

The Executive Board of The Diocese of Virginia Annual Report 2021

PURPOSE: The Executive Board is the governing body of the Diocese of Virginia in between sessions of Annual Convention and is responsible for oversight of the budget and program of the Diocese. Much of the program of the Diocese is done by the work of committed volunteers formed in committees and commissions. Delegates are divided into two working groups: (a) the Program Group, which works on the program for the Annual Convention along with Diocesan staff and makes recommendations regarding grants, is chaired by Ken Royston of the West Richmond Region and (b) the Budget Group, working closely with Ted Smith, Treasurer of the Diocese, which is chaired by the Rev. Andrew Moore of the Central Richmond Region.

MEETINGS: The Executive Board normally meets several times a year and for special sessions, when necessary. These meetings take place at various parishes throughout the Diocese. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings for 2021 were held via Zoom conference technology.

EXECUTIVE BOARD COMPOSITION: The Board is composed of Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority, the Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff, Assistant Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, and Assisting Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor, and 16 voting members selected by the 16 regions of the Diocese to terms of three years. By custom, the Episcopal Church Women are represented by the ECW President, who has seat and voice but no vote on the Board. The following regional and ECW delegates serve on the Board: The Rev. Jo Belser, Alexandria; The Rev. Catherine Campbell, Arlington; the Rev. Andrew Moore, Central Richmond and Budget Work Grouping Chair; Ms. Barbara McMurry, Charlottesville; Mary Ann Cowherd, Culpepper; The Rev. Jay Morris, Fredericksburg; The Rev. Barbara Marques, Upper Tidewater; The Rev. David Lacey, North Fairfax; The Rev. Chris Miller, North Richmond; Ms. Sandra Kirkpatrick, Northern Neck; Karl Colder, Northern Piedmont; George Omohundro, Potomac; Sergio Gutierrez, South Fairfax; Preston Sudduth, South Shenandoah; Ken Royston, West Richmond and Program Working Group Chair; The Rev. Webster Gibson, Winchester; and Cindy Helton, (ECW). The Bishop is the President of the Board, and a lay vice president is elected annually.

At the 226th Annual Convention, an amendment was made to Canon 7.1 of the Constitution and Canons to enhance diversity of board membership in many forms - race, gender, age, parish size, skillsets, and professional expertise (See appendix A for the full amendment).

Bishop Goff, with the advice of the Standing Committee, appointed three lay leaders to serve as at-large members, for a one-year term on the Executive Board with full voting rights. Each at-large member has the option of being reappointed for no more than two additional one-year terms. Those appointed were Cheryl Groce-Wright (Holy Comforter, Richmond), Alda L White (Trinity, Fredericksburg) and Garway Bright (Christ Church, Glen Allen, and Vice President). Other non-voting participants at Executive Board meetings generally include Mark Eastham,

Chief of Staff and Board Secretary; Ted Smith, Treasurer; The Rev. Canon Abbot Bailey, Interim Canon to the Ordinary, and Bill Martin, Executive Board Coordinator.

Executive Board Meeting Highlights:

January 21, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- The Executive Board welcomed nine new members, including the three at-large members appointed by Bishop Goff. Garway Bright was elected to serve as Vice President of the Executive Board and Mark Eastham Chief of Staff, Diocese of Virginia, was elected Secretary of the Board.
- This virtual gathering was called as a special meeting to continue the work on the diocesan budget for 2021 (Background: After an extended discussion, the 226th Annual Convention meeting virtually on November 14, 2020, declined to approve the budget and thereby referred the budget back to the Executive Board).
- At this date, Diocesan Treasurer Ted Smith reported to the Executive Board that 120 pledges totaling \$3.0 million had been received. This represented 85% of the forecasted pledge income in the draft 2021 budget. The diocesan finance staff had plans to contact those 59 congregations that had yet to pledge.

February 27, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- The Budget Working Group of the Board met and continued work on the revised budget with a discussion of the revised pledge income forecast.
- At this date, 86% of parishes were reporting a pledge to the Diocese, and pledge income was forecasted to be higher than was anticipated at the 2020 November Convention, when approximately 15% of the parishes had reported a pledge.
- The Budget Working Group planned to consider input from the October 31 open hearing on the budget, the November Convention, and responses to a subsequent survey of delegates. An Open Hearing on Budget for Convention delegates was scheduled for April 17, one week prior to the Special Convention.
- The Board also adopted a Cafeteria/Section 125 plan for the diocesan payroll. This important compliance mechanism enables an employer to designate an employee's contribution to a benefit premium as a pre-tax item. The Diocese recommended that congregations adopt this plan where applicable and offered a plan template to congregations free of charge.

