

Diocesan Council
Report to Deanery – January 28, 2016

October 22, 2015

Audit Committee Report

Audit Report for 2014 was received and accepted.

Cathedral Update

Dean of the Cathedral, Jep Streit, reported that there will be an open house to thank the entire diocese for their support for and contributions to the renovations on November 7. Some of the major changes are: skylights and glass doors, a handicap accessible elevator and ramp, chairs have replaced pews, and a foot washing station for the Muslim community in Sproat Hall which is now dividable to accommodate more meetings.

Bishop's Time

Bishop Gayle returned from an annual Suffragan Bishops retreat held in Europe. In the first part of the trip, they were in Rome, where they had the privilege of having an audience with the Pope. Other parts of the trip included visiting a refugee camp in Rome, visiting the Anglican center in Rome and ended the trip with the Convention in Paris. The suffragan bishops will be coming to Boston for their retreat in 2017.

Treasurer's Report

Fossil Fuel Free Fund – this will be referred to as the “Carbon Divestment Plus” investment option. Jim’s memo titled “Update from the Diocesan Financial Advisory Committee” provides more detailed information about the fund. The Diocesan Council voted (a) express it’s thanks to the Trustees of Donations for the successful design of an alternative investment vehicle that is free from fossil fuel production companies and has an overweight in companies that are environmental innovators; and (b) approve a payment of \$35,000 to the Trustees of Donations as reimbursement for the consultant search costs incurred in the design of this alternative investment vehicle.

Budget Transitional Comments – Jim distributed a memo to Council titled “Transitional Comments about the Budget” which details possible plans for future budgets.

3rd Quarter Financials – Gerry Sullivan, Chief Business Officer, gave the report. We currently have a \$559,572 surplus which is mostly due to timing – several expenses will be paid in the 4th quarter. Gerry still expects that we will still have a surplus at the end of the year, just not nearly as large as it currently is.

Jim Gammill Thank You

Joe Robinson presented a resolution in honor of/to thank Jim Gammill who is retiring as our Diocesan Treasurer.

Reports/Updates

Hub Fundraising – Lynd Matt, Director of Development, gave the update on plans for future hub fundraising. For this report, he focused specifically on fundraising from parishes. They are hoping to raise \$450,000 from parishes. 70% of funds raised will be allocated for local initiatives and 30% in support of mission hubs. They are suggesting a rapid feasibility study conducted by CCS for each participating parish. Parishes will not need to provide any resources out of pocket for this.

The Council voted to enthusiastically encourage and endorse the diocesan development office to present the collaborative campaign model for future Mission Hub fundraising to Diocesan Convention with the expectation that they return to Council in December with budgetary details.

Mission Tithe Grant – Holly Hartman announced that the Mission Tithe Council Grant this year will be awarded to Trinity Concord who have a partnership with the Maranyundo School in Rwanda. They were the only application this year, but they have applied in previous years and been encouraged to re-apply when they were not chosen in the past. The school is for girls only and they are now in the process of building a high school which the \$25k grant would help fund the construction of this project.

Mission Strategy Update – Libby Berman gave the update. ExecComm encouraged the team to move ahead with a list of new members to augment the current committee. The team will give a presentation at Convention which will include a video and interactive piece. The six listening sessions will be posted soon. The team is researching ways to be in touch with and get feedback from those who often don't have their voices heard. Billy is the point person for receiving questions over the next couple of weeks before Convention.

Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee met on October 1, and discussed whether or not to continue having a separate supplemental budget in the future, changing assessments and folding the together now campaign budget into the regular budget.

December 3, 2015

Bishop's Time

Bishop Gates reflected on his recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land and spoke about the Rededication of the Cathedral and Seating of the Bishop followed by Convention last month. Bishop Gates talked about the importance of continuing to welcome the Muslim community that uses the Cathedral for their Friday prayers, especially in the wake of the recent mass shootings in Paris, Colorado and California. Bp Gates, Libby Berman and Sam Rodman just got back from a conference held by the MA Council of Churches with other denominational leaders.

There was a question and subsequent discussion about the safety of the Muslim and Christian communities that worship in the Cathedral and whether or not there is a threat of either of those groups being targeted for violence.

Treasurer's Report

Newly elected treasurer, Lisa Garcia, introduced herself and spoke about her experience and goals for the upcoming year. She plans to have monthly meetings with Gerry Sullivan and Bp Gates and will regularly attend, as able, meetings of the Budget Committee, Executive Committee, Diocesan Council, the FAC and the Trustees of Donations.

