

**Diocesan Council Meeting Minutes  
October 3, 2019**

**Present:** Bishop Rob Hirschfeld, Chris Porter (Finance), Chip Robinson (Seacoast), Reed Loy (Central), Gloria Gallant (staff), Joyce Johnson (Seacoast), Kelly Sundberg-Seaman (Lakes), Gail Avery (staff), Barbara Buckley (Northern), Terry Knowles (Trustees), Bengé Ambrogi (staff), Zachary Harmon (Southern), Teresa Gocha (Northern), Emily Drake (Lakes), Margaret Porter (Moderator/Secretary)

The Bishop called the meeting to order at 4.05, and opened our devotions using Daily Prayer for All Seasons. Council members shared their name, congregation, convocation, and what they most looked forward to in the season of autumn. Zac moved approval of June Meeting Minutes, Chip seconded, and the motion carried.

**Human Resources Committee Reports: Compensation and Benefits Manual and the Compensation Framework**

Bengé reminded us that in 2017 convention a resolution passed establishing the HR committee, with a manual to be updated annually, along with the compensation framework. The manual was posted online, and the committee reconvenes to revisit the manual and review the framework. Although the manual review and update is not yet completed, substantial changes will be presented to Council for approval at the next meeting. Aspects of clergy and lay sections need to be compatible (leave for jury duty, etc.), and there is a recommended change to supply clergy compensation rates.

Bengé distributed the compensation framework. In the past there were five congregation types included, but now there are two, Type A and Type B. Each type provides a range, in recognition of different local economies, number of years of service. This change from the past represents realities at the time of making a call and negotiating a compensation package. For 2020, CPI-U rises by 2%, with the year running from April to April. Chris asked whether there will be further readjustment, given changes within individual parishes? He moved acceptance of the framework, Reed seconded, and the motion carried. It was suggested that the framework, be posted to the website before churches begin to create budgets later this year.

**Final Audit Report**

Gloria Gallant informed us of a clean audit report. Our auditors are good to work with and ask the right questions. Changes: 1) alterations in accounting standards required review of investments to ensure they are located within the proper categories, restricted and unrestricted, 2) there is now expanded reporting in the way we use program monies. State regulations require a little more work for nonprofits, with more categorization and standardization. Our line items were divided into categories of program services and support services—these are placed in the required category.

**Q2 Financials**

Gloria explained variances on the balance sheet, comparing June to June. Because of conservative budgeting, we had built up a large cash reserve, necessitating transfer of excess cash to the Bank of America account. This will not occur in the 2020 budget. The DAF balance changes, with new loans in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2019. For TD Bank surplus savings, there is a transfer in final quarter of the year. Congregational giving is currently ahead of same period in the past. Credit card services are higher because of the General Convention spending in the summer of 2018. Matching funds for the Ministerial Excellence account will be received from the Lilly Foundation later this year, and we received a 2018 contribution that is designated for 2019. Bengé added that the ECF in partnership with Lilly provided funding to certain dioceses with missional bishops, for use as supplement income to younger or newly ordained clergy in regions that can show particular growth. 2020 is the fifth year, and the grant to clergy decreases over time. Colin Chapman in Londonderry was a recipient, and his congregation is now self-sustaining. Kelly Sundberg-Seaman is another recipient, first in New London and now Ashland/Plymouth. Tim Brooks in Lancaster was a recipient whose church is now self-

sufficient. We received a second 3-year grant: a matching grant, they give \$25,000 and we raise \$25,000. By 2021 we hope to create budget line or do a capital campaign to raise the necessary funds to maintain the grants. We are one of two recipient dioceses; the other is the Diocese of Bethlehem.

The Profit and Loss side shows positive fair share giving due to the split year. For fair share calculations, the churches have a three-month period at one rate and nine months at the newly calculated rate, and receive a letter informing them of the amounts. Grants for Our Kid received monies from the Family Foundation in December, grants are being made. The Assisi Program at Trinity, Tilton, has been discontinued, and the 2019 "sabbath year" continues for 2020, but building utilities payments are outgoing. Clergy Development underspent in 2018 but there is lots of program in 2019. Grants to Congregations from Mission Resources is underspent and under budget so far for 2019. Legal fees were higher than forecast, due to expense of altering titles of congregations at time of sale, re-titling in the name of the bishop rather than the church. The diocese and the congregation splits costs. Money for this is in the Trustees budget and more in 2020 diocesan budget. Building maintenance has been higher, with the Bishop's office upgrades and a bathroom upgrade. Communications received approval from Council to exceed 2019 budget and that amount is built in for 2020.

