

Episcopal Diocese of Western New York
Diocesan Council
December 14, 2006
Diocesan Offices
Minutes of Meeting

Voting members present: Bishop Garrison, Kim Baker, Sarah Buxton-Smith, Nancy Consedine, Owen Gould, Isaac Ihiasota, Steven Metcalfe, Barbara Northan, David Noves, Colleen O'Connor, Gloria Payne-Carter, Margaret Rose, Douglas Turner, Daniel Weir

Others present: Martin Gregg (alternate from Niagara Deanery), Richard Cutting (Treasurer), Howard Gondree (Comptroller), Lorraine Hapeman (Secretary)

Unable to attend: Ann Dutton, John Rupnow, Catherine Way

Total number present: 18

The Bishop called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Opening devotions were offered by Sarah Buxton-Smith.

Consent Agenda: The Consent Agenda including the minutes of the November 9, 2006 meeting and the Bishop's calendar was presented. The Consent Agenda was approved as presented.

Financial Matters: An eleven month financial report was presented. Fair share pledges for 2006 are still coming in slowly. 2006 pledges will continue to come in during the first quarter of 2007

Howard Gondree reported at the November Council meeting that the auditors have requested that work be done with respect to some internal controls around conflict of interest and ethics. It will be taken up at a future meeting but there needs to be a list of names from Council to work on this. Dan Weir volunteered.

There currently is a list of assistant treasurers that will be used as check signers. It is planned to have the assistant treasurers come in on a regularly scheduled day to sign checks. There is a need for one or two people in-house to serve as back-up when the assistant treasurers are not available or a check needs to be cut quickly. Bruce Gillies and Tori Duncan currently serve as in-house check signers but with Bruce's retirement and Tori's new job responsibilities there is a need for new in-house people. Howard requested that Lorraine Hapeman and Laurie Wozniak be approved to serve as back-up check signers. A motion was made that Tori Duncan will continue to serve as a check signer, Bruce Gillies will be removed as a check signer and Lorraine Hapeman and Laurie Wozniak will be added as check signers. The motion was seconded and approved.

The Bishop read a letter from the Episcopal Women's History Project asking for a donation and names of women that should be honored. The Bishop will make a donation from his Discretionary Fund. He asked for names and biographical information of women that should be honored. Virginia Snow, Nancy Piatkowski and Lydia Wright were suggested.

Marty Gregg announced that Judith Lee, Vicar of St. Andrew's, Burt signed an agreement to also serve St. John's in Wilson. The two churches realized this was an opportunity to share ministry, best practices, to work together and be a model for other churches. The leadership of both churches have signed an agreement to begin this new ministry.

Dan Weir reported that Deacon Lee Rose requested funds from the Lay Leadership Scholarship Fund to attend the March Healing Conference. The committee approved the request and Lee Rose will be asked to make a report. There is a need for new members for the committee. The fund has not been used as much as it could be. Steven Metcalfe reminded the members that there is also the Partnership Grants of \$25,000 that are available for deanery and parish level mission oriented ministries. There is a need for Council to develop the criteria and structure for these grants. Steven Metcalfe will lead this discussion at the January meeting. Kim Baker and Nancy Consedine volunteered to serve on the Lay Leadership Scholarship Committee.

Health Insurance: Howard Gondree explained that the current health care plan options sponsored by the Diocese are community-rated. This means that the costs are the same as those for individuals not in the group. The Health Care Task Force continues to recommend community-rated policies for the Diocese. The Diocese currently has a two-tiered system - single coverage and family coverage. This two-tiered system is not advantageous to congregations with a priest and spouse and no family. Un-grouping may provide some solutions to congregations but because the insurance market continues to change, it may be an advantage to the Diocese in the future to have a large number eligibles for re-grouping for bargaining power. The Health Care Task Force's proposal is to establish the conditions and procedure to obtain Diocesan Council consent to un-group from Diocesan-sponsored group health insurance plans. (A copy of this proposal is attached to the original of these minutes.) There are a few churches that have already un-grouped. Dan Weir moved the adoption of the proposal submitted by the Health Insurance Task Force to establish conditions and procedure for un-grouping. Barbara Northan seconded the motion. Each congregation wanting to un-group would have to become their own group and all their employees would be under that group. The motion carried unanimously.

Diocesan Council priorities and 2007 reporting schedule: The Bishop asked Council to discuss what they want to hear about in the coming year. Items identified were:

- An overview of ministry development groups - lay and ordained
- More dialogue with Episcopal Community Services
- Commission on Ministry - ordination preparation, how it works, who's in the process, etc.
- Small parish groups
- Millennium Development Goals
- Celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Episcopal Church in the United States

- Report from the Deans
- Hear from a wider range of youth not just the Youth Missioner
- Niagara Deanery Youth as a model for other Deanery youth groups
- Ministry to and by older people
- Identify two or three things the Diocese is good at and put focus on those things
- Diocese as a very humane region
- Demographic trends in the area - how to plan for the future (projections)
- The General Convention Resolutions - five categories
 - Employment practices (January)
 - Legacy of Slavery (February) ask Stephen Smith to be a resource for this discussion
 - A Broken World and a Ministry of Reconciliation (March)
 - Bringing the Good News to all People (April)
 - Stewardship (May)

It was suggested to take a theme that is designated for a month and discuss it the month prior. In January there will be a report on the Employment Practices and further discussion will be held on scheduling other reports.

The members thanked the Diocese for sending Christmas cards to the churches and for dinner.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine B. Hapeman
Secretary