Boston/Cambridge Hub Budget

Council voted to approve a first year budget for the Boston/Cambridge Mission Hub of up to \$85,000.

Mission Hub Fundraising

Sam Rodman gave the update about the cost of the new collaborative campaign for Mission Hub fundraising. The budget presented is still in need of some tweaking, but they are estimating total costs to be between \$220,000-\$232,500. All of these costs would be covered by the diocesan share of the money collected through the campaign. Sam and Lynd aren't seeking Council's approval at this point, but wanted to update the Council on where they are at this point as they were asked to do at the October meeting when they presented their fundraising plan. The ideal timeline is for feasibility studies to begin at the end of January and campaigns to run from March to June of 2016.

Convention Debrief/Feedback

Friday night – registration was confusing on Friday night and the quorum issue wasn't explained well enough. It was nice to have the Eucharist at the beginning of Convention/on Friday night vs. having it at the end of Convention.

Saturday – Not a lot of time to talk to/get to know other delegates; it was disappointing to not have more contested elections – why aren't people putting themselves forward for leadership positions? How can we make people feel invited to run for positions and submit resolutions? – one recommendation was to send out a letter in the Spring notifying delegates/clergy of Convention, another was to have a "resolutions" workshop to inform people; this year in particular it felt like everyone was participating together; set aside specific space/time for people to get together; make more space for non-voting people who want to come to Convention; having Laura Everett from the MA Council of Churches and the Bishop of W. MA speak (on Friday) was great; the presentation from the Cathedral communities was very powerful, especially from the Muslim community; space in general was an issue.

Next year's Convention will be 2 days, November 4-5, at the Holiday Inn in Mansfield, MA.

Mission Strategy Update

Karen Coleman and Billy Boyce gave the update. They asked for feedback from Council on their presentation at Convention. The next major piece of the Mission Strategy process is the listening sessions. Facilitators of these sessions are going through training in the next couple of weeks. Dates of all the listening sessions can be found on the diocesan website. Council members are encouraged to send announcements/emails to their deaneries so that the message is coming from someone they know and not necessarily a diocesan "blast" email. Council also recommended that some sort of open invitation to come from Bp Gates, asking people to participate.

SLAM Update

The building belongs to the diocese and it is starting to fall apart. The concern is that the diocese doesn't do work on it soon, they will lose this asset. The recommendation was to take \$300k from the maintenance reserve fund (the whole fund currently has a little over \$1mil in it) to do work on the outside/shell of the building to keep it standing until any future decisions on programming is made. The Executive Committee voted the following at their meeting on 11/19/15 to approve a withdrawal of up to \$300,000 from the Maintenance Reserve Fund to mitigate serious structural concerns on the parish hall and church building of St. Luke's and St. Margaret's, Allston, MA.

Other

Updating the "topics" list that Council members are interested in hearing about; the job description for the Canon to the Ordinary position has been posted on the diocesan website; A/V upgrades are in the works for the diocesan offices.

Retreat
January 22-23, 2016

Bishops' Time

Bp Alan spoke of his dad's passing last month. He gave an update on "how it's been going" in month 16 since becoming bishop. He began a discussion on how Council members can build trust among themselves and as a group so that difficult conversations can be more easily and effectively had. He proposed the following process:

Any time Council members feel that something needs to be addressed or readdressed for any reason, they should feel invited to speak to someone on the Executive Committee so that the topic can be brought up at EC and put on a future Council agenda for discussion.

There were 24 applications for the Canon to the Ordinary position. Only 8 are people currently serving or known in MA. They are hoping to hire someone by early March.

Bp Gayle spoke about the upcoming Spring Learning Event (3/5/16 at the Cathedral) which will feature "When God Left the Building," a movie that looks at societal changes and their effect on traditional church attendance. The keynote speaker will be Molly Baskette, author of Real Good Church. Bp Gayle spoke about the importance of Council members attending these kinds of events, or at the very least, encouraging their parishes and people in their deaneries to attend. Bp Gayle reported that the Chancellor just sent her a letter about upcoming legislation on taxation of religious property which will likely affect us all. She encouraged Council members to inform their churches and deaneries of this. Bp Gayle's term as president of the MA Council of Churches will end this February, but she will continue to serve on their Executive Committee. Bp Gayle also reported that the house of bishops has made it their intention to focus on racism in the Episcopal Church.

