



*the Episcopal Church  
in Wyoming*

Diocesan Council  
Minutes  
January 26-27, 2024

The Diocesan Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming met at the Diocesan Office, Casper Wyoming, on Friday, January 26, 2024, and Saturday, January 27, 2024. Council Vice President the Rev. Michael Evers presided.

Council members present were the Rev. Mike Evers, Taimi Kuiva, the Rev. Amy Mayes, Mary Appel, Kim McAtee, Erin Hastey, John Sullivan, the Rev. Lori Modesitt, the Rev. Walt Seeley, Shirley Wildman, and Sue Rector.

Also present were Standing Committee members the Rev. Camie Dewey, Linda McElwain, the Rev. Pam Bright, the Rev. Meg Nickles, Mary Beth Evers, and Vernon Miller.

Staff members present were the Rev. Canon Bobbe Fitzhugh, the Rev. Canon Lara Gilbert, Canon Jessica Reynolds, Genie Osburn, Kira Bachus, and Kristi Wallin.

### Summary

24012601 Mary Appel moved to approve the agenda. Erin Hastey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

24012602 Mary Appel moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Shirley Wildman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

24012603 Kim McAtee moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$26,871 for the Rev. Canon Bobbe Fitzhugh. Mary Appel seconded. Motion carried.

24012604 Taimi Kuiva moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$29,978 for The Rev. Tom Ketner. John Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.

24012605 John Sullivan moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$24,838.51 for the Rev. Canon Lara Gilbert. Mary Appel seconded. Motion carried.

24012606 Erin Hastey moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$29,710 for the Rev. Linda Anderson. Taimi Kuiva seconded. Motion carried.

24012607 Mary Appel moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$15,000 for the Rev. Steve Christy. Seconded by Kim McAtee. Motion carried.

24012608 John Sullivan moved to approve a housing allowance in the amount of \$12,120 for the Rev. Roxanne Friday. Seconded by Mary Appel. Motion carried.

24012609 John Sullivan moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$30,000 for the Rev. Randy Belton. Seconded by Mary Appel. Motion carried.

24012610 Mary Appel moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$30,000 for the Rt. Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler. Seconded by Taimi Kuiva. Motion carried.

24012611 Erin Hasteley moved to approve the Internal Control and Financial Policy as presented by the Finance Committee with the understanding that they will only be binding for the Diocese., Mary Appel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

24012612 Mary Appel moved to accept the financial report. Seconded by Taimi Kuiva. Motion carried.

24012613 Lori Modesitt moved to formalize the ArtSpirit Committee, reduce the property insurance line item by \$7,775, create a line item for ArtSpirit, and allocate \$7,775 to the ArtSpirit line item. Amy Mayes seconded. Motion is carried.

24012614 John Sullivan moved to release the funds restricted for GROUNDED out-of-state initiatives to the ArtSpirit Committee. Mary Appel seconds. Motion is carried.

24012615 Mary Appel moved to commission the Ethete Task Force to address the renovations at St. Michael's Circle in Ethete. Motion seconded by Kim McAtee. Motion carried.

24012616 Shirley Wildman moved to commission the Cathedral Task Force. Erin Hasteley seconded the motion. Motion carried. Taimi Kuiva abstained from the vote.

24012617 Lori Modesitt moved to allocate \$115,000 out of Diocesan reserves for St. Matthew's Cathedral's Operating Budget and up to \$50,000 for repairs to the Deanery and Dean's office in Hunter Hall. Walt Seeley seconded the motion. Motion carried. Taimi Kuiva abstained from the vote.

24012618 Mary Appel moved that the participant deposits be refunded with \$60,000 coming from the 2024 pilgrimage line item and \$6000 from the pilgrimage reserve line item. Sue Rector seconded the motion. Motion carried.

24012701 Shaelee moved that the proceeds from the HR Camp sale be allocated to the Ethete Renovation Project. Erin Seconded the motion. Motion passed.

24012702 Amy moved that the council memorialize the decision to sell HR Camp by issuing the following statement: "In retrospect, we acknowledge that at the August 18, 2023, Diocesan Council meeting no vote was taken regarding the sale of HR Camp; however, the council was informed in Executive Session and no dissent was expressed."

24012703 A motion was made by Mary Appel to add Mike Evers (Vice President, Diocesan Council) and Camie Dewey (Standing Committee) to the list of authorized signers. Lori Modesitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristi Wallin  
Executive Assistant to the Bishop of Wyoming

*"FAITH ON THE NEW FRONTIER"*

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Diocesan Council  
January 26-27, 2024  
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by The Rev. Mike Evers, Diocesan Council Vice President. He reminded the group that God is within us, and He is in this room with us.

