



# Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon

## Diocesan Council Minutes July 28-29, 2023 St. Stephen's, Baker City

### Present:

The Rt. Rev. Patrick Bell, Bishop

### Class of 2023

Barbara Reynolds

Beth Spell

### Class of 2024

The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake (SC)

Terry Rahmsdorff (SC)

Betty Palmer

The Rev. Ray Jeff Spreier

Angela Pursel

### Class of 2025

The Rev. Kelly Mahon (SC)

David Kosar

Cory Bradshaw

Ellen Nesbitt (SC)

### Ex Officio

Patty Olson-Lindsey, Treasurer

The Rev. Charlotte Wells, Secretary of Convention

### Seat and Voice

Amy Jayne, Ascension Executive Director

Lisa Boquist, Secretary to Council

### Absent:

Karly Nash (SC)

The Rev. Ann Marie Hardin (SC)

The Rev. Jonathan Galles

## Call to Order

Bishop Pat called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Beth offered a prayer. Council members did a check-in over dinner before starting the official business of the meeting.

## Approval of Minutes

M/S/C

*Motion to approve the minutes from April 28-29, 2023, and June 29, 2023 (Ray Jeff Spreier, David Kosar)*

## Ascension School Update

Executive Director Amy Jayne gave an update on the following items:

- **Summer Camp Staff Issue**  
She reviewed the staffing issue that occurred with a counselor who has been accused of sexual misconduct with a minor at a prior employment location. An email had gone out to the council prior to the meeting, and she reviewed the steps that were taken once the allegations were made public. The council was appreciative of the communication and actions that were immediately taken to ensure the safety of all involved. Amy noted that any gaps in employment history on future applications will be more thoroughly investigated. David inquired if it would be wise to inform parents of campers from last year, in addition to the current year's parents. Amy and Lisa will be meeting with an attorney on August 7<sup>th</sup> and will make sure to ask this question.
- **Summer Camp**  
The first full day of camp started with an incident that prompted Roman and Katie to both voluntarily resign. Amy asked the council to pray for both. Megan Cox, who had already been hired to replace Roman starting in August, was able to start work immediately and has quickly taken on the work left by the absence of both the Program Director and Operation Manager. The campers have been unaware of the staffing issues and have been enjoying the summer. There are 167 campers this year, as opposed to 120 last year.
- Amy is planning on sending the Master Plan to council members in September so that they will have plenty of time to review the document and come to the November retreat with their thoughts and questions. One item that needs to be addressed prior to that meeting is the need for the feasibility study. Amy and Makenzie Dyer, board chair, have met with several companies and would like to contract with the Vandersall Collective. In addition to the \$35,000 already set aside by council for this work, another \$15,000 is needed.

**M/S/C**     *Motion to approve an additional \$15000 from the Long-Range Planning fund to engage the Vandersall Collective for the feasibility study for the 2024 Capital Campaign. (Aletha Bonebrake, Barbara Reynolds Mayo)*

- The Table has officially been meeting for one year. They have developed a regular schedule, with meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month. At the last meeting of the group the discussion centered around identity. The group agreed to slowly implement more structure in the gatherings. It is exciting that the group is evolving into a more identified community and is growing with some new members.
- Bisbee Grant Reallocation Request

**M/S/C**     Motion to approve the reallocation of the 2023 Bisbee Grant funds that were awarded to Ascension School for the Racial Justice Summit for use to cover the costs of Mending Wings to perform at Diocesan Convention. (Barbara Reynolds Mayo, Charlotte Wells)

## SDG Grant Awards

M/S/C

*Motion to award the 2023 SDG Grants in the form of \$3000 to Ascension School for the installation of a heat pump in the Girls Dorm and \$1450 to St. Patrick's, Enterprise for the Community Garden project. (Terry Rahmsdorff, Angela Pursel)*

## Standing Committee Report

The Rev. Kelly Mahon gave a report on the following items that the Standing Committee has been working on:

- Klamath Falls – Kelly has been to the property 3 times in the last year and in June arranged for a landscaper to take care of some weed abatement, worked with a realtor at Coldwell Banker who will help with property management and will likely also carry the listing for the property. Before the property is listed the Standing Committee will need to determine if some of the deferred maintenance on the property needs to be addressed. There has already been interest in the property from several churches in the area, and they may form a partnership to purchase the property.  
The empty lot that the diocese owns in Klamath Falls will also be listed and the realtor estimates it is worth around one hundred thousand dollars.
- Joann Dickson will likely be approved for ordination to the transitional diaconate during a Zoom meeting that Kelly is working on scheduling.
- The national church has changed the election certification process for Standing Committees, and it has made the process much smoother.
- The committee will also be meeting with Bishop Ousley to begin the process for getting Pat in place as Assisting Bishop.

## Financial Report – Patty Olson-Lindsey

Treasurer Patty Olson-Lindsey gave the following updates on the finances and presented recommendations from the Finance Committee.

- **Audit Report**

The audit came in with just a few recommendations. Patty suggested that the Diocesan Council consider getting a yearly financial review, with a full audit every 3 to 5 years, rather than a yearly audit. The cost for an audit is between \$14,000 to \$16,000 and a review would be less than half that cost. Patty will check with Kurt Barnes, the treasurer for the national church, and report back to the council in November.

- **Rolling Average Approval**

M/S/C

*Motion to approve a 5% rolling average from the invested funds for the 2024 EDEO budget.*

- **2024 Budget**

Patty presented the 2024 draft budget that had been recommended by the Finance Committee. There were several items of discussion including:

- The SDG grant process does not generate a lot of action among parishes. The council discussed either eliminating the line from the budget or dedicating those funds to ERD each year. It was agreed that if no other project requires those funds, they will be given each year to ERD, preferably during the time of year when the gift would be matched, doubling the donation. A note should also go out in Connections and to parishes noting this opportunity.

