

Diocese of Easton
Diocesan Council
Business Meeting
February 10, 2025
Bray House Conference
Zoom

(Rescheduled from January 27, 2025)

Present –

The Rt. Rev. Santosh Marray, Florence Adams, Chrissy Aull, Granville Blades, Rev. Andrew Cropper, Vic Evans, Kay Ferraro, Lynda Habel, Rev. Deacon Jim Kamihachi, Rev. Susan Leight, Rev. Mike Lokey, Marion Robinette, Rev. Deacon Peggy Samuels, Rev. Dr. Nicholas Sichangi

Myron Richardson, Treasurer; Fred Welsh, Finance Chair; John Dragone, Canon to the Ordinary; Regan Smith, Chancellor; Ernie Cornbrooks, Chancellor Emeritus; Michael B Mathers, Vice Chancellor; Julia Connelly-Zahn, Director of Camp Wright.

Excused – Gordon Fronk, Penni Doyle

Documents distributed electronically prior to meeting – Minutes for Nov. 25 Council meeting, Treasurer's Report, Documents pertinent to Personnel matters and Title IV matters, Camp Wright report to leadership.

In advance of the business meeting, the Diocesan Council convened at table with members of the Standing Committee to participate in a Mutual Ministry Reflection led by Rev. Greg Harbaugh. The combined group remained together to hear from Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe by Zoom and representatives of his office as well as Ernie Cornbrooks, Esquire, on topics pertaining to the pending retirement of Bishop Marray. The Presiding Bishop indicated his full and enthusiastic support for the planned timeline and terms of the bishop's retirement. He noted that the request for changes was based on considerable thought and much prayer.

The Standing Committee was excused following the combined session.

The Bishop convened the business portion of the Diocesan Council meeting at 3:04. Bishop Marray offered opening prayer and provided an update on the Vice President Gordon Fronk's health status, which leaves him not able to participate. Bishop asked for prayers for the continued recuperation of Gordon. Chrissy noted that his home address is in the directory should anyone wish to send him a note.

The Bishop led the group in prayer to remember our friend Charlie Bohn who recently passed and shared that arrangements for services are yet to be announced.

Bishop Marray sought a motion to approve the interim appointment of Granville Blades as Diocesan Council Vice President. Mike Lokey made the motion which Andrew Cropper seconded. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

The Bishop turned the meeting to Granville as Interim Vice President.

A motion was made by Rev Lokey and seconded by Deacon Samuels to approve Myron Richardson as Treasurer to fill the vacancy following the death of Charlie Bohn. There was no discussion and the vote to approve was unanimous. (Note: this vote was out of order from the agenda.)

It was noted that the Convention will also need to vote to approve Myron as Treasurer.

Rev. Cropper provided a motion to approve minutes from November 25. He was seconded by Rev. Lokey. There was no discussion, and the Council voted unanimously to approve.

Treasurer's Report

Myron reported that as of year-end, December 31, 2024, there was nothing out of line and that the year turned out well. The Hillsboro property, excluding the cemetery has been sold, and the transaction is closed. The funds from the sale will be administered by the Property Committee for the benefit of the Hillsboro cemetery, Diocesan orphaned property expenses and other property related costs.

There was a motion to approve this report – unanimous vote to approve.

Fred Welsh reviewed the 2025 budget, noting it has already been approved by the Council. He addressed the upcoming resolution prompted by recent changes in the National Church Parochial Report. There will be a more detailed presentation at Convention during his report. Noted that the Diocesan Council approved the revised apportionment formula at a recent past meeting.

Reports

- A. Rev. Mike Lokey was delighted to share that the Hillsboro property sale made it to settlement, was executed and the funds deposited. Rev Lokey clarified a need to confirm with the Standing Committee regarding the intended use of funds from the sale of any property. He shared there is a memo forthcoming from the Property Committee to all parishes regarding all requirements that must be met, prior to attempts to initiate and complete any sale of parish property. Rev. Lokey reviewed that the DOE has responsibility for 5 Orphan properties which mandates maintenance expenses provided by the DOE. Rev. Lokey reminded the Council that Rev. Cropper is the Chair of Cemeteries for the DOE. John Dragone supplemented the report to advise that Trinity Cathedral will participate in the expenses involved in maintenance and improvements of Bray House.

