

**Diocese of Milwaukee
Executive Council Minutes
January 30, 2024 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM**

Roll Call was taken.

Present: The Rev. Scott Leannah, Canon to the Ordinary; the Rev. David Mowers, President of the Standing Committee; Ms. Janice Pauc, Vice-President of the Executive Council; Ms. D’Arcy Becker, Diocesan Treasurer; the Rev. Matthew Buterbaugh; Ms. Barbara Eckblad; the Rev. Nancy Hodge; Dr. John Johnson; the Rev. Esther Kramer; Ms. Christine Krueger; Ms. Judith Miller and the Rev. Debra Trakel

Others present: Ms. Caroline Senn, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Mark Ehrmann, Esq., Chancellor and Mr. Greg Bell, Representative for the Standing Committee

Absent: The Rev. Don Fleischman; the Rev. Bobbi Kraft; Mr. Roger Mukasa and the ex-officio members: the Rev. Pippa Lindwright, President of Commission on Ministry and the Ven. Charles Zellermyer, Executive Director of Trustees of Funds & Endowments

At 6:34 p.m. the Rev. Scott Leannah, Canon to the Ordinary, called the meeting to order and asked the Rev. Esther Kramer to lead the EC in prayer.

January 2, 2024 EC Minutes

The Rev. Scott Leannah called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024 Executive Council meeting.

***Ms. Judith Miller moved and Ms. Christine Krueger, along with others, seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024 EC meeting as presented.

The minutes were so approved.

The Rev. Scott Leannah, with the assistance of the Rev. David Mowers, President of the Standing Committee and Mr. Mark Ehrmann, Esq., Diocesan Chancellor, led the meeting which covered three topics:

- the roles of the Executive Council and the Standing Committee in the diocese
- current context and situation
- next steps

Roles of the Executive Council and the Standing Committee in the diocese

The Rev. David Mowers stated that, basically:

- the SC is the Council of Advice to the bishop and the Ecclesiastical Authority if there is no bishop
- the EC serves as the “convention between conventions” and handles corporate matters

He noted that, specifically:

--the SC is charged by the Canons to—

1. Consent to the elections of all bishops in all dioceses
2. Approve encumbrances of or disposal of properties (sale)
3. Performance review of the bishop
4. Leadership (Council of Advice)
5. If there is a vacancy, manage the election of a bishop.

--the EC operates as a check and balance especially in matters of finance, (Ex: loan requests and the budget) and provides oversight of diocesan ministries (Camp Webb, youth and college, etc.)

The Rev. Scott Leannah used the recent loan request by St. Alban's as an example of the financial role of the EC:

--the parish needed roof repair

--using the loan request procedure, the parish

1. brought the need to the attention of the diocesan staff
2. provided the requested documents to Ms. Caroline Senn, Chief Financial Officer, and the finance committee

--once the need and materials were reviewed, funds identified (amount, interest and time of repayment) the request was brought to the EC, as the “check and balance” in diocesan financial affairs, to review and approve the loan.

NOTE: if it were a mortgage and, hence, an encumbrance, it would also go to the SC.

Both the Rev. Scott Leannah and the Rev. David Mowers noted that, it may feel like “rubber stamping” but that the EC is fulfilling its role as “check and balance”, trusting the work done by the diocesan office and the finance committee. It is the role of the EC to ask questions: Was the process followed? Is all needed documentation available? Is the loan equitable, fair? It was also noted that the loan request could be turned down.

The role of the EC in long range planning, vision and mission was dealt with later in the meeting.

Current Context and Situation

The Rev. Scott Leannah noted that we are currently in a holding pattern:

--A convention to consider a joint resolution of reunion will take place on May 4, 2024.

--The Steering Committee has worked on the Canons and Constitutions for the re-united diocese which will be presented at the Feb. 27 meeting.

NOTE: The Rev. David Mowers explained that there have been at least 6 drafts of the Canons and Constitutions. The current draft is being presented for review, via Zoom, at 6:30, on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, to the Standing Committee and the Executive Council.

Mr. Mark Ehrmann, Esq, Chancellor, explained the legal details – approval of the reunification of the Wisconsin diocese by the General Convention and the timing and filing of the CC.

The Rev. Scott Leannah detailed the overall Situation:

--February 27th review of the proposed CC

--May 4th Special Convention

1. If reunification is approved, a joint convention would occur in October for elections and developing a coming together in all areas (budget, etc.)
2. If there is no reunification, a regular, individual convention would occur in October

The Rev. David Mowers explained that, if reunification was approved:

- Governing Transition Plan **until the October convention(s)**, per the Rev. David Mowers
- SC – all current members folded together
 - EC – each Diocesan EC would elect 3 clergy and 3 lay from their current body
 - COM – each of the 3 Presidents would submit two names

Other items of concern:

--Financial audits for each diocese

NOTE: currently several parishes in our diocese do not have a treasurer. What about out-sourcing?

--Trustees of Funds and Endowments has its own Board. However, of particular interest and concern would be the restricted funds.

Nest Steps: A Proposal

The Rev. Scott Leannah suggested that, until the May 4th Special Convention:

- business be conducted as usual with the SC and the EC engaging in their designated roles
- meetings of the EC would be Feb. 27 (Canons and Constitutions), March 5, April 2 on Zoom

He furthered suggested that, after the May 4th Special Convention, an in-person half to whole day meeting would be planned, possibly May 18th, in order “to engage in conversation, strategy, and discernment of next steps. We will be looking at reunion or a decision not to reunite. Both will involve some careful conversation, discernment and planning.”

Future Considerations/Observations/Questions

The Rev. Scott Leannah presented the following considerations for future on-going meetings that would encourage/allow long range planning, vision and mission.

--periodic in-person gatherings and task forces

NOTE: per Rev. Scott Leannah, at one time, the EC meeting began with the task forces gathering for about an hour or so and then reporting to the entire group prior to the regular EC meeting

--reports of some of the ministries of the diocese that are extensions of our ministry beyond our diocesan borders (Haiti Partnership, The Gathering, college ministries, and our relationship with the Diocese of Newala)

Ms. Barbara Eckblad gave the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Margaret (Marge) M. Kiss

Executive Secretary & Recorder of the Minutes

Appendix I

2024 Executive Council Meeting Dates -- First Tuesday at
6:30p.m. via ZOOM

Additional: February 27th Canons and Constitutions

March 5

April 2

May 7

June 4

July 2

August 6

September 3

October 1

November 5

December 3

Appendix II

2021 Norms for Executive Council Meetings

Begin with prayer

Start and end on time

Receive and Review material one week ahead of time of meeting

Respectful communication

- Assume good/best intentions

- Seek to model reconciliation

- Look for the best in others

- Give the best we have

- Gentleness first

Recuse oneself, leave the room and abstain from matters in which one has a conflict of interest

Respect the “confidential nature” of the discussion (Identify if confidential)

All responsible for the process at the table; Pay attention/Be actively engaged

All members of Executive Council are authorized to raise their hand, to call for a pause in the process, and to ask for a moment of prayer from the Bishop

We are always The Church.