

Executive Council Committee on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

April 24, 2023

Minutes of the Teleconference

HBCU COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Canon Martini Shaw, Ms. Martha Alexander, Canon Jamie Callaway, Dr. Joel Cunningham, Mr. Scott Evenbeck, Canon Anita George, Canon Michele Hagans, Dr. Eugene Lowe, and Bishop Ruth Woodliff-Stanley.

Absent Committee Members: Bishop Sam Rodman,

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS: Canon Ron Byrd, Mr. T.J. Houlihan, Nancy Caparulo.

Absent Staff/Consultant Member: Mr. Kurt Barnes, Fr. Lang Lowery.

Guest: Dr. Ronnie Hopkins, President of Voorhees University.

Canon Shaw called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM with a quorum present and Bishop Ruth offered a prayer.

The February Minutes were moved (Dr. Lowe), seconded (Bishop Ruth) and approved as presented.

Reports

Bp. Ruth largely deferred her report on Voorhees owing to the anticipated arrival of Dr. Hopkins some time later to discuss activities at the school. A primary focus is reconvening the search group for a chaplain. Cn. Byrd added that candidates for the position have been found. Cn. Hagans participates in the search group that will vet potential candidates. Interviews will be organized in Bp Ruth's office when the time comes.

It was noted that this is the middle of scholarship season, and the biggest pool of applicants is this year and they are in process of review and sorting. May 11 is the cut-off date. Voorhees lacks a seminary contact because there is no chaplain coordinating the scholarship effort.

Development

Mr. Houlihan talked about the choir visit to the Episcopal Parish Network. Since the event, the Office of Development has received contact from folks wanting to be more involved. Canons Callaway and Byrd remarked on the positive way Mr. Houlihan managed the event and gave kudos to Mr. Barnes for providing the means for hotel accommodations. New ideas were generated by the choir presentation. The fund is slightly behind last year (\$25K), Mr. Houlihan reported. The number of gifts is increased but the amount is down and that tracks with other funds.

Voorhees University

Dr. Hopkins was welcomed and invited to share the news from Voorhees. "We are thriving at Voorhees University," he said. He was enthusiastic about the choir event shared with St. Augustine's at the EPN gathering. Spring Fest week was held last week and a first spring homecoming went very well.

Founders Day, celebrating 126 years, is being planned. Dr. Hopkins reviewed the elements of the event, including the President's Scholarship GALA to raise funds to attract a wider range of scholars to the school. There 29 scholars now, 4 faculty completed terminal degrees making 73% of faculty now with that status. They are pushing ahead the hotel concept for Denmark and doing a feasibility study to locate it on campus (378 acres of land). A salary study is in process. There is a desire to do a campus/community center with a theater, bowling alley, skating rink, ballroom, community space. There is collaboration with the Diocese of SC on health insurance. Dr. Hopkins said they need to update the school's financial impact on the community, which was reported at \$17 million in 2014. Commencement is on May 6 and the Mayor of Birmingham AL will be the speaker. There will be 74 graduates and the first Masters Degrees (8) awarded.

Dr Hopkins discussed the issue of violence in the area and the formation of a task force on non-violence. The school is working with the community on that matter.

The search for the Dean of Chapel with Cn. Byrd, Bp. Ruth and others has begun anew.

Voorhees offers a Masters of Education and Teaching and will be able to market an MBA in data analytics and resources. There were 508 students in fall, 31 of whom graduated in December. There are now about 474 enrolled. There has been an impact in enrollment because of violence. The school had 8 international students in 2022 and now has 35 and the question has arisen about violence in the US generally from prospects. Additional problems are anticipated around that issue.

Bishop Ruth underscored the need to be ready when the Chaplain candidates are in line for interviews. Commissions on ministry are focused on proper discernment with the students. Joshua Duncan is exploring holy orders. Canon Hagans expressed her thanks to Dr. Hopkins et al for such an uplifting report.

Dr. Hopkins concluded with an update on the healthcare restoration and the process around it. He left the call at 10:34.

Regarding the in-person meeting October 407 at SAU in Raleigh, Fr. Shaw provided planning information. He is waiting to hear from Rev. Hershey about the agenda. Mr. Houlihan suggested there be a gathering of some sort with donors in the area during the committee's time there. A suggestion was made to have a chapel service connected to a local gathering.

Fr. Shaw announced Bishop Waldo's resignation from the committee owing to his joy in retirement.

Next committee meeting: Monday, June 19 (Juneteenth) at 10:00 AM Eastern time.

Dr. Lowe moved and Dr. Cunningham seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 AM. And so it was.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Caparulo
Starr support to the committee