**M/S/C**            *Motion to add ERD to SDG line item in the budget. (Charlotte Wells, Aletha Bonebrake)*

- Someone will talk to Trinity about the diocese potentially discontinuing the EFM support line, and a discussion will also happen with COM to see if there could be other ways these funds could be used to support lay education throughout the diocese. Currently Trinity is the only parish that has an active EFM group.

**M/S/C**            *Motion to approve the 2024 EDEO Operating Budget as presented (David Kosar, Ray Jeff Spreier)*

- **Ascension School Budget**

Amy presented the draft Ascension School budget to the council.

**M/S/C**            *Motion to approve the 2024 Ascension School budget as presented (Angela Pursel, Charlotte Wells)*

- **Ascension Chapel**

The roof on the Ascension Chapel has deteriorated and needs to be replaced. Amy has secured \$55,000 in grant funding for the project, the replacement cost will be closer to \$100,000.

**M/S/C**            Motion to allocate \$45,000 from the Madras Fund for the remainder of the funds to complete the replacement of the Ascension Chapel roof. (David Kosar, Ray Jeff Spreier)

The council will discuss if those funds need to be repaid to the Madras Fund after the project is complete. Terry would also like a discussion around the allocation of funds from property sales to be on the agenda for a future meeting.

## 5G Project

Lisa shared information on a project that was presented to dioceses through a contact from Church Pension Group. Parishes would have the opportunity to lease space on their buildings for 5G towers and could receive significant income from the lease. Lisa will send the link to the discussions to council, and they will discuss the project further at the November meeting. Terry shared that something like this had been presented to Trinity but was rejected due to potential health hazards associated with the towers.

## Convention Committee Report

- Convention Offering

**M/S/C**            *Motion to designate fifty percent of the Convention Eucharist offering to Mending Wings, and the other fifty percent to a local cause if possible. (Kelly Mahon, Aletha Bonebrake)*

- Schedule

Lisa reviewed the schedule for the week of convention. Pat shared that Friday will be a movie rather than his regular Bishop's Address.

- Discussion

- There is currently no person assigned to courtesy resolutions, although Kelly said he may be able to fill that role.

- The November meeting will include discussion regarding the option of moving the date of the convention to the spring or some other time of year as well as a discussion around moving the responsibility of approving the budget to council rather than convention.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the serving of alcohol at convention and if the diocese should be providing and paying for alcohol. Several people suggested that a donation basket could be placed out to help cover the cost. The council decided to task the Convention Committee to discuss options around alcohol issues.
- Lisa encouraged everyone to talk to people and encourage others to consider running for one of the open slots on the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council.
  - Ray Jeff suggested meeting on Saturday and Sunday and attending services at the local congregation which would allow more people to meet and talk with Diocesan Council members. Meeting on the weekends could also make it easier for more people to participate.
  - There was also discussion around tasking members of council to commit to attending a different congregation for services at least twice a year.

## Bishop's Report

Bishop Pat discussed the following items:

- He thanked the outgoing council members, Barbara Reynolds Mayo, Beth Spell, Karly Nash, and The Rev. Ann Marie Hardin, and presented them with gifts.
- The November Diocesan Council meeting has been moved to November 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>, going from 2 days to 3 and allowing Lisa to participate as she will be just returning from her sabbatical. He will also be asking members of the Finance Committee and COM to attend to participate in the discussions around ministry development and finances.
- **Congregation Reports**
  - Lakeview and Bonanza are the only 2 congregations with no regular clergy support. Pat has committed to going down to serve them more regularly. Bonanza currently operates as more of a family chapel and are content to continue that way. Lakeview is in a more tentative position. Key people have moved away and there is a lot of conflict among the congregation. There is a fire burning just outside of Bonanza that has burned several homes and structures. Barbara and Pat will both check in with the congregation.
  - Burns has had some struggles with a reduction in the support for Matt Littau's ministry at Living Waters.
  - Pat visited with several members of Madras over dinner when he was there for his visitation. Although there are only 2 Episcopalians, at most, left in the congregation they would like to continue being known as St. Marks + Church of the Good Shepherd. They are currently in the search process and are working with the Lutheran Church.
  - Heppner is involved in a search process with the Lutherans, but we are also included in that process.
  - Sisters has sent out their profile and should be close to selecting candidates to interview.
  - Bend is almost done with their profile and should be about 2 months out from candidate selections.
  - Sunriver's search process is slightly more complicated, but they are moving forward.
  - Jonathan Galles has accepted a position in Western Missouri. The congregation is regrouping and trying to determine if they will have the funds to support a half time clergy person moving forward.

This fall there will be serious discussions between Standing Committee and St. Paul's regarding the chapel and offices at 601 Union Street in The Dalles. Pat suggested that if the congregation does not want to assume ownership and responsibility for that property then it might be wise to consider donating it to the local historical society or to the city.

- Redmond had informed Pat that they had made the decision to close, especially after their deacon, Keehna Sture, announced that she would be moving away. Pat encouraged them to consider the option of continuing but gathering in people's homes rather than in a dedicated building space. If they were to meet on days other than Sunday, they may also have a much easier time finding clergy to come and offer them Eucharist. They are considering these options and will report back with their decision.
- The staff gathered in Coeur D'Alene to review the discussions that were had with Bishop Ousley after the spring meeting. They came up with some interesting options for operating more intentionally as a team and how to implement that. They will be sharing these thoughts and ideas at the November retreat.
- There was a discussion about the involvement of youth in different ways throughout the diocese and the possibility of a gathering at Ascension School.

## Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:27pm.