

Executive Council Minutes
January 24, 2020
Bishop's Ranch

Attendance: Present Absent Telephone Excused

Officers:

The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus Bishop and President **P**
The Rev. Jane Stratford Chair **P**
Richard Patenaude Vice Chair **P**
Mees Tielens Secretary **P**

Class of 2020:

The Rev. Jane Stratford **P**
The Rev. Debra Low-Skinner **A**
Aidan Jobe Sea **P**
Thomas La France **P**
Charles Mader **A**
Patrick Anderson **A**

Class of 2021:

Bruce Morrow **P**
Eleanor Prugh **A**
Mees Tielens **P**
Richard Patenaude **P**
Don Miller **P**
The Rev. Merry Chan Ong **P**

Class of 2022:

Marj Leeds **A**
The Rev. Ginger Strickland **A**
Tom Matthews **P**
Anna Haight **P**
Birgit Eschmann **P**

Bishop's Appointees:

Robyn Amos **P**
Miguel Bustos **A**
The Rev. Liz Tichenor **P**

Ex-officio members:

The Rev. Richard Edward Helmer Secretary of the Convention **P**
Brad Barber Treasurer of the Diocese **P**

Diocesan Staff:

The Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey *Canon to the Ordinary* **P**
Tom Ferguson CFO **P**
Stephanie Martin Taylor Working Group Head for Communication **P**

Other attendees:

Christopher Hayes, Esq. Chancellor of the Diocese **P**

9:05 AM Call to Order and Opening Prayer (Bishop Marc)

9:07 AM Approval of Meeting Agenda and Minutes of December 3, 2019

Jim Wiant will not be continuing on the Committee on Governance as his term on Executive Council has ended.

Minutes are approved as amended.

9:08 AM Bishop's Time

Bishop Marc gives an update on his health and wellbeing.

9:22 AM Bishop's Ranch update

Sean Swift (Executive Director) and Jack Dowling (Advancement Director) report on the Bishop's Ranch.

The Ranch's mission to provide a welcoming, natural place for transformative ministry experiences is longstanding and unchanged. 2022 will mark its 75th year of service. The Ranch hosts retreats for parishes, clergy, individuals, non-profit groups and provides spaces for daily and weekly worship (including a prayer resident program), summer camps, a watershed education program, nature hikes, volunteer experiences, and local community groups. In 2019 almost 7000 people were at the Ranch (13,000 overnights), which is not quite as many as in the past. 46% comes from DioCal.

The Ranch's income is \$2.2 million with \$2.1 million in expenses. It has a positive cash flow but maintenance costs and depreciation leaves it in a deficit. 2019 was a very good year for giving: 481 households donated \$474,000 to the Ranch.

Challenges in 2020 include financial challenges (for example, rising operating costs) coupled with a downward trend of diocesan use, wildfire impacts, and ongoing high-cost maintenance. The Ranch has implemented new rate structures, new approaches to broadening its target audience, is prioritizing a full slate of bookings over diocesan use if necessary, and is focusing on improvements to accessibility, meeting spaces, and wildfire resilience that would help the Ranch reach a financially sustainable place.

Long time staff members Jack "Cass" Grimes (caretaker) and the Rev. Pat Moore (chaplain) retired in 2019. The Rev. Megan Anderson joined the staff as host and chaplain.

Executive Council members offer feedback that there is a need for flexible and adaptable meeting areas, as the lack of meeting rooms limits how groups can use it effectively.

Are there many individual retreatants? Fewer at the moment as it is not cost-effective to staff, but the Ranch is hoping to put processes in place to make that more feasible. The new fee structure of paying per space, not per person, is a challenge there: perhaps rethinking the fee structure for individuals would be an option, allowing individuals to help fill in slots alongside groups.

9:53 AM Financial report

Brad Barber walks the council through the disseminated reports: summary of revenues and expenditures, aging and arrearage, and line of credit.

Tom Matthews asks about the open LOC for St Paul's in Oakland given their significant reserves. The congregation indeed has reserves, but are not paying off the loan for reasons connected to school financing.

Richard Edward Helmer mentions that Our Saviour Mill Valley just paid off the loan that let them invest in the rectory and stabilize the housing situation for its clergy, which was sorely needed.

Jane Stratford asks about the interest rate that Union Bank charges the diocese. Is that passed on to parishes, even if they are not actively paying off loans? Tom Ferguson explains that the Diocese secures these loans with their real estate but congregations make loan and interest payments directly to the bank. The Diocese gets involved if/when payments are not being made and is mindful of keeping the relationship with the bank strong as it would be difficult to recreate this advantageous relationship somewhere else. All the LOC applications are thoroughly reviewed by the finance committee before being granted.