March 18, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- The Executive Board of the Diocese gathered in a special meeting to approve a draft budget to present to the April 24 Special Convention (Background: Bishop Goff announced on Feb 5th that she will call a Special Convention for the adoption of the Diocesan budget. The Special Convention will be held virtually on Saturday, April 24).

- The Budget Working Group proposed, and the Executive Board adopted, a draft budget balanced at \$4,867,123. The Working Group approached this revision with focus on the Diocese’s stated mission priorities: healing across differences, honoring and caring for God’s creation, and sharing the faith of Jesus with youth and others.
- The proposed budget, including the budget narrative, were to be made available on the diocesan website no later than Monday, March 22. An Open Hearing on the Budget for Convention Delegates was scheduled for April 17, one week prior to the Special Convention.

May 20, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- The Executive Board met on May 20th in a special meeting to debrief on the April 24 Special Convention to Adopt the Budget.
- The Board considered how the Diocese might develop a process for addressing Resolution BR-4, which was presented in the closing minutes of Convention and was defeated. The resolution proposed to allocate \$1,000,000 from diocesan investment assets to the income category and add a new line item for “Reparations and Undoing White Supremacy.” The Executive Board reached consensus that the issue of reparations will be on the agenda for its June meeting.
- Board members planned to employ a variety of resources, including the Diocese’s online library of racial justice resources, to develop a basic and common understanding of the issues and concepts around reparations.
- The Board also discussed improvements to the Convention process and procedures, emphasizing ways to promote trust, transparency and improved communication with churches, clergy, and delegates.
- The Board also created two subgroups – one to study diocesan assets and the other to study campus ministry. The work of each subgroup will help to inform the development of the 2022 budget.
- The Board’s Working Group on Budget decided to begin meeting in June to develop a budget forecast for 2022.
- The Board also decided to consider revisions to the procedural Rules of Order for Convention to improve clarity and consistency.

June 26, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- Trustees of the Funds (TOTF), the related organization that manages the investment portfolios of the Diocese and many churches and organizations presented a report to the Executive Board.
- TOTF adopted a Mission-Aligned Investment Policy, which includes a commitment to having at least 10% of their assets invested in explicit Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) funds. The Trustees has scheduled a meeting open to the public on September 8.

- The Executive Board appointed three members -- Chris Miller, Garway Bright and Ken Royston -- to participate on the Nominating Committee for future Trustees.
- The Board received a report from the Virtual Governance Task Force, which was formed by the 2020 Diocesan Convention, to study how congregations, diocesan bodies, and Convention are using virtual means to carry out governance and how such virtual and hybrid means can make future governance more transparent, accessible, inclusive, and diverse. The Task Force has formed three working groups to address lessons learned from the virtual conduct of (a) Congregational meetings, vestry elections, and property votes; (b) Executive Board and Standing Committee proceedings; (c) Diocesan Conventions (including hearings and voting). The Task Force will continue to gather data, also reaching out to congregations that are not using online meetings due to barriers to internet access or other issues. The Task Force will publish its final report by September 15 and will present its findings and recommendations to the November 2021 Convention.
- The Board received an informational report from the Diocesan Chancellor and Convention Parliamentarian JP Causey on proposed changes to the Rules of Order for the November Convention. The key changes are intended to promote better efficiency and more opportunity for thoughtful discussion of proposed resolutions and amendments.
- The Board received an update on the status of the search for a Diocesan Missioner for Racial Justice and Healing. The Diocese engaged an executive recruiter to launch a national search to secure the best possible candidate for this important work. Bishop Goff appointed an advisory group representing key groups from across the Diocese to assist with the initial vetting.
- Bishop Goff shared reflections on where we are during the intentional four-year interim between the resignation of the 13th Bishop Diocesan in November of 2018 and the consecration of the 14th Bishop Diocesan in late 2022, during which she is serving as Ecclesiastical Authority. Work continues in the four priority areas she announced in her Pastoral Address in 2019: healing across divides; care of God's creation; sharing the faith of Jesus; and resourcing God's mission.
- Bishop Goff shared that work also continues on the infrastructure of diocesan life, including: empowering committees and commissions and empowering Deans as the Bishop's representative in Celebrations of New Ministry; recalibrating the participation of the Bishop on boards; restructuring and clarifying roles of and strengthening diocesan staff. Bishop Goff said that as we come out of the pandemic and into a new normal, we include as a priority a focus on a healthy leadership transition. The Executive Board engaged in vigorous discussion of these focus areas, noting that there have been significant changes and challenges in this time, and that more changes are yet to come.
- The Executive Board's Program Working Group reviewed the grant applications for the Mustard Seed Grants and the Peter James Lee Small Church Revitalization Fund Grants.

