

Diocesan Council
Meeting Minutes
11-24-2025

Granville Blades, Esq – present
Chrissy Aull - present

Rev. Nicholas Sichangi - excused
Rev Dcn. Jim Kamihachi - present
Kay Ferraro – not present

Rev. Andrew Cropper - present
Vic Evans - present
Rev Susan Leight - present
Marion Robinette - excused

Rev. Stephanie Clayville - excused
Myron Richardson - excused
Sally Rifenburg - present
James Fitzgerald - present
Rev. Suz Southern - present

Guests
Julia Connelly
Rev Darcy Williams
Rt Rev Bud Shand

Previously distributed material

Meeting agenda, Meeting minutes, Special Rules of Order for Convention, financials,

Granville - Call to Order 6:05, timekeeper appointed, quorum confirmed

Granville shared that Lynda Habel has had to resign due to being ordained and due to a needed balance between laity and clergy as members, she is no longer able to serve on Council. James Martinez was nominated, asked and agreed to serve the remaining term and he understands that he will run again at Convention. Motion- Vic Evans Second- Andrew, motion carried.

James Martinez of the Worton I.U. parish will complete the year for Lynda Habel and will stand for reelection at Convention.

Granville Blades opened with a prayer. 6:08

Julia Connelly shared an update on Camp Wright. She emphasized that there is always space for campers from the Eastern Shore and particularly from the Diocese. Groundbreaking for the shoreline project was held and successful. Some capital projects coming up next year, including a replastered pool. Strong return of camp staff for next year. End of year/Giving Tuesday fundraising will happen next week. Chrissy has the CW report and will circulate it.

Agenda IV- Spiritual Journey- Rev. Susan Leight shared her spiritual journey.

Agenda V Approval of Minutes-

- 1) From August 14 2025 combined meeting- Andrew moved, Susan second, no questions or discussion, motion carried to approve
- 2) 22 September 2025 minutes from regular business meeting– Sally moved, Andrew second, no edits or changes– motion carried
- 3) 27 October 2025- special combined meeting with Standing Committee, Sally moved, Andrew, second, no edits or additions – motion carried to approve

Agenda VI – Ecclesiastical Authority Report- Rev Darcy Williams, Pres. Standing Committee (SC)

The SC is meeting 2x monthly, many committees to which they will provide support – a liaison assigned to every committee, listed on Diocesan Website, Vic expressed gratitude for the increased level of activity, Darcy notes the importance of awareness throughout the Diocese and the good work that the many committees are pursuing.

Transition - Rev. Claire Nevin Field has resigned as Dean Northern Convocation as she is out on LTD.

Rev. Lynn Wiljanen has turned in her resignation as Director of Bishop's Institute as she will now be Rector at Marion Station. Training packets have been created to be distributed to parishes for training in Lay Ministry. The trainees will be mentored by a LEM in their parish with consult by Rev. Laura Harbaugh. Certificates will be signed by Bishop Bud and Rev. Darcy.

The SC met with Rebecca Wilson, Chief of Strategy for The Episcopal Church, and Louisa McKellaston, Leadership Development Officer. Louisa will serve as our consultant to assess current staff positions and responsibilities to make the positions more efficient. SC is aware of the additional work the staff is carrying.

The Personnel and Compensation Committee will prepare a Resolution for Debate for Convention on the topic of the committee's authority and reporting relationship. Darcy explained that since this committee is doing work on policy there is a need for authority by Convention. Rev David Michaud to assist with writing the Resolution. Darcy explained that Jefferson Moak, archivist, noted no reference since 1972 made by Bishop Taylor with regard to authority by Convention, nothing until Bishop Townsend, nothing since then. Bishop Bud offered some historic perspective regarding the Vestry Act. It was noted that the P & C Committee is getting many projects done that have been inactive for several years.

Agenda VII-Transitions- Rev. Canon Brad Hinton, Transition Minister with Diocese of Delaware will serve as an assistant to the DOE for Transition. He has already assisted parishes in the Diocese that are in active search process, including St. Alban's, Kent, Centreville. He has assisted with the DOE database to update the same regarding status of parishes. The Presiding Bishop office has hired Craig Dressler to serve as support for small Dioceses.

Bishop Bud added that Brad engaged him in a Bishop to Bishop conversation with regard to a candidate. Darcy made reference to Rev Sheila McJilton as a retired Rector who may step in at St. Alban's in early 2026. Emmanuel in Chestertown will ask Rev Delcuze who will be available 2x monthly. Vic Evans noted the hard work of Deacon Lisa who is filling in during Rev. Field's absence.

Agenda VIII -Appointments – Rev Kevin Cross is appointed to the Personnel and Compensation Committee. Darcy asks for the consent by vote– Andrew Cropper moved, Vic second- motion carried.

