

**THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI**  
Minutes of August 12, 2023 Diocesan Council Meeting  
(as approved on September 8, 2023)

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, August 12, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, 520 S. 291 Hwy., Liberty, Missouri. Members attending:

~~Ms. Regina Berens~~  
Cn. Shirley Bolden  
The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, President  
The Very Rev. Tim Coppinger  
Ms. Zella Forsythe  
Ms. Kate French  
Mr. Mark Galus, Chancellor  
The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson  
The Very Rev. Robin James  
The Rev. Steven King  
Mr. Tom Kokjer, Treasurer  
~~Mr. Phil Metz~~  
Mr. Chris Morrison  
Mr. Spencer Orr  
Ms. Amanda Perschall  
The Rev. Joe Pierjok  
The Rev. Susan Roberts  
Ms. Beverly Roggenkamp  
~~Ms. Sally Scheid~~  
Mr. David Schlomer  
The Rev. Galen Snodgrass, Vice President  
The Rev. John Spicer  
The Rev. Donna Stanford, Secretary  
~~Ms. Judy Turner~~  
Mr. Ron Weil Jr.  
Mr. Steven Williams

The Rev. Isaac Petty also attended.

**1. Call to Order and Devotion.** Bishop Bruce determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Amanda Perschall led Council in opening prayers.

**2. Consent Agenda Adoption.** Fr. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Fr. John Spicer, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:

- a. Approve the July 8, 2023 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
- b. Receive the following written reports
  - i. August 28, 2023 Executive Committee Minutes

- ii. August 12, 2023 Formation Report
- iii. August 12, 2023 Diversity and Reconciliation Commission Report

**The motion carried.**

At the request of the Bishop, upon motion and second, Council approved that the agenda items be taken out of order, with the 2024 Plan for Ministry considered after the Treasurer and Finance Committee Report.

**3. Reports.**

a. **The Treasurer and Finance Committee Report.** Treasurer Tom Kokjer reported that financial asset prices are little changed from last month. The diocese's second quarter DFMS investment results exceeded benchmarks established. Blended portfolios are up about 10% year to date. The diocese's cash position was reviewed by diocesan Finance Administrator Ron Weil, including the Operating Revenue and Expense Report for the month ending July 31, 2023, the Statement of Financial Position as of July 2023, and the Statement of Activities as of July 2023. Ron stated that the diocese is sufficiently liquid to meet its regular operating expenses. Ron reported that under expenses, the diocese is under budget for compensation; under program expenses, diocese operations are over budget due to utility expenses and Bishop and lay travel expenses. The Treasurer reported that the Finance Committee approved the sale of a diocesan computer to Kim Snodgrass. The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Amanda Perschall, that the Finance Committee Report be approved as presented. **The motion carried.**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, the Treasurer reported on a funding request from Shepherd of the Hills Episcopal Church in Branson. Shepherd of the Hills has a letter of credit (LOC) from the diocese for roof replacement last year and has been timely on payments. Earlier this month, the church was repainted prior to securing funds. The Executive Committee approved an emergency LOC for \$7,055. In this process, it was determined the wood beams need repair from wood rot and need to be repainted. The church has requested an additional \$6,000 LOC for this work. The Finance Committee moved that the LOC to Shepherd of the Hills be extended \$6,000 with zero percent interest over a 20-year amortization. **The motion carried.**

**4. Old Business.**

a. Finance Sub-Committees

i. Budget (Plan for Ministry 2024)

Fr. Isaac Petty reported that the proposed 2024 Plan for Ministry is currently negative \$287,000. After discussion, Father John Spicer moved, seconded by Amanda Perschall, that the Property Maintenance line item be deleted from the operating budget and a separate Property Maintenance Fund be established, funded with up to \$300,000 of the \$600,000 from the COVID funds currently held in the Expansion Fund.

