewed the Diocesan Audit Policy. There are no proposed amendments to the document since last year. Upon motion made by Stephen Day and seconded by Leo Schuman, the Diocesan Audit Policy was approved as printed.

St. Andrew's Philipsburg - Faber Fund Grant. Previously, Council approved a \$5,000 Faber Fund Application from St. Andrew's Church to be used for a parking pad. The company that did the work on the parking pad has donated their time and materials, therefore, St. Andrew's does not need the money for this project. Upon motion duly made by Hope Stockwell and seconded by Stephen Day, Council voted to allow St. Andrew's to retain the \$5,000 and use the funds for different projects at their Church.

Cardboard Dog Coaching. Council members reviewed an updated Group Coaching Proposal from Cardboard Dog Coaching. Cardboard Dog Coaching will provide weekly and monthly group training sessions to new clergy, along with individual training sessions from September 2022 through May 2023. The cost of the training program is \$4,800, which can be used from Commission on Education funds. Council received this information; no vote was taken at this time.

Voting/Polling Software. Barb Hagen stated although the Diocese has been using “Doodle” since March 2020, the company no longer meets the needs of the Diocese. Barb and Jill Sallin have previewed “VPoll,” an electronic voting and polling software program, and have found it easy to use and intuitive. The cost of the VPoll Premier plan is \$720 per year. The plan allows for 3 users, so Bishop Marty, Barb and Jill could all have access. Upon motion duly made by Stephen Day and seconded by Mary Alice Jones, Council voted to switch to VPoll for electronic voting and polling.

Employee Retention Tax Credit. The Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) is available to qualifying organizations that experienced a decrease in revenue for 2020 and/or 2021 quarters as compared to 2019 quarterly revenues, or were affected by Government ordered shutdowns. The Diocese pays quarterly payroll taxes, and therefore may be eligible for this tax credit. To obtain the ERTC, the Diocesan accounting firm will have to re-file all payroll taxes for 2019, 2020 and 2021, which would be an expense to the Diocese of approximately \$12,000. If approved by the Internal Revenue Service, the Diocese could receive a cash refund of approximately \$70,000. Upon motion made by Keith Kuhn and seconded by Rick Harden, Council voted to table this matter until their next meeting. In the meantime, Barb Hagen and Mark Dvarishkis will reach out to Nate McCarthy at WipFli to obtain more information, and Council will ask the Standing Committee and the Finance Department to review this matter, and offer a recommendation to Council.

Definition of Income for Foundation Board. Upon motion duly made by Stephen Day and seconded by Keith Kuhn, Council unanimously voted to table this agenda item until after the Foundation Board’s next meeting.

2023 Clergy Salary Minimums. Council members reviewed the 2023 Clergy Salary Minimums, which includes a 3.6% Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) increase from the 2022 minimums. Upon motion made by Leo Schuman and seconded by Hope Stockwell, the 2023 Clergy Salary Minimums were approved as presented.

Proposed Bonuses. This past summer, Camp Marshall operated with a vacancy of one Diocesan staff member. Even with being short-staffed, the camping season was successful and all projects were completed. This saved the Diocese approximately \$29,000. A proposal was made to give both David Campbell and Jill Sallin a one time bonus for the extra work they did at Camp this summer. Upon motion duly made by Stephen Day and seconded by Rick Harden, Council agreed to allocate \$3,500 in cash

bonuses as follows: \$1,000 to Jill Sallin, \$2,000 to David Campbell, and \$500 to cover percentages to pensions and FICA. Written letters will be sent to David and Jill informing them of the bonuses, and to let them know they have the option to take the equivalent time off (instead of the money), if they so desire. (Copies of letters attached.) David Campbell will attend Council's next meeting, at which time Council will discuss the possibility of giving cash bonuses to other members of this year's Camp staff.

NEW BUSINESS - RECEIVE INFORMATION.