Darcy announced the Committee on Resolutions for Debate for Convention – Deb Dragone, Gordon Fronk, Rev. Mike Lokey, Rev John Schaeffer, Linda Hurley –

Rev Henry Sabetti is the new Dean of Northern Convocation. Rev Sichangi had asked to be replaced as Dean given recent demands on his family.

Darcy noted the zoom Pre Convention Meeting Dec 9 – 7:00 p.m. – information meeting, details to be published.

Darcy asked for questions, there were none - Vic expressed gratitude to Rev Darcy and the Standing Committee for their extra work during this transition

Agenda IX 6:55 – Gather- Listen- Connect update – Chrissy provided an update on the Nov.15 event, along with input from Darcy and Rev Leight. She noted that Bishop Shand had been suddenly called away due a family health emergency. Bishop Shand expressed his deep gratitude for the circle of prayer and support as he and Lynne organized to leave the location to travel. Chrissy emphasized the extent of thought, prayer and organization put into the day by the Steering Committee and Darcy. Darcy noted that a part of the upcoming Convention has been reserved for further conversation, smaller events planned possibly by convocation to promote ongoing dialogue and reconciliation.

Vic expressed gratitude as a member of the Discernment Committee and in attendance, the day was very important for renewal of the DOE. Appreciates that the notes from the day will be shared verbatim, he feels a need for more attention to this ongoing matter, many people did not know of the extent of the damage done, much more happening that we did not know, communications to be improved, Vic expresses support to continue this effort. Granville suggests meetings on the local/county level not just Convocation to make it more accessible. There was significant agreement to that idea. Members of the Diocese should feel free to reach out to either the Steering or Standing Committee who are named on the DOE website.

Also, the Discernment Committee. It was appreciated that there were Chaplains present to be available. Suggested that Convention be focused on Discernment, with regard to the decisions that will need to be made. Darcy feels we may not be ready to move on to Discernment. The ability to talk about the good and the unpleasant is a part of Discernment. Reference was made to the Diocese of Maryland as Rev. Southern attended their recent Convention in person and Darcy viewed online, a resolution was passed to honor the DOE during our transition. Bishop Carrie offered prayer for the healing of the DOE and to be better together. Expressed that there is upset as to how Bishop Marray was treated, hurt for him. Some great things happening here in DOE. Strong fiscal standing, additional clergy.

Agenda X – Finance Report – Megan Timms shared reports in absence of Myron and Fred - hand-outs provided, Treasurer report – YTD – very close to budget, some changes, income from a Trust that was not expected, Expenses – under budget, Diocesan Convention under budget, some upcoming expenses, Commission on Ministry under budget, Dept of Missions- Fall Mission Summit not held in 2025, no applications for St Stephens Funds, under budget for payroll expenses due to staff turnover.

Total Other Income- closed on sale of Hillsboro is posted
Megan asked for questions – none

Treasurer's Notes – Modest return of audits - 17 audits from parishes to date, they were due in Sept. 2025

Some discussion around this, reasons why, not all parishes are completing audits. Suggested that some parish teams assist other less equipped parishes.

Update on pledges – 27 pledges received to date, all but 3 are 100% pledge.

Camp Wright shoreline groundbreaking ceremony –fundraising to kick off in January.

Church Initiatives Grant Committee – Megan presented as a staff advisor to this Committee. Noted that Chrissy is on the committee. St. Stephen's Fund - \$16000. To give in 2026 – Committee is updating process to make it easier. Updated policies to be presented to Council in early 2026. The Committee would like authority to combine the funds from 2025 with 2026. A review of the grants awarded in past two-three years was provided. Vic encourages the combination of the funds from 2025 and 2026. Noted by Megan who is staff advisor to the Committee, that there is a Council resolution provides broad parameters. Conversation about FOOD as a noted exemption. Chrissy shared, as member of this Committee, that it is likely the intent to exclude food and beverage as entertainment or part of another more primary event. Food as a direct response to food insecurity should be approved. Vic offers advisory that there is a great need to meet the food insecurity of today. Bishop Shand offered clarity about meeting the needs of the Diocese of Easton today and the intention of the St. Stephen's funds when St. Stephen's was closed. Might consider expanding the parameters/criteria.

Motion – Vic motion to approve, second, Sally to combine the funds from both years. Motion carried

Agenda XI – Noted that this topic was added to the draft agenda. Rules of Order for 2026 Diocesan Convention – handouts previously provided – Darcy led a review of each Rule – some additional discussion around Rule #7 as a step to obtain and sustain a quorum throughout the business portion of convention. All Clergy will be informed of the special rules in advance of the Convention.

Andrew moved to approve Rules of Order, Vic seconded, motion carried

Agenda XII – Approval Children’s Home Foundation proposed name for CW Shoreline- **Rock for Ages by Children’s Home Foundation** Move by Vic and Sally seconded, motion carried

Closing Prayer- Bishop Shand 7:50 p.m.

Next meeting - Jan 26,2026, 6 p.m.