



Episcopal Diocese of
Eastern Oregon

Diocesan Council
April 25-26, 2025
Minutes of the Meeting
St. Mark's, Hood River

Present:

The Rt. Rev. Patrick Bell, Bishop

Class of 2025

The Rev. Kelly Mahon (SC)

Ellen Nesbitt

Cory Bradshaw

Class of 2026

The Rev. Liz Cahill (SC)

The Rev. Roy Green

Barbara Reynolds (SC)

Beth Spell

Holly Hendricks

Class of 2027

The Rev. Elizabeth Wheatley-Jones

Betty Palmer

Kathy Thew

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

The Rev. Pam Miller

Call to Order

Beth Spell called the meeting to order at 5:20pm and opened with prayer. Intercessions were offered for the following: Employees and patients of the West Lin VA hospital, the friends and family of Bishop Pat's friend Rudy, the people of Harney County, Arnold Coe and family, Living Waters Church, the Sarazin Family, and for the life and legacy of Pope Francis.

Approval of Minutes: February 25, 2025

M/S/C *Motion to approve the February 25, 2025 minutes as presented (Elizabeth Wheatley Jones, Roy Green)*

Treasurer's Report

Patty Olson Lindsey, Diocesan Treasurer reported on the following financial matters.

- **2024 Ascension Deficit**

Amy provided the 2024 final year-end report for Ascension School showing the \$62,967.75 deficit that she had reported on at previous meetings. Patty recommended that the funds to balance the budget be taken from the Development and Emergency fund.

M/S/C *Motion to approve using \$62,967.75 from the Development and Emergency Fund balance the 2024 Ascension School deficit (Betty Palmer, Cory Bradshaw)*

- **Madras Fund**

St. Mark's in Madras has only 2 remaining Episcopal members of the combined Lutheran and Episcopal congregation. The diocese does not own the building that the parish uses but does maintain a fund within its investments from the sale of the former church building. Patty is recommending that the monies in the Madras property fund be distributed according the following Diocesan Property Fund policy that was adopted by Diocesan Council in 2024:

As The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon and followers of Jesus we are working toward the practice of unconditional love through the values of Human Dignity, Creation Care, and Spiritual Formation. We establish this policy in recognition that all our real property comes from the generosity of those who have gone before us and in the hope that that generosity is reflected in the following allocation of resources from the proceeds of property sales in the Diocese of Eastern Oregon to further the mission of our diocese:

- 50% *Diocesan General Endowment Fund*
- 30% *Development and Emergency Fund*
- 15% *Indigenous Ministry Fund*
- 5% *Ascension School Endowment*

M/S/C *Motion to distribute the Madras property fund monies according to the EDEO distribution policy. (Bett Palmer, Barbara Reynolds Mayo)*

- **Capital Campaign Fund CD**

Amy shared that the Capital Campaign account is again over the FDIC limit and she would like to move some of the funds to Horizon Credit Union in the form of a 6-month CD. She also shared the following strategy for managing the campaign funds:

- \$300k currently in a 7-month CD earning 3.5%, maturing Sept. 14, 2025 = **\$6125**
 - Reinvest in 3-month (Oct-Dec) CD, 3.75% = **\$2780.82**
- Move \$200k, 6-month CD at 3.7%, beginning May 1, maturing Oct 1 = **\$3,700**
 - Reinvest in 3-month (Sept-Dec) CD, 3.75% = **\$1849.32**

Total Earned: \$14,455.14

1. Use the earnings from CDs to replace our usual draw from the endowment in 2025 (at least partially). 2025 budget draw is \$20,000
2. Borrow designated endowment funds (currently in cash) from ourselves to build the pool. Funds are not donor designated, this is legal.
3. Purchasing 3 month CDs in the fall allows us to pull cash if we end up making progress with pool build in fall 2025 (more likely spring 2026)
4. We still have \$100k in cash account (still growing), readily available for needs such as cultural assessment, site work and engineering plans.