**The motion failed.**

Bishop Bruce moved, seconded by the Treasurer, that the \$50,000 New Community line item be zeroed out from the operating budget. After discussion, **the motion was withdrawn.**

Bishop Bruce moved, seconded by Kate French, that, effective immediately, the hours of the diocese's Human Relations Administrator Elaine Gilligan be increased from 16 to 20 hours per week with a \$5 per hour increase in pay. **The motion carried.**

ii. Assessment

Fr. Isaac Petty reviewed the assessment figures if the current calculation base were maintained. Also discussed was raising the formula so all percentages are raised to the next higher whole number, *i.e.*, 11% of the first \$50,000, 12% of the next \$50,000, 13% of the next \$50,000, 14% of the next \$50,000.

iii. Compensation

Bishop Bruce reviewed the 2024 Minimum Clergy Compensation proposal. After discussion, Fr. John Spicer moved, seconded by the Very Rev. Chandler Jackson, that all diocesan staff, including the Bishop, receive a 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2024. **The motion carried.**

After further review and discussion of the 2024 Minimum Clergy Compensation proposal, Fr. Galen Snodgrass moved, seconded by Fr. John Spicer, that the compensation proposal be adopted. **The motion carried.**

iv. Budget (Plan for Ministry 2024) (continued)

After discussion regarding budget income and expenses, the following actions were taken:

Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by Fr. John Spicer, that the Property Maintenance line item be zeroed out in the operating budget and a separate property maintenance/improvement fund be established in the amount of \$300,000, funded by COVID relief funds currently held in the Expansion Fund, with expenditure of those funds governed by the centralized diocese grant process. **The motion carried.**

The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson moved, seconded by Fr. Joe Pierjok, that a \$50,000 Property Maintenance line item be included in the budget. **The motion carried.**

The Very Rev. Robin James moved, seconded by the Treasurer, that the \$50,000 New Community line item be zeroed out from the operating budget. **The motion carried.**

The Very Rev. Robin James moved, seconded by Amanda Perschall, that the centralized Grant Committee line item in the budget be reduced to \$100,000. **The motion carried.**

Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by the Very Rev. Robin James, that the 1.75 full time employee (FTE) Communications staff position be reduced to 1 FTE position and that \$20,000 be allocated in the budget to pay for contract services related to communications. **The motion carried.**

Fr. Steven King moved, seconded by Fr. John Spicer, that the proposed 2024 Plan for Ministry with a \$43,000 deficit be approved. **The motion carried.**

### 3. **Reports (continued)**

a. **The Standing Committee Report.** The Rev. John Spicer submitted and reviewed the following report on behalf of the Standing Committee:

In the past month, the Standing Committee has made significant progress in organizing our bishop-search process. We began by considering several policy-related questions.

- We will have three committees leading the process: a Bishop Search Committee, a Transition Committee, and a Consecration Committee.
  - The Bishop Search Committee will lead a listening process to gather information about the diocese's past, present, and future; create a diocesan profile; evaluate nominees and applicants; and present a slate of three to five candidates for election. (Once the slate is announced, a period of nomination by petition will begin.)
  - The Transition Committee will introduce the candidates to the diocese and the diocese to the candidates, and it will coordinate the episcopal election with the Convention Planning Committee.
  - Following a successful election, the Consecration Committee will help the bishop-elect and family plan for relocating to the diocese as needed, work with the presiding bishop's office to plan the consecration liturgy, and plan the details and logistics of the consecration weekend.
- The Standing Committee will name the members and the chairs of the three committees.
- Diocesan lay people and clergy will be invited to apply for those positions beginning Sept. 1, 2023, when the search website will go live. We anticipate

about 12 positions on each committee. In naming the three committees, the Standing Committee will seek diversity that represents our diocese. This includes geography, congregational size, age, urban/rural context, gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity/language, and ministry order. Applications for the Bishop Search Committee will be due Oct. 1. Applications for the chairs of the Transition Committee and Consecration Committee also will be due Oct. 1, and applications for members of those two committees will be due Dec. 31.

- Expenses incurred in committee service will be reimbursed by the diocese.
- The members of the Bishop Search Committee, the chairs of the Transition and Consecration Committees, and the Standing Committee will take part in a retreat Nov. 17-19 (the weekend following the 2023 Diocesan Convention), led by our search consultant, the Rev. Canon Brian Nordwick, and assisting consultant, the Rev. Shug Goodlow. That retreat will include anti-racism training from members of our Diversity and Reconciliation Commission.
- For each of the three committees, the Standing Committee will seek a secretary who will be compensated but will not function as a member of the committee.
- The Standing Committee will name a chaplain for the search process.
- The Standing Committee will direct that the Bishop Search Committee to offer at least twice-monthly updates to the diocese. The Transition and Consecration Committees will also offer regular updates.