Annual Review of Handbooks, Manuals and Audit Forms. Council members reviewed proposed updates to Diocesan handbooks, manuals and audit forms. Barb Hagen stated there are no major revisions this year, just some "clean-up."

Faber Fund Grant/Loan – Trinity Church, Ennis. In January 2021, Council approved a Faber Fund Application from Trinity Church in Ennis, and provided Trinity a \$10,000 grant, and an interest-free loan in the amount of \$15,512 to be repaid over five years. Since Trinity has not used the funds, they now decline the loan of \$15,512.

Review of Current Policies. Bishop Marty announced a need to review Diocesan Policies, especially those adopted prior to her arrival. Subcommittees will need to be organized to accomplish this. Rick Harden and Jean Buer-Mott volunteered to serve on the subcommittee to review the Credit Card and Debt Policy dated 2016. Tanya Ask and Tom Daniels will serve on the subcommittee to review the Minimum Insurance Recommendations dated 2019.

Statement of Grant Accountings. Council members acknowledged receipt of the following Grant Accounting reports:

1. St. Mark's – Big Timber. St. Mark's report indicates they spent \$13,041 of the Faber Grant they received as a down payment for all labor, materials, equipment and mobilization for the stone restoration and repointing of their Church. The total cost of the project will be \$43,470.
2. Holy Spirit – Missoula. The \$10,000 Faber Fund Grant Holy Spirit received was used to help pay for the solar roof installed on their Church building.
3. Emmanuel – Miles City. The \$1,367 Faber Fund Grant monies received by Emmanuel was used to help pay for the concrete ramp and sidewalk on the south side of their Church building.
4. St. Stephens – Billings. St. Stephens retains \$41,842.38 of the Vickers Fund Grant they received.
5. Deacon's Retreat. A \$5,575.00 Vickers Memorial Ministry Fund Grant was provided for the Deacon's Retreat held January 14-16, 2022. Actual expenditures were \$4,008.91. The Community of Deacons request the balance of \$1,566.09 be returned to the Vicker's Fund.

2021 Diocesan Audit. Council members acknowledged receipt of the 2021 Diocesan Audit from the accounting firm of Wipfli. Barb Hagen stated the Audit will be posted on Teams.

Quarterly Reports – Churches Receiving Abatements. Council members reviewed the Quarterly Financial reports, together with Evangelism and Stewardship reports from the two Churches receiving assessment abatements this year: Incarnation – Great Falls, and St. Andrew’s – Philipsburg.

Changes to 2023 Diocesan Budget. The Episcopal Church (TEC) has changed the exemption amount from \$140,000 to \$200,000 for 2023. This means, in 2023, the Diocese will pay approximately \$9,000 less in our assessment to TEC.

Regions Financial Stock for St. John’s Emigrant. For many years, the Diocese has held Regions Financial Stock for the benefit of St. John’s Church in Emigrant. St. John’s requests the stock be transferred from Regions to their own account. As custodian for the stock, the Diocese will facilitate this transfer.

Council Members’ Terms Expiring. Bishop Marty offered thanks for their time and dedication to those Council members whose terms expire this fall: Stephen Day, Keith Kuhn, Jaime Leonard and Hope Stockwell. Thanks also to Gayle Archey for the years she has served as Diocesan Secretary.

Personal Update from Bishop Marty. Bishop Marty spoke of her time attending the General Convention and then Lambeth. The Bishop provided regular updates on Facebook while at Lambeth. The Opening Ceremony of Lambeth can be viewed on YouTube.

Upcoming Diocesan Council Meeting Dates for 2022.

October 15 at 10 a.m. - via Zoom (New member orientation / possible extra Council meeting at 11 a.m.)

November 12 at 10 a.m. - via Zoom (Assessment abatement for 2023)

Adjournment. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Council members unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m. Bishop Marty offered the closing prayer. Mary Alice Jones offered the dismissal.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Gallik Archey

Gayle Gallik Archey, Diocesan Secretary