The group made their recommendation to approve grants in both categories, and the full Executive Board voted to fund these proposals.

- The Executive Board's Task Force on Diocesan Assets reported that it held its first meeting on June 2. The Board formed this ad hoc group in May to quantify what assets might be available if needed to fund major diocesan mission priorities. The group expects to complete this work by early September.
- The Executive Board's Task Force on Young Adult and Campus Ministry reported that the group is studying the history of funding of the college chaplaincies within the Diocese. The group will soon meet with the chaplains as a group to hear about their ministries and experiences.
- The Executive Board continued discussion about the important work of racial justice and healing in our Diocese, recognizing that many congregations and other groups across the Diocese are engaged in Sacred Ground, in uncovering their own history, and in other work. The Board recognized that this is long-term work in which community and relationship building are vital.
- The Executive Board approved a motion, proposed by Bishop Goff, to designate income from the sale of two unused properties for foundational work in racial justice and healing. This work will include a series of clergy conferences at Shrine Mont over the next year and a half. These conferences will aim to increase the capacity of clergy to talk boldly about race and to help people in congregations and other institutions to talk about race.

September 30, 2021 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

- Bishop Goff announced that bishops have resumed weekly visitations and the Diocese recently held a Day of Commitment on which more than 200 people were confirmed across five services.
- Bishop Goff also announced that the Missioner for Racial Justice and Healing, The Rev. Dr. J. Lee Hill, Jr., will begin his work in the Diocese on November 8.
- The Board passed a draft budget to be shared with the Diocese in advance of the open hearing to be held on November 6.
- The budget is balanced at \$5,247,300. The increased income includes that from funds not previously used for operations (as identified by the Task Force on Diocesan Assets) alongside income which is annually distributed in the form of grants and scholarships. All requests for programming are fully funded and the budget includes the position of Missioner for Racial Justice and Healing along with the partial year compensation of the Bishop Diocesan to be elected next summer.
- Mr. Garway Bright, Vice President of the Executive Board, then led a discussion of the Board's work on racial justice and healing. Topics covered included the Board's September 8 meeting with the Good Trouble – Diocese of Virginia group, the sale of two unused tracts of land to provide funding for foundational work in racial justice and

healing, new and expanded work funded through the operating budget, and the recent hiring of a Missioner for Racial Justice and Healing.

- The Board met with two members of the Search Committee for the next Bishop Diocesan as part of the committee's work to expand their knowledge and awareness of the Board's functions in diocesan governance.
- A report was presented by the Resourcing God's Mission Task Force giving a brief overview of its Resolution to Establish the Virginia Plan for Covenantal Giving which was submitted this week and is available on the diocesan website. A key focus of the report was the role the Executive Board would play in the process of granting pledging percentage adjustments.
- Members of the Task Force on Diocesan Assets reported that, as part of their task to identify all financial assets of the Diocese, including monetary (endowments and other cash resources) and physical (real estate) assets, they have researched files of the Trustees of the Funds and of the Diocesan Treasurer's Office to identify the number, amount, origin, and directions for use or other restrictions for our assets. The Task Force has identified all assets and further research is being done by the Diocesan Registrar and Historiographer Julia Randle to complete the project by late October.
- The Task Force on Young Adult and Campus Ministry reported that their primary work to date has been to seek greater understanding of both the history and present picture of campus ministry in the Diocese. They have consulted with Treasurer Ted Smith to learn more about the history of giving to these programs, as well as with Minister for Christian Formation and Camps Paris Ball to learn more about the distinctions between each group. Their work will continue by connecting with the campus ministers in future months. This group noted that young adult and campus ministry is the second largest funded ministry in the budget.
- Chancellor J.P. Causey reviewed the Updated Rules of Order for the 2021 Online Annual Convention with the Board.

Final 2021 Executive Board Meeting: December 16, 2021

Appendix A

Canon 7.1 of the Constitution and Canons Amendment:

“To provide for wider diversity and equity that may not always be represented, the Bishop may appoint, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, no more than three at-large members (whether lay or clerical) for a one-year term, with the option of reappointment for each at-large member for no more than two additional one-year terms. The appointed at-large members shall be clergy who are on the Official List of the Clergy of the Diocese (Canon1) or lay persons eligible for election to the Vestry of a Church in the Diocese and may not be the Dean or President of a Region or a member of the Standing Committee.”