



THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OF FREDERICTON

115 CHURCH STREET, FREDERICTON NB E3B 4C8

(506) 459 1801 [o] (506) 460 0520 [f]

Adopted 26 September 2020

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DIOCESAN COUNCIL

23 May 2020

Videoconference

Diocese of Fredericton

Pre-meeting circulation

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes (Feb 22, 2020)
- Letter from the Prime Minister
- Greater Chapter Missional Action Reports
- Standing Committee Reports: Constitution & Canons and Finance
- Team Reports: Mission and Outreach, Spiritual Development, and Youth and Intergenerational Ministry
- Representative Reports: Treasurer, Parish Development Officer, Camp Medley Director, PWRDF
- April 30th, 2020 Shared Ministry and Pension and Bonus Assessments
- April 30th, 2020 Draft Financial Statements
- April 30th, 2020 Forecast

Members Attending

Kathy Asch, David Barrett, Eric Beek, David Bell, Roderick Black, Ken Brien, Perry Cooper, David Edwards, Geoffrey Hall, Brent Ham, Heather Harris-Jones, Susan Jack, Chris Hayes, Lionel Hayter, Mary Anne Langmaid, Cathy Laskey, Siobhan Laskey, Bob LeBlanc, Coralie Losier, Rob Marsh, John Matheson, Michael O'Hara, Keith Osborne, David Peer, Matt Pitman, Ted Quann, Paul Ranson, Joni Richardson, William Ross, Kevin Stockall, Robert Taylor, Cheryl Young.

Members Absent

Linda Fury

Guests

Shawn Branch (Zoom co-host), Cheryl Jacobs (Zoom co-host), Rosemarie Kingston, Gisele McKnight.

Worship

1. The Bishop welcomed everyone to the Virtual Conference Room at 10:00 am and began the morning work by leading the Council in Morning Prayer using the liturgy from *Thy Kingdom Come*.

Videoconference voting explanation

2. The Bishop asked Shawn Branch to explain the options for voting that the hosts have prepared to use in the meeting.

Call to Order

3. Bishop Edwards called the meeting to order at 10:18 am and acknowledged that the land on which we join to hold this videoconference includes the traditional unceded territory of the Passamaquoddy, the Abenaki, the M'kmaq, the Wolastokuk (Maliseet), and the Wabanaki Confederacy.

4. The Bishop asked for any regrets and none were received.

5. The Bishop introduced the Agenda for the meeting.

MOTION 1: Matt Pitman / Michael O'Hara

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION 1: Carried.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

6. Diocesan Council reviewed the minutes of the last Diocesan Council meeting.

MOTION 2: Susan Jack / Joni Richardson

That Diocesan Council accept the minutes of the last meeting on February 22, 2020.

MOTION 2: Carried

Business Arising

7. **Synod Office Move Update.** The Secretary of Synod updated council on the progress of the joint Cathedral and Synod plan to construct a building on a new lot created between 115 Church St and Bishop's Court. Mark Gunter of the Cathedral team has submitted a draft rezoning plan to the city for a new lot between the Synod office and Bishop's Court. We are looking forward to approval before the summer. Once approval is received Synod Office can proceed to sell the existing properties, less the property used to create a third lot, to seek confirmation from the city of the final plan for re-zoning. The Cathedral and Synod Office can then move to the next steps in the project, which are to establish the requirements of a new structure that meets Synod and Cathedral needs and to agree on a solution that works for both the Synod and the Cathedral.
8. **ii) Parish of East Saint John Dissolution process update.** The Secretary of Synod updated council that the final transfer of real property and financial accounts is not yet complete, but when they are the Bishop will issue a Memorial of Dissolution.

Correspondence

9. The Secretary of Synod reported that he had received a letter from the office of the Prime Minister thanking the Synod for the Synod's letter outlining its work in November.

New Business

10. There was no new Business.

Reports to Council

11. The Bishop asked for a motion to receive the Greater Chapter Missional Action reports

MOTION 3: Brent Ham / William Ross

That the Diocesan Council receive the Greater Chapter Missional Action reports.

MOTION 3: Carried

12. The Bishop asked if anyone had any questions on the Greater Chapter Missional Action. There being none he asked for a motion to receive the Committee and Team Reports.

MOTION 4: Mary Anne Langmaid / Lionel Hayter

That the Diocesan Council receive the Committee and Team Reports.

MOTION 4: Carried

13. **Constitution and Canons.** David Bell reviewed the proposed amendment to parish governance on page 19& 20 of 45 of the meeting package and provided context.

14. The first proposal would add a new sub-paragraph 4(1) (b.1) to *Canon Six – concerning Parish Governance* (shown in the motion in red). The Anglican Church Act gives the Synod power to regulate both parochial acquisition and disposition of real property. Disposition of Parish property is covered by canon and policy. Dispositions of real property by sale, lease or grant of right of way are fairly common and there is good degree of parish awareness of and compliance with this restriction.

15. Acquisition of parish property is currently only regulated by Diocesan Council with policy. The proposed amendment to Canon Six would regulate parish purchases both canonically and by policy. Raising the regulation of parish acquisition of real property to canonical status gives greater authority and prominence.

16. The rationale is that parishes would typically purchase land to develop, and the Bishop and Synod would want to be involved at the beginning of any development process, not after the land purchase had already occurred.

17. The draft amendment proposed on acquisition would only regulate purchase of land. Parish acquisition of land by gift would continue unrestricted.