The meeting began with everybody in the meeting introducing themselves.

Mary Appel moved to approve the agenda. Erin Hastey seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mary Appel moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Shirley Wildman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Standing Committee Report**

Standing Committee Chair Megan Nickles gave an update on Diocesan daily work, while planning for contingencies based on a foggy future. She said folks in the Diocese are stepping up whenever asked, showing great strength in our organization.

### **Financial Reports**

Canon Jessica Reynolds gave a 2023 financial report and the 2024 budget presentation. She reported the Finance Committee has been meeting every other week and have reviewed the balance sheet and budget over actual.

The Council was asked to approve the portion of staff clergy salaries allocated to housing.

- Kim McAtee moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$26,871 for the Rev. Canon Bobbe Ftizhugh. Mary Appel seconded. Motion carried.
- Taimi Kuiva moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$29,978 for The Rev. Tom Ketner. John Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.
- John Sullivan moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$24,838.51 for the Rev. Canon Lara Gilbert. Mary Appel seconded. Motion carried.
- Erin Hastey moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$29,710 for the Rev. Linda Anderson. Taimi Kuiva seconded. Motion carried.
- Mary Appel moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$15,000 for the Rev. Steve Christy. Seconded by Kim McAtee. Motion carried.
- John Sullivan moved to approve a housing allowance in the amount of \$12,120 for the Rev. Roxanne Friday. Seconded by Mary Appel. Motion carried.
- John Sullivan moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$30,000 for the Rev. Randy Belton. Seconded by Mary Appel. Motion carried.
- Mary Appel moved to approve the housing allowance in the amount of \$30,000 for the Rt. Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler. Seconded by Taimi Kuiva. Motion carried.

### **Internal Controls**

The Rev. Mike Evers presented the Internal Control and Financial Policy (Internal Controls) for The Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming and the Foundation for the Episcopal Church in Wyoming with input from Megan Nickles and Jessica Reynolds.

Discussion centered around internal controls and the consolidation of financials between the

Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming and the Foundation for the Episcopal Church in Wyoming. It was noted internal controls are meaningful and important; however, the bigger discussion is the relationship between the two organizations. It was noted we hadn't had a conversation about this with both boards in a while. Today's discussion will begin a conversation with each other about what works for each organization.

It was requested that the following documents will be shared with the Council:

- 2022 Internal Controls Document (not approved by, but shared with previously Council and Foundation)
- 2024 Internal Controls with the most recent auditors' red-lines
- Highlighted document from auditors showing where we are out of compliance

Erin Hastey moved to approve the Internal Control and Financial Policy as presented by the Finance Committee with the understanding that they will only be binding for the Diocese., Mary Appel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mary Appel moved to accept the financial report. Seconded by Taimi Kuiva. Motion carried.

### **ArtSpirit**

Genie Osburn gave a report on behalf of the newly-formed ArtSpirit Advisory Committee. The committee consists of Carl Morton, the Rev. Travis Helms, Genie Osburn, and Kristi Wallin. Genie presented the current art exhibits in rotation, which include White Robe, GROUNDED, and Dying Sorrow. White Robe has no funding for 2024. GROUNDED has commitments in other areas of the world and will be shipped to Washington, DC, for an exhibit at American University. ArtSpirit has requested funding from the Foundation for an Artist in Residency program in partnership with Thomas the Apostle Center in Cody, WY. Genie Osburn asked the Council to formalize the ArtSpirit Committee and to allocate \$7,775 to a line item in the 2024 Budget for White Robe commitments. Jessica suggested two ways to fund this request: use funds from the Diocese's property insurance budget or take money out of diocesan reserves.

Lori Modesitt moved to formalize the ArtSpirit Committee, reduce the property insurance line item by \$7,775, create a line item for ArtSpirit, and allocate \$7,775 to the ArtSpirit line item. Amy Mayes seconded. Motion is carried.

John Sullivan moved to release the funds restricted for GROUNDED out-of-state initiatives to the ArtSpirit Committee. Mary Appel seconds. Motion is carried.

