



Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama

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**Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama
College of Consultors
Thursday, December 3, 2020
St. Mark Skylight - 3:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER: Bishop Raica called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and opened with a prayer.

Attendees: Bishop Steven Raica, Rev. Bill Lucas, Rev. Bryan Lowe, Rev. Vincent Bresowar, Msgr. Michael Deering, Rev. Joe Culotta, Rev. Bryan Jerabek, Rev. Jose Chacko

Excused: Msgr. Martin Muller, Rev. Bob Sullivan

Absent: Rev. Mike Mac Mahon

Staff: Bob Sellers, CFO; John Whitaker, General Counsel; Donna Mealer, Executive Assistant to the Bishop

Agenda – Approved as submitted.

Minutes – of October 15, 2020 was approved as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

Reorganizing/John Whitaker, General Counsel – Bishop Raica introduced the issue with opening comments. John Whitaker addressed the Consultors present. As a lawyer for the diocese, we are looking for a way to protect the diocese and the parishes. If there is a large judgement against the diocese, parish, etc. Lawyers will look for as much money as they can and now, if this scenario did occur, it could bankrupt the diocese. The Archdiocese of Mobile began reorganizing in 2011 and just finished this past February 2020 to complete the endeavor. Parishes day to day activities would not change. Each parish would incorporate separately. These separate entities will not change the canonical structure of the diocese. The One Voice has their own Tax-ID number. The current structure of the One Voice is under review due to Sales and Use tax. Bishop Raica is contemplating the Foundation issues, how it would be administered and invested. Lowe: asked about "Personal Property." ex: automobiles/bus - vehicles that parishes own. Lowe stated that the diocese was set up as a corporation

sole to assist the smaller parishes to be able to receive loans from Deposit and Loan. Bob Sellers has discussed the reorganization with the bank (the same bank that services the AD of Mobile) and they do not anticipate any changes in the loan protocols and services provided after incorporation of the parishes. The Service Agreement will be written in such a way to mirror the same or almost the same services currently being provided by the Chancery offices. The Bishop will continue to "manage" this protocol. With no pressing lawsuits currently, provides us an opportunity to begin to implement this effort. We are trying to protect the parishes that are not a part of a lawsuit. Bishop Raica asked if there should be a motion from the Consultors; then to discuss the process with the presbyters in most likely Deanery Meetings; knowing this will take us some time to complete. We may want to begin with the largest parishes (the ones that have the most to lose). It may cost \$500 per parish since we will initiate the effort with the assistance of a paralegal, until John Whitaker is familiar with the process to take over.

MOTION: Canon 1277 – The bishop needs the consent of College of Consultors and Finance Council for "extraordinary acts of administration" i.e. diocesan restructuring. The process of restructuring civil incorporation to begin with the consent of the Diocesan Finance Council. **All in favor; none opposed.** Bishop reminded those present that the documents presented in this meeting are private and confidential.

Development and Stewardship – Allen McClendon has been hired and is already present to manage this office for the Diocese of Birmingham – working with Catholic Charities, Grants, and foundation aspects.

St Francis of Assisi, Livingston, Change in Canonical Status/Fr. Justin Ward – A town hall meeting was held; six parishioners attended. Fr. Bryan Jerabek was present as well as a presentation from Fr. Tom Ackerman (dean). The meeting was overall positive and production; collection is less than \$200 per week. It was received well. When mentioned suppression of the parish would be a mission of St. Leo, those present thought it was already a mission of St. Leo. **MOTION:** to suppress the parish and reestablish the parish a MISSION of St. Leo the Great parish. This structure allows us to have the mechanism to manage the recent receipt of 104K. A member of St. Francis will be appointed a member of the St. Leo Finance Council and St. Leo Parish Council. Ensure St. Leo fully understand this relationship. **All in favor; none opposed.**

Holy Spirit, Huntsville, Adoration Chapel – Fr. Mac Mahon presented his plans of a new adoration chapel for the parish. Fr. Jerabek noted that the drawings do not reflect the same design of the present church. Parishioners are excited of the building – to accommodate 50 or so individuals. Estimated cost: \$750K. Fr. Lowe stated that the Facebook post indicates that Fr. Mac Mahon does not have all the funds. Bishop Raica will revisit with Fr. Mac Mahon about a capital campaign (\$513K in the Deposit and Loan) parish account. Bob Sellers stated that he has not approached him regarding a loan. **ACTION:** Bob Sellers suggested sending the form to complete to determine the risk rating.

Communications/Faith Catholic – Bishop Raica provided information that was discussed in other meetings with staff. Mary Dillard provided information regarding a magazine (bi-monthly)– to reach more households in our diocese. Just information at this point. **Mary Dillard** is working on a presentation.