



Minutes

Diocesan Council
Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming
Draft Minutes – November 21, 2025
Meeting via Zoom

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

The Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley, bishop provisional, called the meeting to order via Zoom and welcomed members.

The bishop noted that the Rev. Amy Mayes, who has previously served as chaplain, was not present and that appointing a chaplain for Council will be added to future business. The bishop led the opening prayer.

2. Roll and Introductions

Council members, ex officio members, and staff introduced themselves, including their congregations, regions, and roles. New members and the youth delegate were welcomed.

3. Approval of Minutes and Agenda

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the previous Diocesan Council meeting.
 - **Outcome:** Motion approved.
- **Motion:** To approve the agenda for the current meeting.
 - **Outcome:** Motion approved.

4. Orientation to Diocesan Council Role

The bishop offered an orientation to the work of Diocesan Council, emphasizing:

- Council acts on behalf of diocesan convention between annual sessions.
- Council's primary responsibilities are governance, policy, and oversight; staff oversee day-to-day operations.
- The importance of checks and balances among Bishop, Council, Standing Committee, and other bodies.

Members were encouraged to read the diocesan canons as the primary guide to diocesan structure and responsibilities.

5. Bishop's Report

5.1 Ethete Museum Project and Property



Council received a detailed update on the museum project in Ethete:

- Renovation of Building 12 (museum) on the Circle is nearing completion. A walkthrough with local leaders and the contractor is planned for December.
- Significant funds have been invested, but there is no written memorandum of understanding specifying responsibilities for operations, staffing, furnishings, and utilities.
- Diocesan leadership, the Ethete Task Force, local congregations, and the Northern Arapaho Tribal Council will work to draft one or more memoranda of understanding.

The bishop reported that:

- The diocese owns multiple parcels of property in and around Ethete.
- Some parcels are of interest to the local school district and tribal leadership.
- A land exchange approved by all parties in November 2024 was not filed with the county due to staff error; current staff are now completing that filing.

The bishop will bring a detailed property map and proposals for Council's consideration at a future meeting.

5.2 Appointments and Ex Officio Membership

The bishop reported:

- Two episcopal appointments to the Commission on Ministry are pending and in discernment.
- One episcopal appointment remains to be made to the disciplinary board.
- The ecumenical officer (the Rev. Anne Marie Delgado) and representative to the Wyoming Interfaith Network (the Rev. Warren Murphy) will continue in their roles.
- An Episcopal Relief & Development liaison and diocesan historian have not yet been appointed.
- The current archdeacon has resigned; the bishop is in conversation with a deacon who may serve as archdeacon.

Regarding ex officio seats on Council, the bishop proposed that no additional ex officio members be added at this time, allowing Council to assess needs and invite specific voices as needed.

5.3 Cathedral Commission

The bishop informed Council that:

- A new cathedral commission is being formed to clarify the role of a cathedral in the Diocese of Wyoming and to examine the relationship between the diocese and St. Matthew's Cathedral in light of the diocesan office's relocation to Casper.



- The commission will also address unresolved facility issues, particularly the condition and liabilities of Hunter Hall.
- Membership will include diocesan and cathedral representatives; a retired cathedral dean with broad experience has agreed to consult with the commission.

5.4 Staffing Structure and Titles

The bishop outlined a new staff structure based on three overlapping circles: bishop, administration, and discernment.

Key elements include:

- Administration and finance led by the director of administration, who will also function as chief operating and financial officer.
- A small team of canons focused on transitions and social justice, discernment, and evangelism/networking.
- Realignment of missional-priest roles to promote financial transparency and support congregations in developing sustainable local ministry models.

An organizational chart will be shared at a future meeting.

5.5 Confluence Leadership Gathering

Council received an update on the Confluence leadership gatherings, facilitated by Pastor Chris Hart. The next Confluence will be held in late January in Casper and will focus on diocesan identity and preparation for the upcoming bishop search.

6. Officers and Governance Practices

Council confirmed that:

- The Rev. Mike Evers continues as vice president of Council.
- Dr. Erin Hasty continues as secretary of Council.

Questions were raised regarding how officers are selected and whether there is a succession plan. The bishop asked a small group, including officers and the chancellor, to review the diocesan canons and propose best practices and possible council rules or bylaws. Recommendations will be brought to a future meeting.

7. Finance Report

The treasurer and director of administration presented the finance report:

- The diocese is under budget on expenses and income is generally stable.
- The current accounting system (FastFunds) contains significant inconsistencies in chart-of-accounts structure and data entry, preventing the generation of reliable system-based financial reports.



- The accounting firm is assisting with cleanup and will support migration to Realm, a church management and accounting platform.

Because of these issues, standard financial statements were not presented. Staff committed to providing accurate, system-generated reports once the new system is in use.

Congregational accounting:

- Congregations using FastFunds are not required to switch to Realm. Realm will be offered as an option.
- A survey is being sent to all congregational treasurers and bookkeepers to clarify local systems and contacts and to determine how the diocese can best support them.

8. Property Committee Report

The Property Committee chair reported:

- Building-condition assessments have been completed in Regions III and VI by an outside contractor; other regions will follow.
- Many church buildings show substantial deferred maintenance, and some have serious structural or environmental issues (including mold).
- The committee is working in partnership with the foundation's property-specific CapEx fund to prioritize and address urgent needs.
- Processes are being drafted for handling both planned capital work and emergencies.

Specific congregational actions will be brought to Council or the foundation as needed.

9. Foundation Report

The foundation reported:

- Strong engagement with the *Love Thy Neighbor* grants, which fund local holiday outreach ministries in congregations across the diocese.
- Continued work on Sacred Spaces and property grants in partnership with the Property Committee.
- Election of officers for the coming year and alignment of foundation systems with diocesan accounting improvements.
- Ongoing work toward a memorandum of understanding with the diocese regarding the diocesan office building.

10. Standing Committee Report – Bishop Search

The standing committee president reported:

- New members have joined the standing committee following convention.



- Three consultant candidates for the bishop search have been interviewed; a letter of agreement with the selected consultant is being finalized with the Presiding Bishop's office.
- A timeline has been set: bishop election in early to mid-May 2027; ordination in October 2027.
- Search and transition committees will be formed, and job descriptions will be shared with the diocese.

11. Council Representative to Foundation Board

- **Motion:** To elect the Rev. Pamela Glasser as the Diocesan Council representative to the Episcopal Foundation of Wyoming board.
 - o **Outcome:** Motion approved.

12. Executive Committee Delegation – Year-End Staff Appreciation

The bishop raised the question of whether diocesan staff should receive any year-end appreciation and noted the history of Christmas bonuses and the theological and financial questions they raise.

- **Motion:** To delegate to the executive committee (bishop, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) the authority to determine whether and how to provide year-end appreciation to diocesan staff in 2025 and to consider longer-term practice, reporting the decision to Council.
 - o **Outcome:** Motion approved.

13. Regional Reports

Regional representatives briefly highlighted ministry and outreach in their regions, including:

- Creative uses of *Love Thy Neighbor* grants.
- New models for supply clergy service.
- Pastoral-care initiatives (for example, death-and-dying education and CPR training in an older congregation).

No formal actions were taken in this section.

14. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

The Rev. Camie Dewey offered the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned.