

**Executive Council Minutes
Tuesday, September 19, 2023
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
via ZOOM**

Attendance: Present Absent Excused

Officers:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Handley Andrus Bishop and President P
Sherry Lund Chair, Class of 2023 (Convention) P
The Rev. Kirsten Spalding, Vice Chair, Class of 2025 (Convention) P
Peter Fairfield, Secretary, Class of 2024 (Convention) P

<i>Class of 2023</i>	<i>Class of 2024</i>
The Rev. Krista Fregoso (Contra Costa) P	Bruce Morrow (Alameda) P
Steven Depont-Kalani (San Francisco) P	The Rev. David Erickson (Convention) E
Aidan Jobe Sea (Peninsula) P	Bill Burrell (Marin) P
Elaine-Vallecillo Miller (Southern Alameda) P	Michael Diamond (Peninsula) E
Jeanette Dinwiddie-Moore (Convention) P	Mary Frances Leopold (Southern Alameda) E
<i>Class of 2025</i>	<i>Bishop's Appointees</i>
Vance Frost (Marin) P	Leigh Flesher (2025) P
Carolyn George (Convention) P	Bruno Peguese (2024) P
The Rev. John Kirkley (San Francisco) E	
The Rev. Will Scott (Alameda) P	
Jim Wiant (Contra Costa) P	

Ex-officio members:

The Rev. Brother Richard Edward Helmer Secretary of the Convention E
Lane Ringlee Treasurer of the Diocese E

Diocesan Staff:

The Rev. Canon Debbie Low-Skinner Canon to the Ordinary P
The Rev. Michele Racusin CFO P
Canon Amy Cook Canon for Faith Formation P
Stephanie Martin Taylor Working Head Group for Communications P

Other attendees:

Canon Christopher Hayes, Esq. Chancellor of the Diocese P
The Ven. Carolyn Bolton, Standing Committee P
The Rev. Anna Marie Hoos

4:33 Chair Sherry Lund called the meeting to order. The meeting went into breakout rooms in groups of two for prayers.

4:43 Consent Calendar

Motion to approve minutes as corrected from previous meeting made by Steven Dupont-Kalani was seconded and approved.

Financial reports were received.

Announcements:

- The assessment relief application deadline is September 30.th Executive Council will review these in our October meeting.
- We don't yet know if there will be openings for the Finance Committee membership. Deadline for submission of the roster is October 13th. Lane will assemble the names, classes, and photos when he returns so that we can get the Finance Committee information on the Diocesan website, as a subcommittee of the Executive Council.
- We learned that Bishop's Ranch and St. Dorothy's rest have found a vendor for their reserve study.
- The Executive Council retreat is January 17-19 for new members and January 18-19 for continuing members. Members are urged to complete the registration form, stating housing needs and desired self-paid upgrades at the Ranch. For questions, contact Rev. Kirsten Spalding.

4:58 Bishop's Time

Bishop Marc and Rev. Kirsten Spalding are at the climate meeting in New York. Bishop Marc will be presenting the goals of the Episcopal Church regarding climate change.

The House of Bishops met online and prayers were requested for Presiding Bishop Curry.

Bishop Marc commented on the funeral for Rev. Iain Sanford and noted that this diocese is at the center of recognition of rights for transgender persons in the Episcopal Church, in that that we have several clergy and upcoming ordinands that are transgender.

Shared thoughts on the installation of our new Regional Deans and how their role will help us to have greater connection with the Diocese.

There was some discussion of the revision of the Title IV process by the House of Bishops.

There are 20 applicants for the Canon for Social, Racial and Environmental Justice position. The Bishop expects to have a hiring decision made by the end of the year.

5:22 Clergy Housing Task Force Report - The Rev Anne Marie Hoos and Rev. David Erickson

Rev. Anne Marie presented a very useful summary of the report from the Clergy Housing Task Force (see attached report). Questions and some discussion followed about creative ways of meeting the goals outlined in the report. The final report will be presented to Convention in October. Executive Council will begin to discuss the short and long-term recommendations in our October meeting, but this topic is too complicated to arrive at recommendations by next month's Convention. It will be more realistic to make recommendations sometime next year and report at the 175th Convention in 2024.