Engineering/Drawings/DOH	7.50%	\$30,929.74
Upon Starting Construction	30.00%	\$123,718.95
Upon Pouring Pool Walls	30.00%	\$123,718.95
Upon Installing Pool Equipment	17.50%	\$72,169.39
Upon Substantial Completion	15.00%	\$61,859.48

M/S/C *Motion to approve the opening of an account at Horizon Credit Union and purchasing a 200,000 ` 6-month CD. (Roy Green, Barbara Reynolds Mayo)*

M/S/C *Motion to approve Amy Jayne, Patty Olson Lindsey, and Lisa Boquist as signers on the Horizon Credit Union account. (Elizabeth Wheatley Jones, Kathy Thew)*

- **Shop Funds**

Amy reported that the new shop at Ascension School is complete and there are some remaining funds left in the account. She asked that Diocesan Council consider moving those funds to the Ascension School Endowment.

M/S/C *Motion to approve the transfer of the remaining funds in the Ascension Shop Fund to the Ascension School Endowment to assist with the cost of the diocesan archives that are housed in the shop building. (Kathy Thew, Cory Bradshaw)*

There was some discussion regarding the current Investment Policy and Lisa indicated that she would share that policy with Diocesan Council along with these minutes.

- **Truth and Conciliation Commission**

WeX is a community outreach organization, indigenous led, out of the Warm Spring area. The Diocese applied for and was awarded a \$8500 Beloved Community on behalf of WeX. Some confusion around the role and scope of EDEO's involvement with the group, including a failure to complete the Beloved Community grant report, which prevents any other EDEO entities from applying or receiving grants from the national church, has come out of that process. WeX was under the impression that EDEO was their fiscal sponsor, as they do not have non-profit status, and EDEO is unable to fill that need for them due, in part, to the lack of staff available to take on a partnership of that scope. In order to clear up any confusion with WeX, and to reinstate EDEO's good standing with the national church, it is recommended that the EDEO send the \$8500 back to the national church and to consider the \$8500 given to WeX as a grant from EDEO, to be funded by the Indigenous Ministry Fund.

M/S/C

Motion to return the \$8500 received for the Beloved Community Grant for the work of WeX back to the national church, and to consider the \$8500 already given to WeX as grant from EDEO. The \$8500 will come from the Indigenous Ministry. (Elizabeth Wheatley Jones, Roy Green)

M/S/C

Motion to send the following letter to WeX on behalf of Diocesan Council and EDEO to be signed by Patty Olson Lindsey, Treasurer. (Roy Green, Kathy Thew)

▪ *April 26, 2025*

Dear Jolene & the WeX Team,

As you are aware, the Truth and Conciliation Commission and WeX were awarded an \$8500 Becoming Beloved Community grant through The Episcopal Church in late 2024. Upon receipt of funds, we (the Diocese) issued a check for the full amount to WeX. Thank you for your work so far in tracking the grant financials and bringing the project to life. We are writing to update you on some shifts as we close out our 2024 financials. Our accountant requested a W9 for the payment to WeX, and we received a W9 from Renegade Consulting. Because this was not a payment for services, we are recording the \$8500 as a grant to WeX – similar to the previous gifted funds totaling \$15,000. Additionally, the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon cannot be considered the fiscal sponsor of the grant or WeX in general. Fiscal sponsorship requires that we provide fiduciary oversight and financial management over the organization. We do not have a fiscal sponsorship agreement in place and do not have the capacity to implement that form of partnership. We felt that this was an important point of clarification for our relationship. It is relevant to the \$8500 grant funding, because the Episcopal Church requires that we maintain control over the funds.

After some consideration about how to move forward, the Diocese has decided to pay back the \$8500 to the Episcopal Church and consider the check issued to WeX a grant from the Diocese directly. This will align with the recommendation from our accountant and best practices encouraged by our auditors.

This gives WeX flexibility in the use of the funds as there will not be any kind of required reporting moving forward. You may use the funds however you see fit to further your mission. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your work and partnership.

Sincerely,

*Diocesan Council
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon*

*Patty Olson-Lindsay
Diocesan Treasurer*

Policy Manual Discussion and Vote

Amy presented proposed non grammatical updates to the EDEO Employee Policy for consideration and approval by Diocesan Council.

