

## Executive Council Minutes

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

4:30 PM – 7:00 PM

In Person and via ZOOM

Attendance: Present Absent Excused

### Officers:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Handley Andrus, Bishop and President P

The Rev. Kirsten Spalding, Chair of 2024, Class of 2025 (Convention) P

Leigh Flesher, Vice Chair, Class of 2026 (Peninsula) P

Peter Fairfield, Secretary, Class of 2024 (Convention) P

Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Bruce Morrow (Alameda) P	Vance Frost (Marin) P
The Rev. David Erickson (Convention) E	Carolyn George (Convention) P
Bill Burrell (Marin) P	The Rev. John Kirkley (San Francisco) P
Michael Diamond (Peninsula) P	The Rev. Will Scott (Alameda) P
Mary Frances Leopold (Southern Alameda) A	Jim Wiant (Contra Costa) P
Class of 2026	Bishop's Appointees
George Strait (Convention) P	Tish Busselle (2026) P
AnnaMarie Hoos (Convention) P	Bruno Peguese (2024) P
Christine Bensen (San Francisco) P	
Justin Cannon (Southern Alameda) P	
Todd Bryant (Contra Costa Deanery)	

### Ex-officio members:

The Rev. Brother Richard Edward Helmer, Secretary of the Convention P

Lane Ringlee, Treasurer of the Diocese P

### Diocesan Staff:

The Rev. Canon Debbie Low-Skinner, Canon to the Ordinary P

The Rev. Michele Racusin, CFO E

Canon Amy Cook, Canon for Faith Formation P

Canon Stephanie Martin Taylor, Canon for Communications E

Canon James Forsyth E

### Other attendees:

The Rev. Austin Rios, Bishop-Elect P

Canon Christopher Hayes, Esq. Chancellor of the Diocese E

The Ven. Carolyn Bolton, Standing Committee P

Canon Davey Gerhard P

Jessica Kober, Windes LLP P

4:31 PM **Welcome and Prayers:** Chair Spalding opened the meeting and asked that the group be divided into small groups for prayer.

4:42 Chair Spalding called for approval of the agenda and the May minutes. After a small correction was requested, the minutes and agenda were moved for approval by Justin Cannon. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

4:47 **Bishop's Time:** Bishop Marc noted that he and Sheila will be leaving next Thursday for their drive across country to their new home. He will continue to work on the ministry of Environmental Justice and will attend the next UN climate summit (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024. He expressed pride in this diocese as a leader in Creation Care. Bishop-elect Austin, while admitting that his body was not yet fully in this time zone, was eager to begin his ministry with the Council. He has been reading the history of this diocese with interest and noted that, like this diocese, we all begin where we are and we work together with the power of relationships. He expressed thanks to all who have worked to make the coming celebrations possible, and noted that what we celebrate is who we are to be. We must think about the diocese of the future, being realistic about the years that it will take, but engaging in the excitement of the work, day to day.

5:02 **Financials:** Jessica Kober, CPA, CFE, Senior Manager, representing the auditor, Windes, reviewed the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2022. A question about expenses grouped under the category of "Other" brought the response that this is a standard practice and that, overall, there is a level of transparency of which we should be proud. In upcoming years, the auditor anticipates keeping the "Other" functional expenses category below \$200,000. The goal is to provide further transparency in the coming years. The Diocese continues to receive an "unmodified audit report", which indicates the auditors' opinion that the financial statements of the Diocese accurately reflect the Diocese's financial condition. A question arose as to how we might be able to support congregations with their auditing needs, but discussion was postponed until Canon Racusin could be present.

5:30 **Approval of Line of Credit:** Lane Ringlee began a discussion of the application of St. Clare's for a bridge loan from the diocesan line of credit, noting that the Finance Committee had recommended approval. After a brief discussion, Bishop Marc moved that the application for a \$125,000 loan be accepted. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

5:40 **Acceptance of Financials:** After review of the P&L, Aging report and Finance Committee March minutes, the Financials were accepted by the Council. George Strait noted that the discussion of numbers was well and proper, but there was a lack of narrative in the numbers. "What are the numbers telling us about who we are and what we are doing?" "How are we failing to accomplish our goals?" These and like questions stimulated a lively discussion which resulted in general agreement that staff will prepare a narrative budget (in addition to the detailed line-item budget and financial reports) for presentation to the Deaneries later this summer.

5:48 The meeting was suspended for a dinner break.

## 6:20 **Committee Reports**

- **Program & Budget:** The committee agenda is being worked on with a focus on parochial report financials. This committee will meet for the first time in May.

- **Property Disposition:** The committee is in process of preparing a draft Policy on Disposition of Property for presentation to the Council at our next meeting. The committee plans to discuss the application of the policy to the Holy Innocents Corte Madera property and the Brentwood property. The committee has been informed that the Contra Costa deanery will discuss possible uses or disposition of the Brentwood Property.
- **Clergy Housing:** The committee is researching other dioceses, and developing new ideas. The committee will consider use of real assets and the Expanding Horizon's balance for support of Clergy Housing. The Committee seeks new members with expertise in the field of real estate. AnnaMarie Hoos agreed to develop a brief description of the expertise sought and will share it with the Council for distribution through the Deaneries.
- **Diocese of the Future:** The committee is developing a timeline and will bring preliminary work to the Council at the July Executive Council retreat (7/27).
- **Nominations Committee:** Brother Richard Edward agreed to support Christine Benson in identifying potential candidates for Executive Council and Standing Committee.
- **Bishop Transition:** The Council members should expect to receive an email reminder about the Friday night dinner at the Mark Hopkins.
- **Lyon Street Renovation:** The subcommittee for oversight of the approved renovations budget (Lane Ringlee, Kirsten Spalding, Tish Busselle, Peter Fairfield, Leigh Flesher, Jim Forsythe) met and approved comprehensive bids. Work has already begun. So far, there are no surprises. The contractor will notify the committee of any changes or cost overruns.
- **Communications:** The parishes do not know what the Executive Council is all about. The Committee made two recommendations: 1) A schedule could be set up so for individual council members to visit parishes to make short presentations about the work of the council and solicit ideas for the council to address. Two-way communication is important. The ensuing discussion noted that raising awareness of the council's work may help drive nominations. After discussion, the Council requested that the Communications Committee develop this proposal with a brief script and a schedule for visits. 2) A second proposal was made to develop a mail list of parish newsletters to send regular updates on the work of the Council. This proposal will be discussed again at future meetings.

6:45 Carolyn Bolton moved that the meeting move into executive session to discuss legal matters. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. The Chair read a statement about the current status of legal matters prepared by our Chancellor, Christopher Hayes.

7:00 Tish Buselle moved that the meeting leave executive session. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

7:02 Brother Richard Helmer offered the Collect of the Day for Peter Williams Cassey and Anna Besant Cassey to close the meeting.

**Important Dates:** May 3<sup>rd</sup>: the Executive Council will be dining with the bishop-elect at the Mark Hopkins Hotel. May 4<sup>th</sup>: The consecration of Bishop Austin Rios at Grace Cathedral. The mid-year Executive Council retreat will be on July 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Action Items**

- The Communications Committee will prepare a plan to have lay members of Executive Council members visit parishes other than their own to discuss the work of the Council and hear parish plans and concerns.
- Committees will continue to meet and prepare for reports at the May Executive Council meeting.

### **Talking Points**

#### Bishop Transition Events

Service of Ordination and Consecration, Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am followed by Reception

This event is open to the public; each attendee must be individually registered. You can register at <https://diocalbishopsearch.org/registration/>. This event will also be livestreamed.