10:09 AM Chancellor's Time

Entered executive session at 10:09.

- ESC Litigation update

Exited executive session at 10:43.

- St Dorothy's Rest: Resolution permitting SDR to use investment account funds to pay its payroll debt to diocese

Thomas LaFrance moves to approve resolution as written, seconded by Birgit Eschmann, approved by all.

- St Dorothy's Rest: Information item: Future action by SDR to transfer 20 acres to local park district

SDR is in discussion with a local park district to donate parcels that aren't economically important to SDR at no cost to SDR: the park district will pay legal fees.

10:45 AM Update of SMAA/St John's (Canon Abbot Bailey)

A fuller report will follow at our February meeting. Rev. Amanda May's last Sunday was on January 5 and Rev. Audrey Miskelley is coming in as interim on February 11. This will be an opportunity to repair and strengthen the relationship between the congregation and the diocese, as well as gather a fuller picture of the situation. They will work towards a repayment plan. This is a good step forward.

10:49 AM Secretary's update:

The secretary of the convention's primary task is to help organize the work and planning of the convention with the Bishop, Diohouse staff, the chancellor, and the various chairs of committees. His other job is to be the 'squeaky wheel' that makes sure the EC doesn't lose sight of the charges of diocesan convention with everything else that passes before the council.

- Diocesan Task Force

Diocal currently has 4 task forces and is approaching the saturation point to fill them. Task force on: liturgical commission (on EC agenda in Feb.), sabbatical leave policy for clergy (populated and functioning), disability and deaf access, sexual harassment. Stephanie Martin Taylor says that ads are going out for people to apply to work on task forces.

- Canon 20

Summary: the Personnel Practices Committee is extinct and the canons do not reflect that. This was the trigger for the Committee on Governance to look at the way we make decisions about benefits and compensation. The Committee looked across dioceses and found that it is rare to have the extensive, specific kind of language we have in our canons about this topic. Usually decisions are left to the personnel board, HR department, or a body like the Executive Council; it is very unusual for it to be left to Diocesan Convention. In response the Executive Council proposed an updated canon. Some of the stresses and concerns of the diocese were visible on the floor of convention, both about income inequality in the diocese and about Executive Council taking that responsibility. The resolution was ultimately sent back to EC and the secretary feels this reflects a need to slow walk these questions and address the stressors around healthcare costs rising and the pressures that is putting on salary packages in smaller parishes, perhaps in conversation with various stakeholders and with a mechanism to solicit feedback.

Richard Edward Helmer cautions against getting caught in the artificial deadline of needing to solve this before the next Diocesan Convention; perhaps the better approach would be to facilitate a conversation at the convention. Bishop Marc acknowledges the need to do this carefully but also that there is a certain urgency to these questions and we cannot put them off for long.

Current and former members of Executive Council with HR experience include Lane Ringlee and Anna Haight; Tom Matthews has experience with HR and the Personnel Practices Committee.

11:14 AM Appointments: Committee on Governance and Program and Budget Committee

The appointments for the Committee on Governance are tabled for the February meeting.

Program and Budget members for 2020:

Alameda: Bruce Morrow

Contra costa: Marj Leeds

Marin: TBD

Peninsula: Aidan Jobe Sea

San Francisco: Birgit Eschmann

Southern Alameda: Richard Patenaude

11:17 AM Approve Calendar for 2019

Our February meeting will be an in-person meeting.

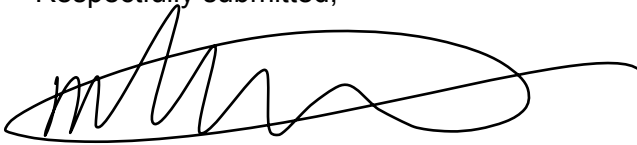
Request to add Jane Stratford to your contact list to ensure Executive Council emails actually arrive.

11:19 Compensation (chancellor)

Bishop Marc, Tom Ferguson, Canon Abbot Bailey, and Stephanie Martin Taylor exit the room. The chancellor has received the request to increase the contributions to the 403b retirement plans of Bishop Marc (up to \$20,000) and Tom Ferguson (up to \$10,000). This is a standard request that does not need to go through a compensation review because there is no change in compensation, only a redistribution of salary (at no cost to the diocese). Thomas LaFrance moves to approve this request, Tom Matthews seconds, approved. A signed copy of the resolution is filed with the minutes.

11:22 AM Closing Prayer and adjournment of meeting (Rev. Jane Stratford)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mees Tielens', written over a horizontal line.

Mees Tielens
Secretary of Executive Council