Q&A

The bishops responded to a question about the recent action taken by the primates of the Anglican Communion to "suspend" the Episcopal Church. The Anglican Consultative Council is meeting in April, at which time they hope for more clarity since the primates don't actually have this authority. A full response from the bishops can be found here:

<http://www.diomass.org/diocesan-news/moment-re-affirmation-mass-bishops-respond-anglican-primates-action>

Mission Strategy Update & Discussion

There have been three open listening sessions so far. The listening sessions each have a scribe to record what is said as best as they can. There are also audio recordings of each session that are being sent to professional transcribers so that when the information is reviewed, people's exact words and phrases are captured. Members of the design team and other members of Council who have attended sessions shared their feedback.

The process design team has broken up into various committees - communications, transcription reading day, themes development, opening listening, targeted listening, budget and writing team. All Council members are invited to the transcription reading day (date and place TBD) where all the information collected at the listening sessions will be transcribed and compiled.

Phase 2 – The remainder of phase 2 entails continuing listening sessions through February, compiling/coding the data (transcription day), this data will be given back to the phase 2 team, in April a report will then be posted online/widely disseminated in the diocese so that feedback to the report can be submitted. The phase 2 team will edit the report as needed and submit it to the Bishop. At this point, phase 2 will end.

Phase 3 – Once the final report has been submitted to the Bishop, phase 3 begins. A different/larger committee will form the team for this phase.

Treasurer's Report

2016 Budget – the Dow Jones has decreased from 18,000 to 16,000 since Convention. The books haven't been closed yet for 2015. Quarterly variance analysis will take place to make sure we're staying on budget for 2016. She asked that we be mindful of our expenses since we don't know what the market will look like a month from now and prepare for the possibility that we may need to adjust and be flexible. There was a recommendation that information be gathered to see how individual parishes are doing/if they are feeling the effects of the market.

Systems and Cybersecurity – the treasurer's office is looking into security/cybersecurity systems updates at the diocesan offices.

Nominations

Executive Committee – George and Ted spent time interviewing current EC members/attendees and have come up with recommendations for how to form the committee moving forward and nominations for this year. They passed around a hand out detailing their findings and proposing the following recommendations:

1. That Council (at a future meeting) has a longer conversation about what the Council and EC would like the EC to do. The question of whether we want to have explicit term limits for service on the EC beyond that of the Council term limits and when we should elect new EC members should be considered.
2. Three long standing EC members will be rotating off in November 2016, so Council should consider "bulking up" on the size of EC in the Spring so that there is time for new members to come up to speed before Convention.

Mission Hub Implementation

The MHIC proposes the following hub clusters for second-round budget approvals:

Feb 2016 – South Coast, North Shore

Mar 2016 – Plymouth Cape & Islands, Merrimack Valley, MetroWest

Jun 2016 – South Shore, Dorchester/Roxbury

Jan 2017- Boston/Cambridge

There was a discussion around what mission hub board members should do when their or other hubs are being evaluated. It has been the practice that board members recuse themselves for votes on their own hubs and this should continue.

Hub Fundraising Update

Lynd Mott presented a chart of the parishes that either are involved in the collaborative campaign or who are likely to become involved. So far, Grace, Norwood, All Saints', Belmont, and Old North, Boston have voted to proceed. Their aggregate goals total about \$1.3m. The total amount needed is around \$2.2m.

Future Council Agenda Items

How to have difficult conversations

EC/DC agenda setting

Assessment formula & adjustments to it

SLAM

Use of Proceeds

Mission Strategy

Health Insurance

Strategic/longer-term thinking

Diocesan staff salaries

Staffing/HR consulting in response to mission strategy process

Parishes without full-time clergy/status of non-full-time clergy – where do they fit?

Forecasting tool for struggling parishes – “early warning system”

Audit plan for parishes – less complicated and cheaper

Communications plan – website, Facebook, other social media

Mission of the Cathedral

Parishes in default from their assessment

Committee reporting

Parish vitality – what is the role of laity?

Relationships outside our diocese – global ministry connection/partnership

Practicality of a universal bookkeeping system

BCHCCC report

Use/improvement of virtual technology

How to do better with the deaneries/how do deaneries elect members of Council?

Disaster recovery

Other Business

A task force has been created by Bishop Gates with members of the staff, Council and the Standing Committee to look at the procedures and practices for closing and merging parishes and figure out who has what responsibility throughout the process; a new Diocesan Controller has been hired; a discussion was had around what to do with the proceeds from the sale of COS, Wayland and its rectory. It has been bought by a Coptic church – its priest is a member of the MA Council of Churches.