Break

5:53 Parochial Report Analysis – Rev. Kirsten Spalding, Leigh Flesher, Rev. John Kirkley

Responses in Parochial Reports are quite varied in their depth and thoroughness in answering the questions. Covid likely skewed the results of reports regarding attendance and giving. The information in the report could be used as a basis for forward movement instead of looking back on the way things used to be. Discussion ensued about how the report can be disseminated to Vestries, Deanery and Clergy. The findings indicate that all congregations share similar concerns about the state of the church. Ways to overcome communication barriers were discussed and Stephanie Martin-Taylor encouraged the vestries to sign up to receive diocesan newsletters and to use the new Regional Deans.

Chair Lund suggested that the team that created the report draft a cover letter to accompany the report with an overview of the purpose of the study and distribute the report directly to senior and junior wardens plus clergy in all parishes.

6:13 Executive Council role in the fiduciary oversight of camps and conference centers.

Canon Chancellor Christopher Hayes reviewed his presentation on the legal structure of the diocese from January and continued with more detail about the relationship of the Executive Council to camps and conference centers.

Guiding principles:

- All church corporations must obey the Constitution and Canon of the Episcopal Church
- All must obey the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of California
- All must obey the any Act of the Convention requiring action.
- Land is owned by the Corporation Sole.
- St. Dorothy's Rest and Bishop's Ranch control their own operations but Bishop and Executive Council have influence over those operations

Due to time constraints, Chair Lund asked Executive Council members to capture questions about this presentation and we will focus on those and their specific interpretation in our October meeting.

6:46 Rev. Kristen Spalding moved that we go into executive session

6:50 Bruno Peguese moved that we leave executive session.

Business for additional discussion next month

- Clergy Housing
- Governance and fiduciary relationship with retreat centers

6:58 Sherry Lund

At the July mini-retreat, there was a desire to create a stronger committee structure in order to get more done and best utilize member skills.

Due to time constraints in this meeting, Chair Lund suggested that we review potential committees at this meeting and decide on them in the October meeting. Executive Council members can think about which committee/s they would like to join. She mentioned that we also need to refine how we do Committee work. Committees should end up with a short list of actionable recommendations, ideally implemented ideally those making them, or getting the buy-in of those who are authorized to implement them.

Potential Committees:

Property Utilization and Disposition of Assets – There was a great deal of interest in creating both policy and process for the decision to sell a property, the consideration of alternatives to sale, and where the disposition of assets should go.

Church of 2073 and How EC Work is Affected -- What is the V+T equivalent for the Diocese? Perhaps this could be a joint committee with the Standing Committee.

Communication – Developing a process for getting information directly in the hands of vestries; getting a document that explains the purpose and role of the Diocese and relation to congregations.

Nominations. Chair Lund feels the Nominations system still does not work well within the current Canons and in practice. It remains largely a matter of accepting and coordinating information rather than an active search and recruitment of leaders. The processes are still much the same as when the Nominations Committee asked for help in changing these methods from the Leadership Task Force. Getting participation is still very difficult, including from the Executive Council in sourcing and nominating Executive Council members.

Governance – Membership of this committee is proscribed by Canon and the Governance Committee has oversight by the Standing Committee. It could be much more active and engaged in revising Canons that are very out of date, e.g. specifying appointment of committees that haven't existed in several years.

7:00 Closing Prayer and Adjournment

Talking Points

*The Bishop updated the EC on the search for a Canon for Social, Racial and Environmental Justice. The Diocese has received 20 applications and the Bishop anticipates that a hiring decision will be made before the end of the year.

*The EC and the entire Episcopal Church are praying for Presiding Bishop Michael Curry who will undergo surgery tomorrow (9/20/23)

*The deadline for Assessment Relief applications is September 30, 2023.

*The EC heard a report from the Clergy Housing Task Force, which will be submitted to Diocesan Convention.

*A committee has completed a summary of the narrative responses to questions in the Parochial Report. After discussion, the EC agreed to disseminate the summary to clergy and directly to vestries through their wardens.

*EC heard a presentation from the Chancellor on the governance structure and fiduciary duties with respect to the Diocesan Retreat Centers (Bishop's Ranch and St. Dorothy's Rest). We will take up questions and have more conversation about the Retreat Centers at our next meeting.