M/S/C *Motion to move the adoption of the following EDEO Employee Policy updates with the removal of the word “unlimited” from the paid time off policy:(Roy Green, Holly Hendricks)*

1. *Benefits begin at 30 hours (fulltime) per week (was 20)*
2. *Added holidays – Juneteenth and Indigenous Peoples’ Day*
3. *Employment Assistance Program now offered to all employees regardless of Medical enrollment*
4. *Unlimited Paid Time off taking the place of sick, personal, vacation and bereavement leave. Ascension School and EDEO offer an unlimited Paid Time Off (PTO) policy, allowing employees to take time off as needed without a set limit on the number of days, provided that their work performance remains consistently high, and they effectively manage their workload to ensure team continuity.*
 - *Individual use of the policy will be assessed as needed or during annual performance reviews.*
 - *All time off requests must be approved by the manager or supervisor with adequate advanced notice whenever possible.*
 - *All days off must be included on the staff calendar and communicated to all necessary co-workers.*
 - *Paid Time Off includes personal leave, vacation time, bereavement leave, and sick leave.*
 - *While there is no accrual system, the Executive Director (for Ascension School) and the Standing Committee (for the Executive Director and Diocesan Administrator) will monitor usage to maintain operational efficiency and encourage responsible use of this benefit.*
 - *Periodic audits will be conducted to ensure appropriate use of the policy.*
 - *Time off will be tracked to identify potential issues and ensure responsible use.*
 - *There will be no payout upon termination of employment.*
 - *There will be special attention given to explaining the culture of this policy during onboarding and it will be readdressed regularly throughout employment.*
 - *This policy is dependent upon clear communication, trust and responsible work ethic.*
5. *Benefit Waiver Allowance (policy adapted from Diocese of California)*

Employees who have medical or dental coverage through a spouse or partner and waive either or both these coverages can receive a benefits waiver allowance for doing so. This arrangement can be advantageous for both the employee and the employer. Ascension School Camp and Conference Center and EDEO offer a \$500/month BWA for the waiver of medical benefits and a \$20/month waiver for dental benefits. They will offer the same BWA amount to all employees, regardless of whether the coverage waived is single, employee +1 or family. The allowance is taxable income to the employee and assessed for both clergy pension and lay retirement plan contributions. A BWA template must be filled out before Annual Enrollment of each year before BWA payments will be added to payroll.

Standing Committee Report

Kelly reported that Angela Pursel and Ray Jeff Spreier have stepped down from Standing Committee. Cory Bradshaw and Elizabeth Wheatley Jones have been appointed to replace those vacant positions, leaving two open positions on Diocesan Council.

The sale of St. Paul’s in Klamath Falls has fell through – the buyer was unable to secure financing. The realtor said that there was another party interested and is going to follow up with them.

The undeveloped lot in Klamath Falls is in escrow and the buyer is working on securing the necessary permits. St Paul’s, The Dalles has entered into an agreement with EDEO to take over control of the chapel and offices at 601 Union Street. They are covering all costs with the exception of property insurance, which is still covered by

the diocese. They are working on finding other uses for the space and will be discerning for another year if they can make the space work in the future.

Ascension School Report

Amy reported that 50 people attended the Easter Sunrise Service at Ascension. They partnered with St. Peter's on the event and hope to do that more in the future. There were also over 300 people on campus on the Saturday before Easter for a community breakfast and Easter Egg hunt sponsored by the Cove Community Association and the Cove FFA.

The winter months were very full with guest groups, many of them sports teams competing in local events and needing overnight lodging. This is a new revenue source that has allowed the previously slow months to gain an increase in revenue.

Over the last 6 months several staff reductions have been made. Julie Witten, who works alongside Janette in the kitchen, has now taken over as housekeeper in addition to her kitchen work. The position is now fulltime and allowed the elimination of the part time housekeeping position that had been filled by Amy Arnold, who left at the end of 2024. In September a maintenance position will also be eliminated. That position was created specifically for the task of getting all of the buildings on campus painted. That job will be completed at the end of August.

The Capital Campaign is basically completed, and was successful. While the goal to reach a million dollars in the endowment is still short by approximately \$130,000, the campaign raised significantly more than the feasibility study predicted. Vandersall Collective is creating a planned giving campaign with brochures, etc. to finish out their contracted time with Ascension School.

The 40 acres of property under the CREP program may lose its funding due to changes at the federal government level. A CREP representative visited the site and while she said she had rarely seen that level of progress on a project, the agency was preparing for a large number of contracts to be canceled. The contract provides between \$5,000 to \$6,000 each year to the Trail budget.

