

Minutes

Montana Synod Council
April 17, 2021 – Zoom Electronic Meeting

Managing for the future *Financing the Synod Ministries*

Present: Bishop Laurie Jungling, Vice President Dick Deschamps, Treasurer Sue Ost, John Sheppard, Rev. Gretchen Wagner, Rev. Doris Tollefson, Robin Matthews, Allen Hansen, Kevin Johnson, Rev. Anna Merritt, Rev. Peter Erickson, Associate to the Bishop Jason Asselstine, Colter McCarty, and Director for Evangelical Mission Peggy Paugh Leuzinger.

Absent: Mary Hutchinson, Kristi Lobdell, Evan Ceaicovschi, Rev. Jessica Obrecht, Rev. Amanda Liggett

Welcome

Vice President Dick Deschamps welcomed the members of the Synod Council and thanked them for joining in the meeting

Devotions

Vice President Deschamps led the council in an opening devotion and prayer

Call to Order

Vice President Deschamps called the meeting to order at 10:10 am

Adoption of Agenda

Motion

Second: Adopt the agenda with the privilege of the chair to revise.

SC.21.04.01

VOTE: ADOPT THE AGENDA WITH THE PRIVILEGE OF THE CHAIR TO REVISE.

Approval of Minutes

Motion

Second: Approve the minutes of the February 19, 2021 meeting

SC.21.04.02

VOTE: APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 19, 2021 MEETING

Business Meeting

Financial

Synod Treasurer Sue Ost shared updates of the financial situation of the Synod.

Motion

Second: Approve Funding of \$3,000 for 2021 for the work of Dennis Trotter, Synod Financial Consultant.

SC21.04.03

VOTE: APPROVE FUNDING OF \$3,000 FOR 2021 FOR THE WORK OF DENNIS TROTTER, SYNOD FINANCIAL CONSULTANT.

Candidacy Coordinator

Due to the sudden death of Pastor Bob Quam who had volunteered his services to manage the Candidacy process, there is need for money in the budget of \$2400 per year to provide a stipend for his successor. This will require a small increase in anticipated mission support and expenses for contract services for both the 2021 and 2022 budgets.

Motion

Second: Add \$2,400 per year to cover cost for a stipend for the Candidacy Coordinator to increase mission support and expenses for contract services for both the 2021 and 2022 budgets.

SC.21.04.04

VOTE: ADD \$2400 PER YEAR TO COVER COST FOR A STIPEND FOR THE CANDIDACY COORDINATOR TO INCREASE MISSION SUPPORT AND EXPENSES FOR CONTRACT SERVICES FOR BOTH THE 2021 AND 2022 BUDGETS.

Synod Assembly Planning:

Bishop Laurie Jungling shared updates on the Assembly:

Resolutions: No resolutions were received before April 1st, so none will be considered during the Assembly.

Worship: Molly and Allen Sasser Goehner will be asked to plan worship.

Registration: Currently there are 89 female voting members and significantly fewer male (as of the Synod Council meeting).

The Synod Council will meet on Wed. June 2nd via zoom from 5:30 – 7:30 pm prior to the Assembly.

The slate of candidates from the Nominating Committee was presented.

Motion

Second: Approve the slate of candidates from the Nominating Committee.

SC.21.04.05

VOTE: APPROVE THE SLATE OF CANDIDATES FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

The Synod Council engaged in conversation about accepting nominations from the Voting Members during the Assembly (Nominations “from the floor”). It was suggested that there be a document that would explain briefly the nomination process and that further nominations would not be accepted.

Motion

Second: During the 2021 Synod Assembly, the Chair will not accept nominations from the floor.

SC.21.04.06

VOTE: DURING THE 2021 SYNOD ASSEMBLY, THE CHAIR WILL NOT ACCEPT NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR.

The following indicated that they will be able to be in Great Falls to be in person for the assembly: Robin Matthews, Dick Deschamps, Sue Ost, Amanda Liggett, Anna Merritt.

Colter McCarty explained what he is planning for the technology portion of the Assembly: He will be scheduling trainings for voting members on-line and all are encouraged to attend at least one. He requested that Synod Council members scatter their attendance at the meetings to offer their support/presence.