### **Ethete**

Shirley Wildman gave a presentation about the soon-to-be commissioned Ethete Task Force. On February 15, 2024, the task force will walk through the current museum in Ethete. On February 19, 2024, the committee will come to Casper to view the artifacts currently stored at the Diocesan Office. Megan Nickles gave a brief history of the Ethete projects and said Melinda Bobo will be appointed to the Diocesan Council in an ex-officio capacity to serve as liaison with the Ethete Task Force. The overarching concern is creating a plan to get the artifacts currently held by the Diocese back to the people of the Wind River Reservation.

Mary Appel moved to commission the Ethete Task Force to address the renovations at St. Michael's Circle in Ethete. Motion seconded by Kim McAtee. Motion carried.

### **Cathedral**

Jessica Reynolds gave a presentation on the Cathedral Task Force. She asked for a motion to commission a Cathedral Task Force chaired by The Very Rev. Rick Veit. The task force will build a

long-term relationship between the Diocese and St. Matthew's Cathedral to ensure vitality, programming, and building needs in Laramie.

Shirley Wildman moved to commission the Cathedral Task Force. Erin Hastey seconded the motion. Motion carried. Taimi Kuiva abstained from the vote.

Lori Modesitt moved to allocate \$115,000 out of Diocesan reserves for St. Matthew's Cathedral's Operating Budget and up to \$50,000 for repairs to the Deanery and Dean's office in Hunter Hall. Walt Seeley seconded the motion. Motion carried. Taimi Kuiva abstained from the vote.

### **Reimbursement of Egypt Pilgrimage Deposits.**

The November 2023 pilgrimage to Egypt was canceled, and insurance has not been willing to cover the \$2,000 per person deposits made by many of the participants. The deposits totalled \$66,000.

Mary Appel moved that the participant deposits be refunded with \$60,000 coming from the 2024 pilgrimage line item and \$6000 from the pilgrimage reserve line item. Sue Rector seconded the motion. Motion carried. Note: All those who will receive a reimbursement abstained from the vote (Seeley, Evers, Modesitt).

### **Congregational Vitality Assessments and Building Audits**

Meg Nickles informed the council about the creation of a program to help address building maintenance and improvement needs for all of the diocese-owned properties. She reminded the group that the Diocesan Council owns all of the buildings, and local congregations hold the buildings in trust. Frequently, grants are requested by local churches for building improvements, yet neither the church nor the Diocese has the full picture of a building's needs.

A small group consisting of Mike Evers, Meg Nickles, Katie Parrish, Jessica Reynolds, and Kristi Wallin has been working on a program that would offer each church the opportunity to have their buildings evaluated by a professional. In addition, Jessica is working with The Episcopal Church to create a congregational vitality assessment. The evaluation and the assessment will be free of charge for the congregations.

The day's session ended with a prayer by the Rev. Amy Mayes.

January 27, 2024

The Diocesan Council began the day with a lovely morning prayer service led by the Rev. Amy Mayes.

### **Allocation of HR Camp Sale Proceeds**

The Finance Committee recommended that proceeds from the Sale of HR Camp be allocated to the Ethete Renovation Project.

There was much discussion about how the sale of HR Camp was conducted and how information was disseminated. Some members expressed concern that the Council did not have input on the sale before the Standing Committee approved the sale. Others informed the group that the Bishop had informed the Council in August. It was concluded that there should have been a vote recorded in the August minutes.

Shaelee moved that the proceeds from the HR Camp sale be allocated to the Ethete Renovation Project. Erin Seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Amy moved that the council memorialize the decision to sell HR Camp by issuing the following statement: "In retrospect, we acknowledge that at the August 18, 2023, Diocesan Council meeting no vote was taken regarding the sale of HR Camp; however, the council was informed in Executive Session and no dissent was expressed." Motion passed with four abstentions (members not on council at that time).

Shaelee moved, and Walt Seeley seconded that the Diocesan Council ratify the sale of the real property in Converse County, commonly known as HR Camp (legal description attached), and terms and conditions outlined in the November 1, 2023, contract between the Diocese of Wyoming and the Wyoming Rescue Mission. Motion passed on a voice vote.

Abstentions: Sue, Mary, Tiami, Kim, Erin

Erin suggested that our procedures for executive sessions should be clarified. Vern Miller told the group that issues relating to personnel, real estate, and legal can be in executive session, with actions taken in full session.

### **Foundation Report**

Katie Parrish reported on the Foundation. She first gave an overview of how the Foundation is a supporting organization to the Diocese and what that means. She explained how board members come on to the Foundation and gave an update on current board members and officers. She reported that the Foundation continues to work on ways to clarify its grant guidelines and how the Foundation can support the mission of the Episcopal Church in Wyoming through grants and funding opportunities.

