

Executive Council Meeting

August 19, 2023

Meeting held by Zoom.

These are the official minutes, approved by Executive Council at the September 30, 2023 meeting

Members Present: Ms. Joan Amati, Ms. Lara Chase, Ms. Amy Dobbs, Mr. Dick Frey, Ms. Sally Hardgrove, The Rev. Dr. Jason Haddox, The Rev. C. Davies Reed, The Rev. Canon Hipólito Fernandez Reina, The Rev. Allen Rutherford, Canon Mariann Scott, Mr. Mike Staubitz, Mr. Sean Sullivan Canon Brendan O’Sullivan-Hale, The Rev. Canon Kristin White, Dr. Laurel Cornell, Ms. Janet Brinkworth.

Members Absent: The Rev. Mary Bargiel, Ms. Lara Dreyer, The Rev. Dr. Paul Jacobson, Mr. Greg Seamon, The Rev. Julia Whitworth, , The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows.

Guests Present: Ms. Jen Phelps

Executive Council Vice President, the Rev. C Davies Reed, called the meeting to order at 10am, welcoming all to the meeting. He began by leading us in the morning devotion. Ms. Janet Brinkworth confirmed those in attendance and there was a quorum.

Organizing for Business – Canon Kristin White led the group through our review of our Diocesan Mission and the Executive Council norms. All members affirmed these standards.

2024 Budget Draft – C Davies gave an overview of the draft document. He requested Canon Brendan O’Sullivan-Hale to highlight the primary changes. In contrast to the last meeting in May, Canon Brendan indicated that the budget is now balanced, though information on health insurance rates is not yet available, so the budget will likely require another revision. Among the changes since May were being deliberate about using accumulated points from diocesan credit cards, restoring the youth budget to pre-pandemic levels under the leadership of a new youth coordinator, and several other items. There was a motion made by the Rev. Allen Rutherford to approve the 2024 proposed draft budget for general distribution, with a second by Ms. Joan Amati. There was time spent in discussion and with questions. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Leadership and Diocesan Updates – There were updates from Council members, including that the capital campaign at St Francis is moving forward, several members indicating a focus on the new school year, an upcoming racial justice event, thanks for the recent College of Congregational Development (CCD) week and good comments about CCD, and appreciation of personal visits from diocesan staff to parishes.

Fall Neighborhood Meetings & Convention – Canon Kristin began with a summary of the upcoming neighborhood meetings. These meetings have been set up to meet in person and Bishop Jennifer will attend all meetings along with Canon Kristin, Canon Brendan, Ms. Heather Kenison, and either the Rev. C. Davies Reed or Dr. Laurel Cornell attending. Each meeting will incorporate a conversation about their neighborhood mission and will include a meal. Also, each Neighborhood Meeting will be open for all in the neighborhood, not just delegates to convention.

Convention – Canon Kristin reminded the Council that the convention will be held at St. Paul’s Indianapolis, and that the theme is: Rest & Liberation. She has indicated that the workshops will focus on this theme. An overview of the schedule was given. There was some discussion.

Bishop Staff Update –
Canon Brendan

- Advised the Council that he enjoyed chaperoning the youth trip in June,
- He is finding more time to catch up on his work, while the Bishop has been away,
- The Pride festival was a good day (he was on the mission trip), and they are working on improvements for next year,
- Tomorrow, he leaves for Brazil to celebrate Bishop Mauricio’s 20th Anniversary. He will attend representing the Bishop and the Rev. Hilary Cooke (Global Missions Chairperson) will also attend.
- A Grant from Lilly Endowment for \$1million has been received to continue the work of Church Buildings for Collaborative Partnerships (CBCP). This grant is to allocate resources to parishes, similar to the previous grant, but will assist with deeper needs.

Canon Kristin

- Has advised that Ms. Heather Kenison has stepped in easily as the new Diocesan Youth Minister and she has been in touch with parishes of the diocese.
- The Youth Vision Summit with Ministry Architects occurs in October. Ministry Architects assisted in the hire of Heather. Everyone is invited.
- A Lilly Endowment Grant has been awarded to IUPUI, focused on developing Christian parenting resources, in collaboration with the diocese.
- Mission Strategy’s work is ongoing. The committee is considering how it can be more effective, considering that most grant applications are not hitting the mark of what the committee is hoping for.
- The College for Congregational Development (CCD) was highly successful. Ms. Michaela Flash was an intern this year and has been trained to be a trainer next year at CCD.
- Canon Kristin asked for prayers in the search for the new Bishop in S Ohio, of which she is a candidate.

Took a Short Break

Safe Church Updates with guest Ms. Jen Phelps, Diocesan Transition Minister. Jen indicated that one year ago, Executive Council approved the Safe Church Policy. This new document presented today is mostly a clarification of the previous document. She highlighted some of the updates using a “red-line” version of the policy, which was provided in advance. Some topics brought forth included adjudicating background check red flags, the option that parishes can set their own policies, and indicated some of the general clarifications needed, as well as an update to Appendix A (a chart containing the list of courses according to church position). There were some questions. A motion was made by Mr. Dick Frey to accept the revisions of the revised policy of Safe Church as presented, with a second from Ms. Lara Chase. Some was additional discussion. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discernment on Reunification Update The Rev. Allen Rutherford reported on the most recent meeting (July 29) in person in Kokomo. He indicated that data gathering is ongoing, and this is the initial phase. Analysis of this data is the second phase. Allen indicated that reunification is not a foregone conclusion, there is still work to be done. However, all agreed that participation in some shared programming and events should continue. Both dioceses will present a report at their upcoming diocesan convention. Allen also reminded the Council members that there is a process involved in this decision. He mentioned other dioceses who are going through either unification or reunification.

May Minutes approval. A typo (“dioceses” should be “diocese”) will be corrected. A motion to approve the May 20, 2023, minutes was made by the Rev. Allen Rutherford, with a second from the Rev. Dr. Jason Haddox. It was PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Updates Canon Brendan highlighted several items in the July statement. There was some discussion. He indicated that the 2022 audit fieldwork is complete, but that the diocese’s audit cannot be completed until Waycross’ audit is done.

The Treasurer’s Report from Dr. Laurel Cornell was sent to the members in advance. A motion was made by Mr. Dick Frey to receive the financials and the treasurer’s report, with a second from Canon Mariann Scott. The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Old Business

Supply clergy compensation. Canon Brendan indicated that the Personnel Committee is looking for Executive Council to consent to a new compensation request, made at the May 20 meeting. He suggested that this should be a starting place but can be negotiated for special circumstances. There was some discussion. The Council agreed to change the second word in the document from Priest to Clergy to include Deacons. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Holy Family. Canon Brendan reported on the congregation’s request for continuing mortgage support. The parish has signed an agreement to sell part of their property, with Standing Committee’s approval. Closing is not assured; the agreement is subject to certain inspection and zoning provisions that could allow the buyer to back out.

Racial Justice Resolution – Canon Mariann Scott requested that the resolution adopted at the May Executive Council meeting go back on the agenda to clarify some parts of this resolution, as there was some confusion about whether Executive Council intended to speak for itself as a governing body, or for the diocese. Brendan explained the ambiguity of how Executive Council’s authority is used between conventions – a procedural clarification. There was a discussion, which concluded that a plain reading of the passed resolution indicated that Executive Council did intend to bind the diocese as a whole to the actions identified in the resolution.

New Business – None.

C. Davies advised that the next meeting would be Sept 30 at Waycross and in person. He adjourned the meeting at 12:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Brinkworth