Amy's sabbatical begins on June 1st and goes through the end of August. She is planning a trip to Japan with her family, and is also hoping to go to Oak Flats. While she is sad to be missing out on a camp season she has the highest confidence in Megan, as program director, to oversee the camps this year. Megan has already hired a full staff for the summer, secured resource staff, and has arranged for a social worker to be on site to help with any issues that might arise. An alumni weekend has been added to the schedule this year on June 20-22. The cost is free and is open to any former campers that might like to come and spend some time on campus. Adult formation is August 21-224 – speaker and theme will be announced soon.

Caretakers of the Land is becoming more financially viable; their budget is consistently in the black. They have received over \$30,000 on grants so far this year. They are working on setting priorities as they are in high demand. The partnership with Caretakers has helped to build a relationship with CTUIR, who has held several meetings at Ascension School including their upcoming symposium as well as board meetings, a women's wellness weekend, and other events.

Nate and Megan got married on April 10th – will travel to North Carolina at the end of May for a ceremony with family and on September 27th there will be a blessing at Ascension School – all are invited.

Amy, in partnership with members of the Cove Community Association has been working on a Community Garden Network project, made possible by a Feast Grant that was received from the Oregon Food Bank. The project brings community members together to help each other with personal gardens – members will come and plant, weed, harvest, etc. community member gardens. The project also includes a barter system and better access to locally grown foods.

o Ascension Advisory Board Description -Amy

Amy presented the following job description for the Ascension School Advisory Board as well as an updated description for the diocesan canons. The canon update can be added to the list of other updates that may be presented as a resolution for Convention. Council requested that "Bishop" be added to bullet point "b" under the canon description.

Ascension School Leadership Organization & Structure

Responsibilities of the Ascension School Advisory Board

- *Provide strategic advice and expert guidance to Ascension School's senior staff leadership (including, but not limited to, Executive Director, Program Director, and Operations Manager)*
- *Identify key items for organizational focus each year based on the strategic plan with measurable outcomes to be presented to Diocesan Council*
- *Identify and elect a board chair who will work closely with the Executive Director and staff in setting agendas, meeting structure, and board priorities*
- *Offer insights into industry trends, market conditions and potential challenges*
- *Help inform key decision-making and be a sounding board for staff by assisting leadership in identifying potential issues, analyzing situations and brainstorming solutions*
- *Develop and regularly evaluate the organization's strategic plan*
- *Monitor the organization's program and services for alignment with the strategic plan*
- *Work to identify and mitigate potential risks*
- *Assist in creating an annual operating budget for recommendation to Diocesan Council*
- *Recommend policy changes to Diocesan Council*
- *Create committees or task forces to address specific challenges or needs. For example: camp, hiring/ search, capital campaign etc.*
- *Assist Diocesan Council in evaluating the performance of the executive director*
- *Fundraise and develop resources by assisting with annual and special campaigns*
- *Enhance the organization's public image through advocacy, networking, and promotion*
- *Ensure legal and ethical integrity through regular organizational and programmatic evaluation*

Responsibilities of Individual Members

- *Know the organization's mission, policies, programs and needs*
- *Be thoroughly familiar with the strategic master plan and its purposes*
- *Serve as advocates and ambassadors for the organization*
- *Leverage connections, networks, and resources for achievement of the mission*
- *Prepare for and conscientiously participate in meetings*
- *Participate beyond the bounds of regular board meetings, including committee work, task forces, or other engagement.*
- *Engage in at least one camp session or other program per season*
- *Respect the experiences of all who bring their voices and lived experiences into the room*

Responsibilities of the Board Chair

- *Work with Executive Director in building meeting agendas, planning board retreats and leading projects*
- *Run meetings*

Responsibilities of Board Secretary

- *Take minutes of all meetings, distribute for feedback and ensure preservation*

Responsibilities of Executive Director and/or Staff

- *Carry out the day-to-day operations according to established job descriptions*
- *Management of the organization according to the strategic plan*
- *Direct human resources for all Ascension School staff - hiring, dismissal, performance review, benefits, etc.*

- *Implement the policies and procedures set by Diocesan Council*
- *Report to Diocesan Council/Standing Committee*
- *Collaborate with board members in implementing the strategic plan*