The Standing Committee has developed a detailed timeline for the search, transition, and consecration process. Here are the highlights, which will also appear on the search website:

Sept. 1, 2023	Search website goes live; applications open for all three committees.
Oct. 1, 2023	Applications due for Bishop Search Committee members, as well as chairs of Transition and Consecration Committees.
Week of Oct. 9, 2023	Standing Committee announces Bishop Search Committee members and chair, as well as chairs of Transition and Consecration Committees.
Nov. 11, 2023	Diocesan Convention considers rules and procedures for an episcopal election.
Nov. 17-19, 2023	Joint retreat of Standing Committee, Bishop Search Committee, and chairs of Transition and Consecration Committees.
Dec. 31, 2023	Applications due for Transition and Consecration Committee members.
November 2023 through February 2024	Bishop Search Committee gathers information and develops diocesan profile.
February 2024	Standing Committee names Transition and Consecration Committee members.
March 1, 2024	Diocesan profile published; bishop application/nomination period opens.
March 2024	Retreat for Transition and Consecration Committee members.
Early April 2024	Application/nomination period for bishop closes.
April through June 2024	Bishop Search Committee screens and interviews potential bishop candidates.
Early June 2024	Discernment retreat for potential bishop candidates.
Early August 2024	Slate of candidates announced; nominations by petition accepted.

September to October 2024	Candidate visits and other engagement with the diocese.
Nov. 8-9, 2024	Election of the ninth bishop of West Missouri at Diocesan Convention.
November 2024 to March 2025	Canonically mandated consent period.
April or May 2025	Consecration of the ninth bishop of West Missouri.

With the help of our search consultant, the Standing Committee has created the following documents:

- The Standing Committee’s commitment to the diocese related to the search.
- Position descriptions for members of the Bishop Search Committee, Transition Committee, and Consecration Committee, as well as the search-process chaplain.
- The Standing Committee’s charge to the Bishop Search Committee.

The Standing Committee’s next step is to develop the rules and procedure for electing a bishop. The Episcopal Church’s canons and our diocesan canons specify few details about how the election is to take place, so the Standing Committee will develop the rules and procedure, with the help of the diocesan Chancellor, and present them to the 2023 Diocesan Convention for consideration.

In our work with our search consultant, we have had two meetings (one involving just the Standing Committee President and one involving the full committee), but we haven’t yet received any invoices.

Finally, the Standing Committee has written this prayer for use by all our congregations and members through the search, transition, and consecration process:

O Creator God, giver of every good gift, look graciously on us in the Diocese of West Missouri and guide us as we discern our call of a new bishop. O Jesus, be present in our discernment, and lead us to a shepherd who will invite us to live out the Gospel every day. O Holy Spirit, inspire us with your wisdom, and kindle our hearts with the fire of your love, that we may be renewed as we prepare to welcome the ministry of our next bishop. This we ask trusting in You. Amen.

**b. The Bishop’s Report.** Bishop Bruce reported on personnel changes: Kim Snodgrass, Assistant to the Bishop for Christian Formation, is retiring effective October 31; the new Vocations Missioner will be announced on August 16.

The Bishop asked for prayers for her aunt, Ellen Jardine, who is hospitalized.

The Bishop reported that Mtr. Kary Mann of Trinity Episcopal Church in Independence, asked for permission to send a letter to all of the churches in the diocese requesting financial support for Trinity’s capital campaign. After

discussion, by common consent, the Bishop will approve an announcement in the New Spirit only.

c. **The Vice-President's Report.** The Rev. Galen Snodgrass had no report.

#### 5. New Business

- a. The Diocese Minimum Insurance Limits need to be updated to meet what the current Church Insurance Policy provides, including Cyber Liability and Malicious Attack. After review of the Diocese of West Missouri Minimum Insurance Requirements as updated on August 1, 2023, the Rev. Steven King moved, seconded by Amanda Perschall, that the updated minimum insurance limits be approved. **The motion carried.**
  
- b. Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by the Very Rev. Chandler Jackson, that Episcopal Relief and Development be the recipient of the 2023 Diocesan Convention Opening Eucharist collection. **The motion carried.**

#### 6. Action Items

- a. Grants committee and process  
After review and discussion of the proposed "Grants Committee and Grant Process" document, Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by the Very Rev. Robin James, that the Deans be removed as members of the Grants Committee and that lay members and clergy members (which may include the Deans) be elected by Deanery councils. **The motion carried.**

Fr. Steven King moved, seconded by Amanda Perschall, that the proposed "Grants Committee and Grant Process" document be approved as amended.  
**The motion carried.**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Beverly Roggenkamp moved, seconded by Canon Shirley Bolden, to adjourn. **The motion carried,** and the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Donna Stanford  
Diocesan Secretary