**MINUTES**

**Executive Council Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility**

**Friday, June 6, 2025, 1-3pm ET**

**Meeting via Zoom**

Committee members in attendance: Sarah Lawton, Chair; Amy Domini; Lawrence Hitt, Anne Hodges-Copple, Jamie McMahon, Diana Wilcox, Heidi Kim

Committee members absent: Winnie Varghese, Thomas Brown

Others in attendance: Rebecca Blachly, Chief of Public Policy and Witness; Kurt Barnes, Treasurer; Chris Lacovara, CFO; Christopher Rowe, CPG; Mary Minette, Mercy Investment Services; Rich Stazinski, Heartland Initiative; Sam Jones, Heartland Initiative; Bill McKeown, volunteer consultant

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Chair Sarah Lawton opened the meeting with prayer, and invited each person to introduce themselves.

Sarah Lawton presented the CCSR [mandate](https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing_and_interim_bodies/interim_bodies/1581/mandate) and specific tasks for this triennium, including addressing the new [weapons resolution](https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/476?house=HD&lang=en) passed at the last General Convention, and role to encourage the various bodies of the church to consider and implement ethical approaches to investing.

Rebecca Blachly discussed the recent reorganization of the Church Center and how staffing is shifting for CCSR’s work. She also discussed the plan to align CCSR’s work with the other public witness arms of TEC (Office of Government Relations, UN Office, Episcopal Migration Ministries) and their plan to organize and communicate our work through the priorities of those groups (Poverty, Migration, Racial Reconciliation, Creation Care, Human Rights/Peace-Building). Finally, she offered a perspective the changing landscape for public witness work given the new administration and the ways that our church can continue to educate and witness to our faith-rooted values in difficult times.

Kurt Barnes offered a perspective from his 22 years of supporting this committee’s work and noted that he will be retiring later this year, though he will continue to work with our new CFO as part of their transition. He also clarified that $220 million of the $600 million in DFMS funds is composed of trust funds from other Episcopal Church entities including dioceses, parishes, and Episcopal Relief and Development.

The committee offered thanks to Kurt for his many years of faithful service to this committee and the Episcopal Church.

Chris Lacovara, our new CFO introduced himself. He has a background in non-profit finance and law in New York, so will bring that experience to the management of this work; he is enthusiastic about the mission of this committee and will do everything he can to support this work.

The committee briefly discussed the roles and and responsibilities of our TEC staff. Chris Rowe noted that we coordinate our proxy votes with CPG, and that he is able to be in touch with Rebecca and the finance officers when a question arises about those votes. In general, Rebecca will be meeting with our consultants regularly to support the day-to-day work, based on our priorities and corporate year work as passed by Executive Council.

Mary Minette presented an update on the corporate year work that is drawing to a close, and offered some highlights including advocacy with utility companies, lithium mining companies, and soft drink companies (with regard to child labor in the sugar fields of India). In general, the landscape for this work is more difficult in this time, and we are finding that private meetings and letters are more effective right now than public letters and votes. We and our faith partners are seeking strategic pathways to make a difference. We should expect a year-end report soon, which will be distributed to the group. Mary reported that we have participated in 43 engagements this year, with seven issues brought forward for a vote.

Sam Jones offered an introduction to the work of Heartland overall and some of their initiatives on our behalf this year, including with travel companies working in areas of conflict, and also with semiconductor companies.

In response to a question from Amy about the effectiveness of sign-on letters, all our consultants agreed that there are too many and that landscape is difficult right now and that we will have to be more strategic in what issues we focus on and in how we engage.

In response to a question about our new weapons policy resolution, which the committee will take up at our in-person meeting in November, Heartland reports that they are already engaged with high-quality investment partners both in the USA and in Europe who are assessing the landscape, especially in terms of lethal autonomous weapons, so we will have the benefit of their work and engagement alongside us.

Finally, the committee discussed logistics. Sarah, with Diana’s help, will work to port over our files on Teams from the previous committee and will flag files for our new committee members to read in order to get up to speed.

**Next meetings:**

**September 19, 1pm-3pm ET (by Zoom)** – to discuss and vote on the 2025-2026 workplan

**November 17-19** – meeting in person in Baltimore

Bishop Anne offered a blessing before we ended the meeting.