Responsibilities of Diocesan Council/Standing Committee

- *Ensure strong fiduciary oversight and financial management by faithfully reading and understanding the organization's financial statements provided by the Diocesan Treasurer (who also acts as the treasurer of Ascension School)*
- *Set policy*
- *Set the salary and determine adjustments for Executive Director*
- *Approve the annual operating budget presented by the Ascension Advisory Board and Staff*
- *Select, support, and evaluate the performance of the Executive Director with guidance from the Advisory Board*
- *Assess the performance of the Advisory Board through a Diocesan Liaison*
- *Ensuring legal and ethical integrity*

Responsibilities of DC and SC Members

- *Know the organization's mission, policies, programs and needs*
- *Be thoroughly familiar with the strategic master plan and its purposes*
- *Serve as advocates and ambassadors for the organization*
- *Leverage connections, networks, resources for achievement of the mission*

Advisory Board Demographic Recommendations & Goals

- *Caretakers of the Land advocate*
- *Multi-generational*
- *Socio-economic status*
- *Geographical representation from the Diocese*
- *Cove Community representation*
- *Camp and Camp Staff Alumni representation*
- *BIPOC presence or consultation*
- *Diocesan Council Liaison (?)*
- *Clergy Representation*
- *Special skills desired: HR experience, education, environmental stewardship, racial justice, curriculum development, spiritual formation, legal expertise, medical professional, insurance specialists*

Canon Recommendation

There shall be established an Advisory Board of Ascension School. This Advisory Board is responsible to Diocesan Council, acting in an advisory capacity to the Ascension School Executive Director and senior staff.

- There shall be a minimum of 9 members, at least one shall be a current member of Diocesan Council*
- Members of the Board shall be nominated by the Advisory Board, staff or Diocesan Council and be confirmed and appointed by Diocesan Council.*
- The term of the members nominated and confirmed shall be three (3) years on a staggered basis or until their successors are elected.*
- There shall be an Advisory Board chair and secretary elected from within by ⅔ vote of all members.*

Bishop's Report

Bishop Pat reported that he had spent both Easter and Christmas in Bonanza and Lakeview, who have no access to clergy presence. While the congregations are small, they continue to faithfully gather.

He also urged people to not stay silent in the face of the hateful rhetoric coming out of the federal government towards marginalized communities, including LGBTQA+ people, black and brown people, immigrants, and

women. Many of those present discussed how it is difficult to know how to respond when many live in communities that support much of what is being said. Elizabeth shared that she had helped to start the Bend Action Coalition, which is a group of 5 local congregations who have joined together to take on social justice issues in Bend. Visit their website for more information: <https://bendactioncoalition.org/>

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Charlotte reported that on May 29th at 7pm in Pendleton EMO will be hosting their annual Collins Lecture that will focus on how to support LGBTQA+ youth during this time of uncertainty and targeting by the government. The cost is \$25 per person and that includes online attendance as well. Elizabeth – website Nobody is disposable, Bend Action Coalition (.org) Elizabeth will write an article for Connections. Beth how do we talk about these issues in the church without being accused of politics in the pulpit. Charlotte will send information to Lisa.

Team Episcopate – What’s Next

Bishop Pat revisited how we had arrived at this point, starting with the conversation with Bishop Todd Ousley, encouraging us to explore the idea of Team Episcopate. +Pat shared that after dealing with a fairly serious parish conflict over the last few months he has come to the conclusion that such a model may not be feasible. Dealing with issues such as clergy or parish conflicts requires more work than should be expected of volunteers, and having a bishop who is able to be present for these matters seems necessary. He also stressed that all the work that was done over the last 12 months working towards Team Episcopate was not wasted. The time spent has brought the council, and diocese, closer together and given us a clearer view of who EDEO is, and what we may need in the next bishop. Kelly also echoed those sentiments.

Rebecca Wilson, Chief of Strategy for the national church, joined the meeting by Zoom and shared some options available to EDEO once Bishop Pat retires in June of 2026. The Provisional Bishop model was discussed at length and Diocesan Council agreed to meet in June to decide if that is the direction they will take.

Next Meeting:

Lisa will send out a poll with options for a meeting sometime in the first two weeks of June, with the location being either at St. Paul’s in The Dalles, or at St. Mark’s in Hood River.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20pm.