MOTION 5: David Bell / David Peer

That Diocesan Council recommend to Synod that Canon Six – Parish Governance be amended as follows:

The Parish Corporation

4(1) Subject to the authority of the Bishop and the Synod, a Parish Corporation shall

(a) organize and manage activities and programs in furtherance of Christian life in the parish,

(b) manage the investment of endowment and other funds of the parish and, in so doing, may engage professional assistance and pay reasonable fees therefor,

(b.1) purchase real property only with the approval of the Bishop and the Finance Committee of the Diocesan Council,

(c) dispose of real property only with the approval of the Bishop and the Finance Committee of the Diocesan Council,

(d) manage the properties, revenues and expenditures of the parish, utilizing appropriate financial controls and procedures,

(e) employ the lay employees of the parish

[etc]

MOTION 5: Carried with 4 abstentions

18. David Bell next reviewed the proposed amendment to Episcopal Elections on page 21 of 45 of the meeting package and provided context.

19. The proposal to Synod would add paragraph 1(2) to Canon Three – our Episcopal election canon (shown in red in the motion). It would provide a mechanism for altering the 90-day maximum time-line set out in s. 1 to introduce procedural flexibility if the see of Fredericton fell vacant unexpectedly. The wisdom of having this flexibility was demonstrated by the need to postpone scheduled electoral synods in the dioceses of British Columbia and Nova Scotia/PEI.

MOTION 6: David Bell / David Peer

That Diocesan Council recommend to the Synod that Canon Three – Election and Appointment of Bishops be amended as follows:

1(1) When a vacancy occurs in the See of Fredericton, the Diocesan Council shall summon an electoral meeting of the Diocesan Synod for the election of a Bishop to be held not less than forty-five nor more than ninety days after the vacancy has occurred, at which meeting no business other than such election shall be transacted.

1(2) In exceptional circumstances the Diocesan Council may summon an electoral meeting of the Diocesan Synod for a date more than ninety days after the vacancy has occurred.

MOTION 6: Carried with one no and 2 abstentions

20. **Finance Committee and Treasurer's Report.** Susan Jack presented the Finance Committee report and verbally amended the report to remove the reference to Parish of Coldbrook and St. Mary's under the Property section.

21. The Bishop asked Heather Harris-Jones to brief the Council on the content of the Treasurer's report and its supporting documentation and to speak to the motion recommended by the Finance Committee on the Anglican Foundation.

22. Heather Harris-Jones briefed the council on the status of the federal COVID-19 wage subsidy. All parishes were eligible for the 10 % subsidy and all but 14 were also eligible for the 75% subsidy. The diocese is still working through financial information to determine for what the diocese might qualify. The Diocesan Synod and Parishes will need to resubmitted applications in May and qualify to continue to receive the subsidy.

23. Heather briefed the council on the 2020 forecast and noted it projects the worst case a \$1 million loss. The important take-away from this forecast is that with over \$1 million in cash in our bank accounts, the Diocese will not have to sell assets to provide Parishes funds from investment income or redemptions.
24. Heather presented the shared ministry and employment assessment. The shared ministry deferral in March will be reviewed later in the year when more information is known about what support Parishes and the Diocese received from the government wage subsidy and how parishes are faring financially. A proposal for dealing with shared ministry equitably will be brought to Diocesan Council for approval before any proposal is implemented.
25. Heather reviewed the Diocesan income Summary as of April 30th. She noted that the bottom line will be subject to considerable volatility as expenses and income is booked in the coming months. Our investments suffered as a result of the market downturn, but are performing better recently and she hopes they will recover by the end of the year. She continues to explore investment mix options that would provide a more consistent return than they are currently.
26. Heather provided context on the Anglican Foundation Grant application from the Parish of Saint John recommended by the Finance Committee. Cathy Laskey spoke favourably of the Anglican Foundation and encouraged members of council and parishes to join the Foundation. In the discussion on the notice of motion on the Anglican foundation grant application, a friendly amendment was proposed to the notice of motion. The change was agreed by the Mover and Seconder and "Loan" was changed to "Grant" and the word "future" was removed.

MOTION 7: Susan Jack / Heather Harris-Jones

That the Anglican Foundation Grant Application from the Corporation of the Anglican Parish of Saint John be approved as per recommendation by the Property Committee and subsequent final approval of the documentation by the Finance Committee.

MOTION 7: Carried with one no from Cathy Laskey

27. The Bishop asked Cheryl Jacobs, a member of the Companion Diocese team to provide an update on the Mobile Medical Clinic. Cheryl noted that the project is still active but fundraising is a bit behind schedule. The plan was to have funds raised by the end of May. Individual donations are being received, although opportunities for fundraisers planned in support of the project have not materialized. In addition, the focus of our Rotary partners has shifted during the Pandemic to COVID-19 issues. She encouraged members to support the project. Cheryl asked council members to forward any suggestions for ways to fundraise under the public health restrictions to the Team.
28. **Representative Reports.** The Bishop asked for a motion to receive the Representative reports.

MOTION 8: Lionel Hayter / Joni Richardson

That the Diocesan Council receive the Representative reports.

MOTION 8: Carried

Other Items

29. There were no other items.

Adjournment

30. The Bishop asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION 9: Susan Jack

That this meeting of Diocesan Council be adjourned.

MOTION 9: Carried

Next Meeting

31. The Secretary will arrange a virtual meeting or an in-person meeting as the public health restrictions and Diocesan needs permit and notify Council before the meeting. A physical location has not been determined; the tentative date is Saturday September 26th.

32. The meeting schedule for the next year is below

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2020 | 2021 |
| Saturday Sept 26 | Saturday Feb 20 |
| Friday Dec 4 to Saturday Dec 5 | Saturday May 29 |

33. The Bishop closed the meeting at 1137 with prayer and all members said the Grace together.

Respectfully submitted,

The Right Rev David Edwards
Bishop and Chair

The Rev David Peer
Secretary of Synod