

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF KANSAS, INC.**

November 29, 2023

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met via Zoom on November 29, 2023. Prior to the start of the meeting, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, shared a portion of a liturgy created by a woman from the Diocese of Iowa. The bishop then called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

Members of the Council of Trustees present were:

Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom
Dr. Elizabeth Fitz Gibbon, President
The Rev. Helen Hoch, Clerk
The Ven. Jim Cummins
Ms. Melanie Laster
The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis
The Rev. Margaret McGhee
Mr. Mike Morrow
Mr. Ron Olson
The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab
The Very Rev. Casey Rohleder
Ms. Teresa Ryther
Mr. John Smittle
The Rev. Daryl Stanford
Ms. Diana Waddell-Gilbert

Also present as advisors to the Council of Trustees:

Mr. Hurst Coffman, Vice-Chancellor
Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer
Mr. Frank Taylor, Chancellor

Also present:

Mr. Jay Currie, Comptroller
Ms. Michael Funston, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary
Mrs. Michele Moss, Director of Operations
The Rev. Karen Schlabach, Youth, Campus & Digital Missioner
Mr. Chad Senuta, Director of Communications & Young Adult Ministries

Bishop Bascom presented the November 8, 2023, meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Currie reported that it still looks like all parishes will fulfill their apportionment for 2023.

Mr. Jay Currie reported the diocesan staff clergy requests for housing allowance.

- The Rev. Karen Schlabach requested 42% of her compensation be declared as housing allowance.
- The Rt. Rev. Cathleen Bascom requested 50% of her compensation be declared as housing allowance.
- The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston requested 70% of his compensation be declared as housing allowance.

Mr. Morrow moved to approve the housing allowance requests as one. The motion was seconded, and the requests were approved unanimously.

Mr. Currie will be meeting with the auditors and Mr. Geary, Treasurer, tomorrow to finalize the diocesan audit policy.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Brian Geary gave some updates from the Finance Committee. He reiterated the meeting with the auditors tomorrow and their report will be presented to the Finance Committee at their December 14 meeting.

Mr. Geary then moved on to report on the updates to the diocesan audit policy. He walked through the updates from the Finance Committee on the version before the Council for approval at this meeting. One of the highlighted portions indicates no longer requiring a CPA from every parish unless required by another organization. The Council of Trustees may require a higher level of audit for a parish for any reason. It also leaves room for the parish leadership to adopt a policy of their own to conduct audits under more stringent standards. Other updates included updating the numbering of the policy and including sufficient training for clergy, vestry and officers to understand finance reporting. In the "process standards" section, the update was to change the word "approved" to "adopted" by the vestry. Mr. Geary asked for questions.

Mthr McGhee asked for clarification around the deadlines in section 3 and 4 of the policy statements. Mthr McGhee asked it be changed to be more specific. In section 3, it was suggested to change it to the calendar year as opposed to fiscal year. Vice-chancellor Coffman asked that the wording in Policy statements, section 2a change from "may" to "shall". Canon Funston said that the sentence at the beginning of section

2 says that all are required to have an annual audit and therefore the “may” in 2a is conditional to that statement. Mr. Geary was thankful for this reading as it helps the committee know how it will be read by those who have not been working on it detail by detail. Dean Rohleder asked if the Finance Committee was prepared for the training emphasized in this policy as it would be a lot of work for the committee. Mr. Geary said the committee is gearing up for this work.

Mr. Olson asked if there are currently any policies and training in parishes. Mr. Geary said not in his recent memory. Mr. Currie said that he has gone to parishes to directly train them, but it has been a while. This was something that was part of the Lay Leadership Academy that used to be held in the diocese. Mr. Geary said that the goal is to refresh this for all parishes in the diocese during 2024. Mr. Morrow clarified that under the canons of the Episcopal Church the fiscal year is January 1 to December 31. There was discussion around whether section 3 is necessary as the canons of the Episcopal Church already put it forth. There was discussion relating to redundancy as not all treasurers and vestries are looking at the Canons of the Episcopal Church in addition to the diocesan canons and parish bylaws.