Camp Wright- Julia Connelly-Zahn – Julia provided a full report to the Council with copy to leadership in advance. The highlights included the highest enrollment for the upcoming season since the pandemic. Hiring for the summer is either complete (day staff) or well ahead of schedule. Julia looks forward to hosting tours of the CW facility for the Convention attendees. Julia notes that they are in the beginning stages of major fundraising, and she invites every parish to consider their part in this significant effort. Myron Richardson referred to an upcoming meeting with the Camp Wright staff (Julia) and the finance committee regarding the expenses involved with the shoreline improvements. The Bishop reinforced the investments in Camp Wright as a worthy effort and action. Vic Evans asked that information and announcements concerning these investments be made during the upcoming Convention.

Added agenda item – St Stephen's Ministry Fund.

Chrissy Aull asked to share a recent and brief e-mail from Rev. Charlotte Meyer regarding the status of funds in the St Stephen's Ministry Grant Funds. The e-mail was distributed. It advises that there were no Diocesan grants applied for during the recent cycle therefore no funds distributed. The funds will remain invested unless the Council has a different request/suggestion. There was no Diocesan Council action taken.

John Dragone submitted the following report as Transition matters. This was not distributed to members in advance.

Status of Parishes seeking Clergy:

- Christ Church, Easton
 - Interim Rector Patrick Collins in place
 - Preparing to start searching for fulltime rector
- Christ Church, Kent Island
 - Interim Rector Frank Crumbaugh in place (tenure extended)
 - Actively searching for fulltime rector
- St. Paul's, Kent
 - Has called an interim rector, Rev. Elenor Elsmere
 - Continuing to interview candidates for a full-time call
- St. Philips, Quantico
 - Presently covering services with supply clergy
 - Seeking part-time Clergy, tentative start date January 2025
- St. Paul's, Centreville
 - Currently covering services with Supply Clergy
 - Leadership discerning whether to call an interim
 - Bishop and C2O visited with Vestry, search, and communication committees on November 26th
- St. Paul's, Trappe
 - Has called Deacon Les Roberts

Deacon Assignments:

- Deacon Joanne Fisher is assigned to Christ Church, Cambridge

Bishop Marray left the room for the purpose of personnel discussions, including his own.

John Dragone, Canon to the Ordinary offered resolutions concerning one Diocesan staff member, other than the Bishop, compensation/benefits.

John presented the update to the Bishop's decision to move his retirement to an earlier date and reviewed conditions for same. A more detailed explanation was distributed electronically to all Diocesan Council members. John Dragone read a prepared resolution aloud to members. At least two amendments to the Resolution were offered and agreed upon.

Rev. Mike Lokey moved to approve the Resolution as amended. Council discussed the intended use of Search Committee funds. Also discussed necessity to communicate the Bishop's decision in timely fashion to the Diocese.

Regan Smith, Esq joined Zoom at this point. John Dragone read aloud the resolution as prepared for Regan's benefit. It was noted that Ernie Cornbrooks had been on the call since the beginning of the meeting. Ernie and Regan were asked if they had any concerns regarding the Resolution with amendments to meet the Bishop's altered timeline. Neither expressed any concerns.

The motion was again made by Mike Lokey with a second by Kay Ferraro, no further discussion, vote was unanimous to approve Resolution as amended. John Dragone to make changes.

- The Bishop was requested to rejoin the meeting. His report included noting a busy parish visitation schedule ahead. The Bishop referred to the Title IV announcement from the Chancellor and inquired of now releasing same to the Diocese. Both Ernie Cornbrooks and Regan Smith approved the release. Bishop shared the basis for his decision to depart sooner than originally announced, referring to the recent stress and impact on himself and his family. He noted the upcoming possible discernment process on which he should not have any impact.

Granville Blades requested a motion to approve uploading the Chancellor's announcement regarding Title IV resolution. Rev Mike Lokey moved, Rev Sichangi seconded, no further discussion, vote unanimous to approve.

Deacon Peggy Samuels offered a closing prayer.

Bishop updated the group on the funeral arrangements for Charlie Bohn.

Meeting adjourned, time not noted.

Next meeting date TBD.

Respectfully submitted, Chrissy Aull, Secretary