

Executive Council Committee on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

February 4, 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. **Regrets:** Mr. Kurt Barnes and Bishop Anne Hodges-Copple.

Canon Shaw called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM EST and welcomed everyone. Dr. Lowe offered a prayer. The minutes from the December 17 meeting were considered, moved (Dr. Evenbeck), seconded (Dr. Lowe) and carried to accept as presented.

Voorhees Update

Bishop Waldo did not have a report at this time. Dr. Evenbeck reported on the status of work with Trinity Wall Street. Ms. Malm and Cn. Lowery had spoken with Dr. Brown and learned that a search committee has been formed to seek a new president. There are three applications for the chaplaincy but no details about the candidates are known.

Cn. Hagans discussed her presentation of the HBCU Committee to a meeting of black deputies. She gave an overview of the committee's work with the two under-resourced universities. With the pandemic, revenue to the schools (tuition, dorm fees, food program, etc.) is less than a trickle. She observed that the church started out with ten schools and now has only two, both of which need support.

Fr. Callaway added that enrollment is 150 in person, which they had hoped for 250. There are 100-125 studying online. First semester was very difficult as many students work to support their households and joined online. There is a salary line for a chaplain; they have added religious studies to the job's responsibilities. Weekly chapel attendance is required, which cannot continue without a chaplain.

Cn. Lowery discussed the enrollment situation in greater depth. Overall enrollment is significantly down by about 125 from the pre-pandemic level, which is of great concern.

Bishop Rodman is now a full committee member rather than a guest.

St. Augustine's Update

Bishop Rodman reported the SAU enrollment of 907 students, most in person, engaged in a hybrid of in-class and online learning. There is a concern about the amount of testing going on as the level is down from that seen in the fall. The student number is low – the target was 1000, creating a financial pinch. They do their census at the beginning of each semester and

expectations are that the number will increase. SAU is eligible for loan forgiveness up to \$20 million, which will help the financial outlook. They were not included in donations from Mackenzie Scott but have been cultivating relationships with Pfizer, Apple and Tennessee State in a program where they'll receive \$88K for specific items.

SACS/COC is scheduled to discuss SAU's response to their warning in April. A site visit is also scheduled for April 2022. The presidential search continues. The board is interviewing candidates later this month. The local news station in NC ran a segment on the university as part of their Black History Month programming.

Bp. Sam met with the PB to discuss the chaplain's office at SAU. They talked about it specific to the relationship between the school and the church.

Fr. Callaway raised the matter of defining an Episcopal college. Cn. Hagans observed the opportunity before the church to address the nature of the racial divide. This was discussed at some length with the focus on chaplaincies at both schools. Fr. Byrd noted some significant efforts that are going forward to support the schools.

Consultant Reports

Ms. Malm said the Absalom Jones appeal in full swing and reviewed the activities around that campaign. Donations are already coming in after social media blasts. Last year \$45 K was raised. This year's goal is \$50 K and Ms. Malm is very optimistic about the likely response.

Ms. Malm and Cn. Lowery with Dr. Brown at Voorhees. April 10th is a virtual Scholars Gala, the main funding activity of the year. In 2022 they will celebrate their 125th anniversary and planning is afoot for fundraising around that. Four new board members were announced. David Miller is now the board chair at Voorhees. Fr. Cunningham was very enthusiastic about the new board members.

At SAU Dr. Clark-Jones is Ms. Malm's main contact. She supports them simply from the standpoint of a fundraising professional.

Fr. Byrd asserted that the black Episcopal Church absolutely supports the schools. They are important to them, which is reflected in the success of the Absalom Jones appeal. Bp. Waldo focused on supporting the ministry of TEC by being a vital, giving presence at both schools for the students. Bishop Waldo and Ms. Hagans will work with Fr. Byrd to examine this further.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) at 9:30 AM Eastern time.

Bp. Rodman moved and Ms. Hagans seconded to adjourn at 11:05 AM. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Caparulo
Staff support to the Committee