

Executive Council Committee on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

March 17, 2021

Minutes of the Teleconference

HBCU COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Canon Martini Shaw (Chair), Ms. Martha Alexander, Dr. Joel Cunningham, Canon Jamie Callaway, Dr. Scott Evenbeck, Canon Anita George, Canon Michele Hagans and Dr. Eugene Lowe, Bishop Sam Rodman, Bishop Andrew Waldo.

Guests: Father Ronald Byrd, Canon Lang Lowrey, Ms. Cecilia Malm, Dr. Christine McPhail.

Regrets: Mr. Kurt Barnes and Bishop Anne Hodges-Copple.

Canon Shaw called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM EDT. Dr. Lowe offered a prayer.

The roll was called and perfect attendance appreciated.

The minutes from the February meeting were moved (Ms. Alexander), seconded (Bp. Waldo) and approved as presented.

Voorhees Update

Bishop Waldo reported that he had talked with Dr. Hopkins, who was excited about the possibility of finding a chaplain who would be an adjunct faculty member with a focus on religious life. There are questions yet to be answered. If TEC would pay salary and benefits, a shift would need to be made from funding other things at Voorhees. This arrangement would depend on who gets called. Dr. Hopkins believes it would be a good investment for the school to have someone skilled in relationship building. Conversations continue. A job description will be developed with Dr. Hopkins and a look taken at the money from TEC and how and, even, whether block grant money could be used to fund the position. If TEC covers the salary, a more equitable salary for a cleric could be offered. All agreed that the person is important who fills that ministry. Two candidates were identified, vetted and a decision made not to proceed with either. Discussion ensued concerning accountability and lines of reporting for the position.

St. Augustine's Update

Bishop Rodman expressed his enthusiasm about Dr. McPhail agreeing to be president of SAU. Her hiring was a unanimous decision from a strong field of candidates. She started February 24 and there is great excitement about her leadership. Interim President, Dr. Lumpkin, has returned to her previous role as provost. So far, SAU has been fortunate with regard to COVID. A vaccination clinic will cover 2000 people this weekend. Proposed changes of by-laws will have an impact on the relationship between the school and the church as well as an impact on the nature of the relationships with NC bishops outside of the Diocese of North Carolina. The college is on tract to respond to the warning that was issued from SARS.

Discussion returned to the chaplaincy position at Voorhees. The role is three-fold as chaplain, covering the Sunday congregation that meets on site, and teaching, requiring full-time service.

Canon Lowrey reported on the presidential search at Voorhees. He explained the mechanics of the search process and said a decision would be made in the summer.

Guest Appearance

Cn. Shaw welcomed Dr. Christine McPhail, the new president of SAU, to the meeting a bit after 10 o'clock and expressed condolences for the loss of her husband, Dr. Irving McPhail, who had been president before her. Dr. McPhail said that she had been in place for several weeks and observed the unity between the church and school in supporting the students. She had learned much about SAU and the relationship from her husband. She is concentrating primarily on the health, wellness and safety of students and faculty. The school is staying on top of COVID-19 with regular testing. She described the various directions they are focused on: the importance of STEM education, building upon location and the properties they own, seeking entrepreneurial opportunities, and aiming to become a globally competitive institution. SAU is doing whatever it can to continue support from the church and this committee. Individual committee members expressed their support and enthusiasm for her having accepted the presidency. Hopes were expressed as well about a future meeting of the committee on the SAU campus. Dr. McPhail left the meeting at 10:17.

Consultant Updates

Ms. Malm talked about the success of the Absalom Jones appeal. There have been 279 gifts received for a total of \$40,530 raised to date against the \$50K goal for 2021. She gave kudos to the communications office that provided articles in ENS, ads, and a presence on social media. Ms. Malm added that she is waiting for a donation from Grace Church in Brooklyn Heights where a Lenten Offering specifically for the benefit of SAU has been in process.

Ms. Malm and Cn. Lowery continue to meet with Dr. Brown at Voorhees to support them in their fundraising. She will get together with SAU institutional advancement team and Dr. McPhail.

Next meeting date: 8:00 AM on April 22nd unless the board meeting at SAU is moved, in which case the meeting will take place at 9:00 AM.

At 10:28 it was moved (Ms. Alexander), seconded and agreed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Caparulo
Staff Support to the Committee