## Staff Reports

- Jessica Reynolds (Transitions)
- The Rev. Bobbe Fitzhugh (Missional Priests, SoulShop, Pilgrimage)
- Genie Osburn (Communications, Newsletter)
- Kristi Wallin (Safe Church, Licensing, Friendship Visits)
- The Rev. Lara Gilbert (By Whose Authority, Book Study)

A motion was made by Mary Appel to add Mike Evers (Vice President, Diocesan Council) and Camie Dewey (Standing Committee) to the list of authorized signers. Lori Modesitt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## Regional Reports

### Region 1: Shaelee Donahue

- St. Christopher's in the Pines - outside of Ten Sleep. They want it to be more accessible to those with mobility issues. Perhaps a motorized wheelchair.

### Region 2: Mary Appel

- Good Shepherd Church – Sundance
  - They have come to an agreement with The Rev. Annemarie Delgado to be their Priest-in-Charge where she will serve twice a month after The Rev. JoAnne Moore retired at the end of December.
  - They continue to make plans for the Sacred Space next to the church and will begin construction in the Spring.
- St. Luke's Church – Buffalo
  - I met the new rector for St. Luke's, The Rev. Todd Young. He was looking forward to annual meeting and described things as quiet between the Epiphany and waiting for Lent.
- Christ's Church – Newcastle
  - The Rev. Steve Christy, Priest-in-Charge, is getting to know the people of Newcastle.
  - They have returned to having a Sunday morning service rather than the afternoon service like they had the previous year.
  - Steve goes to Newcastle once during the week where they have a soup lunch at the church for those interested in coming as well as a Bible/book study.
- St. Francis on the Prairie - Wright
  - Rev. Steve Christy visits Wright twice a month for Services.
  - Although attendance is low the church is still involved with community outreach with their participation in the community clothing exchange that happens quarterly.
- Holy Trinity Church – Gillette
  - Holy Trinity has a new priest, The Rev. Nelson Aloo. He was a transitional deacon and returned to Kenya in November and was ordained a priest. Now they are working on making Nelson canonically resident.

- They also received a grant from the Foundation to build a labyrinth as part of a meditative garden that has been in the plans since they built the church.
- All Souls Church – Kaycee
  - I didn't get in touch with The Rev. Carol Buckingham for a report.
- St. Peter's Church – Sheridan
  - They started EfM last fall and had enough people interested that they have 2 classes.

Lori Modesitt gave a report on Region 3:

- St. Mark's - Casper
  - The Rev. Jim Shumard's departure, The Rev. Camie Dewey's arrival, Hearts to Hands Diaper Bank, 120 year anniversary in May.
- St. Stephen's - Casper
  - St. Stephen's: working on strategic planning, building needs, working on defining mission
- Ketner's churches:
  - Glenrock has music director
  - Glendo: community dinners with other churches, carols and beer at the old saloon
  - Douglas: campfire service on one Sunday evening each month, community outreach, book study at Whistle Stop
  - Wheatland: Jennie is doing great. Campfire services, well attended, book studies at the Wanderer,
- Torrington: Kenli has brought a spark of life.
- Hartville

John Sullivan, Region 4, described St. Christopher's grant for veteran's outreach.

Region 5 - Erin Hastey

- St. Hubert the Hunter - Bonderant
  - Most active of Randy's congregations and are a very active group. Dinner church, active group.
- Oregon Trail Memorial - two consistent parishioners, working on historical site designation
- Holy Communion - Rock Springs
  - Christmas outreach
- St. James - Kemmerer
  - Senior Center outreach
- St. Andrews in the Pines - Pinedale
  - Jonie Mack - expanding music ministry, Taize, increasing age diversity,

Region 6 - Sue Rector had to leave early before she could give a report.

Vice President Evers asked the group for suggestions for the next Diocesan Council meetings. The ideas shared were:

- Put regional reports at the beginning of the meeting so that members can discuss the activities throughout the meeting and at meal times.
- Provide a Diocesan Council and Standing Committee contact list, including cell phones and email addresses, to all members



- Send out meeting packets earlier so that board members have sufficient time to review the materials
- Consider different meeting times to accommodate members who work
- Schedule future meetings at the Cathedral and Ethete
- Create a template for the Regional report
- Continue the noon-to-noon model

The group expressed a desire to learn more about how Foundation grants outside of budget are accounted for and followed. They'd also like to have a regular report, for information only, of the Foundation grants to our churches.

The Reverend Canon Lara Gilbert closed the meeting with prayer.

The meeting was adjourned.

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