There will be a meeting scheduled to present information about nominees as well as a Budget Forum on Friday at 5:00 pm on the day of the Assembly.

Credentials/Elections Committee: Colter will be setting up the software – eballot.

Colter suggests that there needs to be 4 people to be on this “committee” Anna Merritt, Jessie Obrecht, and Robin Matthews volunteered

Tech Support: Kristi Lobdell and John Sheppard and maybe 1 other person to help with tech support will be needed. Dick Deschamps and John Sheppard were considering potential people to help with this.

If someone wants to speak on an issue there will be someone available to assist the Bishop to admit them to the zoom meeting from the waiting room. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger will help with this.

Colter will be setting up and hosting training meetings for Assembly participants in the next weeks.

John Sheppard will be the back-up for whole tech stuff and will be meeting with Colter soon.

Pre-Assembly: Move by staff on June 1st

Thurs. 5:00 pm in person rehearsal including all speakers as is possible

Opening of assembly at 1:00 pm on Friday

There will be a gathering with the Bishop on Friday evening

Budget conversation maybe on Friday evening, too.

Nancy and Kathy Marks have agreed to be in Great Falls to assist with powerpoint and other graphic needs during the assembly.

The Council thanked Colter for all his work so far to help the assembly run smoothly.

Endowment Report:

In response to a question about the sources of Endowment Funds, Sue Ost presented an update of the funds.

The Montana Synod Endowment Fund consists of 3 main endowments: the Planned Giving Endowment, the Emmaus Endowment, and the Ramseth Seminary Endowment. The Region I FSO (Alyce) keeps track of each of these three funds separately, although at the ELCA Foundation, they are combined.

The Planned Giving Endowment was established in 1998 as part of a Planned Giving Consortium with the Regional Gift Planner. This plan never really came to fruition, and the endowment was not used for 20 years. In September 2018, the Synod Council voted to use the earnings from this fund to help make payments on the mortgage if needed. The balance in the account is \$50,396.36 and we have not yet had to draw any of the earnings for this purpose. Earnings are reinvested in the fund.

The Emmaus Endowment was created when one of the 3 congregations in the Westby parish closed. They chose to use their assets to create an endowment to assist rural ministry. We have used this fund occasionally, to fund a rural ministry conference or to help with a pastor's moving expenses. The balance is \$94,262.05.

The Ramseth Seminary Fund was created in honor of Bishop Mark Ramseth when his tenure as Bishop ended. Earnings from this fund are used to pay one month per year of seminary loan payments for pastors who request it. This endowment has a balance of \$204,212.61.

We also have the Montana Synod Fund For Leaders, which is held and administered at Churchwide. Funds in honor of former Bishops Daehlin and Omland are in this fund. Each year, the Bishop is informed of the amount available for distribution from the earnings, and the Candidacy Committee decides which candidates will receive those funds. \$193,320.63 is the balance in this fund.

The Hetzel Foundation endowment is also owned by the Synod, but has their own Board of Directors and strict rules governing grants it provides to various applicants. The Bishop serves on this Board of Directors. This endowment was created by the Last Will and Testament of William and Blanche Hetzel. It exists "to provide financial assistance to agencies and institutions providing care for the elderly, and for the health, education, religious training and recreation of children and young people through the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Bishop Jungling brought up the Covid-Disaster fund which was established last year, wondering how do we use that money when the requests for Covid relief have been minimal, especially in the

last 9 months? She mentioned the need for recovery support for leaders for spiritual, mental and emotional support.

Closing Prayer

Bishop Laurie Jungling led the Synod Council in a closing prayer.

Adjourn

Vice President Dick Deschamps declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Paugh Leuzinger
Secretary Pro-tem

Upcoming Synod Council Meetings

- June 2, 2021, (ZOOM) 5:30 – 7:30 pm
- September 17-18, 2021 Great Falls
- February 18-19, 2022, Great Falls
- June 3, 2022, Billings
- September 23-24, 2022, Great Falls

Synod Assembly

- June 4-5, 2021, Virtual