Canon Funston presented the proposed changes to points 3 and 4 to read as follows:

3. An annual audit of the parish accounting records is to be performed covering each fiscal year, which runs from January 1 to December 31.
4. A copy of the audit and written audit response must be provided to the comptroller of the diocese not later than September 1 of the year, covering the financial reports of the previous calendar year.

Mr. Morrow moved to amend the proposed audit standards to reflect the changes in sections 3 and 4 of “Policy Statements” as follows:

3. An annual audit of the parish accounting records is to be performed covering each fiscal year, which runs from January 1 to December 31.
4. A copy of the audit and written audit response must be provided to the comptroller of the diocese not later than September 1 of the year, covering the financial reports of the previous calendar year.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Morrow moved to adopt the Internal Control and Audit Standards for Parish Funds and Assets as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

After the passing of the audit standards, Ms. Laster asked if there were term limits for treasurers and will there be penalties for those who do not submit their audits. Mr. Geary was not sure about term limits for treasurers but that would be part of the training and best practices for parishes. Canon Funston asked that the Council of

Trustees consider what would be good accountability for this policy as the Finance Committee continues its work.

Standing Committee Business

Dean Casey Rohleder presented reports on the following potential ordinands:

Maddy Bishop – Priesthood
Jeanine Blessant – Diaconate
Sarah Shipman – Priesthood

Dean Rohleder moved to approve Maddy Bishop for candidacy for ordination, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

Dean Rohleder moved to approve Jeanine Blessant for candidacy for ordination, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

Dean Rohleder moved to approve Sarah Shipman for candidacy for ordination, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

Bishop Bascom discussed one of the candidates who was interviewed and was not being suggested for candidacy approval at this time.

Canon Funston presented a request for approval for ordination:

- Dean Rohleder moved that the Council of Trustees, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocese, consent and certify Susan Byler of St. David's, Topeka, for ordination to the diaconate. The motion was seconded and it carried unanimously.
- Mr. Smittle moved that the Council of Trustees, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocese, consent and certify Deacon Caroline Howard of St. Peter's, Pittsburg, for ordination to the priesthood. The motion was seconded and it carried unanimously.
- Dean Rohleder moved that the Council of Trustees, acting as the Standing Committee of the Diocese, consent and certify Deacon Martha Lamoy of St. Thomas the Apostle, Overland Park, for ordination to the priesthood. The motion was seconded and it carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed for a short break and resumed at 11:31 a.m.

Bishop's Report

The bishop presented her written report and highlighted a few points. She continues to discuss the Priority Goals and Strategic Planning of the Council of Trustees with vestries on her parish visits.

Bishop Bascom leaves for Dubai for the UN Climate Conference next week. She plans to learn more about what others are doing around the world in caring for the land and water resources.

Bishop Bascom sees opportunities emerging for more Latino clergy to be part of the Diocese of Kansas.

Reports from Trustees and Staff

Staff reports were submitted in writing. Mthr Karen Schlabach reported on Youth, Campus and Digital Ministries. The Youth Commission met a couple of weeks ago and has invited the Council of Trustees to join them for their January 27 meeting to talk with them about the Priority Goals and Strategic Goals of the council. Youth Commission also worked on publicity for upcoming events including Miqra and Happening. Council members asked for postcards to hand out in their parishes as a tangible thing to help invite young people to youth events.

Dean Lewis led the council in Noonday Prayer celebrating the Eve of St. Andrew. The meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 12:49 p.m.

Priority Goals and Strategic Planning

President Fitz Gibbon went over the plan for the working groups for the day. There was some discussion around the membership of each group. The Council split into their groups. After a thirty-minute session, each group gave a summary of their work for the day.

The Ven. Jim Cummins sent the group out into the world. The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 pm.

The Rev. Helen Hoch
Clerk