Highlights: We haven't drawn from cash reserves, haven't tapped new ministry fund, unrestricted endowments from closed churches. We have approximately 96% compliance in fair share. MRC is under budget. (Steve Baker, Chair, has been appointed a Canon by the Diocese of Bethlehem; Bill Peterson of Wolfeboro will succeed him.)

Gail added that we have \$10,000 available for Global Initiatives through the Sustainable Development Goals fund. Letters are going out to congregations to solicit suggestions for projects to fund.

### **Vitality Conversation**

As participants in the Diocesan Leadership Initiative, four from our diocese went to a conference at Kanuga in NC, to determine what our project would be. We decided on church vitality and how it can be measured. This led to diocesan-wide discussions—Vitality Conversations—in many constituencies. These sessions, 10-12 total, lasted for 1 to 1.5 hours, based on definitions and examples of church vitality and how it might be measured. Groups consulted included Mission Resources, Commission on Ministry, convocations, 2 forums during Spring Renewal, and the Reconciliation Commission. Themes that arose: formation, worship, hospitality, engagement of congregation within the church, congregational engagement outside church, leadership, and mission.

This work results in a planned Vitality Sunday and distribution of a 10-point questionnaire, already pre-tested at St. Matthew's, Goffstown. After results were tallied there was a parish conversation. Regardless of survey results, good conversation is fostered. The point was made that an organization behaves to the metrics set before it. If hospitality a high value, then people make effort to be hospitable. There is a difference between leading indicators and trailing indicators. Parochial reports measure trailing indicators. A leading indicator would be more about engagement than attendance. It's not certain how this will connect to report to parochial report, but it could be a resource. Ideally congregations would do it annually. What's important is how things change and raising awareness.

### **Bishop's Time**

The Bishop attended the meeting of the House of Bishops, and heard the report from the Committee on the State of the Church (the oldest standing committee in the Church, dates from 1800s). They are commissioned by resolution A0523 (in Bengé's committee at General Convention) to create a revised parochial report—simplified and reflecting the diversity of mission within The Episcopal Church. Members of the group interviewed bishops at their tables, asking questions. Other organizations change metrics sooner and faster than the church, but this work will likely be presented at the next GC in 2021.

*Budget initiatives.* Clergy with coaches have been saved as pastors, relationships with congregations have been saved.

*Bishop's curates.* The diocese will assist with funding to initiate new mission, expenses to be shared between church and diocese and the mission. We don't yet have the curates, but the...

*School for Ministry* will be the pipeline. A Dean will soon be announced, and the school will be housed at Tilton, named for Samson Occom, Pequot Indian from CT, converted to Christianity by Eleazer Wheelock. When Wheelock started Dartmouth, Samson was left out. This naming will be a form of reparation.

After Thanksgiving, Bishop Rob will visit the Diocese of Angola, which is going to be an independent diocese after being a missionary diocese of the Church of Southern Africa. Angola has great oil wealth in the area near the Congo, but the people are very deprived. Our diocese has been in relationship with one of the poorest sections for many years now—they have suffered drought, famine, and malnutrition. We sponsored the construction of a school (now government run) and a church, we support a nutrition program. We might offer a courtesy resolution at convention to congratulate the new diocese.

International relationships already established include Zimbabwe (via the new Rector in Nashua, Mike Green), Cuba (Mark Pendleton, Rector in Exeter), Chantilly, Jamaica (St. Paul's, Concord).

After 22 years, Michael Bradley of St. George's, Durham (formerly Seacoast clergy rep to Council), has been called to Grosse Point Woods MI. He leaves 24 November, and is only the second priest they've had.

**Next meeting date:** Thursday, December 12, 4-6 PM, Grace E. Concord

Agenda items: Sustainability grant recommendations, Bishop's clergy staff housing allowances, Compensation and Benefits manual update

**2020 Council Meeting Dates:** March 19 and June 11, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter TBD

The meeting closed with prayer at 6.05 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Porter, Moderator/Secretary

Oct. 18 Deadline for Diocesan Convention Registration

Oct. 26 Clergy Tax Seminar 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

9 Nov., Diocesan Convention, Waterville Valley Conference Center 8:00 a.m-3:00 p.m.

<https://www.nhepiscopal.org/convention>