

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council  
Executive Committee  
Minutes  
May 22, 2007**

Members present: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Treasurer Mark Bradley, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, John Petersburg and Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin.

Staff present: Deborah Norrie, Recorder

The committee met from 3:00 to 3:30 to complete the review of the personnel policy manual. The manual will be edited and submitted to the committee for final review in August and then forwarded to the synod council for action in September.

Vice president Shirley Gangstad called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 in the synod office conference room at Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota.

Mark Bradley led devotions.

Secretary BettyAnn Hernke presented the minutes of the meeting March 8, 2007. John Petersburg made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.

**Voted**

**EC.07.05.01 to accept the minutes of the Executive Committee of March 8, 2007.**

Treasurer Mark Bradley presented the Treasurer's report.

- Mission support for the first quarter was \$477,275; historically we have 23.1% of income during the first quarter; this year we are at 21.5%
- The April preliminary financial report was reviewed;
- Committee members reviewed the check register for items paid in May and asked questions of Deborah Ann about items of note
- The checkbook balance for that day was \$315,893.50

BettyAnn Hernke made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded and carried.

**Voted**

**EC.07.05.02 to accept the treasurer's report.**

Old Business

2007 Synod Assembly

Bishop Usgaard reviewed the agenda for the upcoming assembly. The committee also reviewed the resolutions received and noted that a substitute resolution would be offered by the author for Resolution 2007-02.

The committee approved the dates of future assemblies:

April 30 – May 1, 2010 (revised date)  
May 6 – 7, 2011  
May 4 – 5, 2012  
June 7 – 8, 2013 (Bishop's election)  
May 2 – 3, 2014

Budget Task Force.

Bishop Usgaard reported that in recent conversations with other bishops, most synods are struggling with budgeting because of flat income. None have found a solution.

Several names were suggested to form this task force: John Petersburg and Mark Bradley from the Executive Committee; Jeff Setterlund, former treasurer; Diane McNally Forsythe, former Vice president; Rev. Joseph Crippen and Rick Thoni.

John Petersburg commented that a new strategic plan will impact the budget; but are those goals concrete enough to base a budget on them? The bishop replied that the goals and objectives for the synod are laid out in the constitution but a plan needs to be in place to determine the emphasis for the next six years. Do we do the strategic plan first and then do the budget?

The committee had conversation on what values impact the budget. We always talk about cutting. Shirley Gangstad asked about how to increase giving?

Bishop Usgaard will contact Jeff Setterlund, Diane McNally Forsythe and Joseph Crippen and ask them to serve on this task force.

The committee welcomed Steve Christopherson from Smith, Schafer & Associates to present the audit. The management letter indicates internal control deficiencies. Mr. Christopherson noted that little can be done about it because of the limited size of the staff. Deborah Norrie commented that more of the regular bookkeeping duties would be delegated to Cheryse Sloan to address some of those issues. But this deficiency requires the auditors to cover more detail as a part of the annual audit. During the review of the audit report, committee members had opportunity to ask clarification questions. Mr. Christopherson recommended that we look at the amount of money held in the checking account at Eastwood Bank. We may earn more interest if some of the cash is held in a higher interest earning account. Also, we should look at moving more of the restricted money to the Thrivent restricted fund from the checking account.

John Petersburg made a motion to accept the audit report and offered thanks to Mr. Christopherson for presenting the report to the committee.

### **Voted**

**EC.07.05.03 to accept the 2007 Independent Auditor's Report from Smith Schafer and Associates, Ltd., Rochester, Minnesota.**

There was no other old business.

## New Business

### Youth & Family Ministry Task Force

The bishop reported that if the assembly resolution passes, the council will need to appoint a task force to review this ministry and make recommendations to the council. He has compiled a long list of people interested in serving on the task force.

Ms. Norrie called attention to the new Assisi lease and the letter sent to the Sisters outlining the attorney's concerns about the lease. No response has been received from the sisters. Ms. Norrie will keep the committee informed.

### Future meetings.

Ms. Norrie asked how to delegate responsibilities for the Executive Committee meeting and the two Synod Council meetings to be held while she is on sabbatical.

The following was decided:

- BettyAnn Hernke will be responsible for minutes;
- Shirley Gangstad will coordinate arrangements with Our Savior, Spring Valley and Jim Ahlquist at Messiah, North Mankato for the synod council meetings;
- Shirley Gangstad will prepare agendas, and
- Carolyn Goulet will prepare and mail packets

The program for the September council meeting has not been set. Bishop Usgaard will identify a book for the council to read and have book group discussions for the continuing education of the council.

### Staff vacancy

Bishop Usgaard reported that he may be ready to begin interviews. Dates in June were discussed as possible interview days if needed.

There was no other new business.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary  
Deborah Norrie, Recorder

### Next meeting dates:

August 28; Devotions – Huck  
October 30; Devotions – Shirley