

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Southeastern Synod Council Executive Committee
Minutes for Teleconference Meeting
February 24, 2019
8:00 pm Eastern Time**

In Attendance:

**Rev. Julian Gordy, Bishop
Mr. Imran Siddiqui, Vice President
Rev. Randy Jones, Secretary
Mr. Lee Smith, Treasurer
Rev. Kim Stover
Mr. Stephen Schrader**

**Dr. Sandra Gustavson, Synod Fiscal Advisor
Rev. Dale Sillik, Assistant to the Bishop**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Siddiqui called the meeting to order.

II. OPENING PRAYER: THE REV. KIM STOVER

Rev. Kim Stover opened the meeting with prayer.

**III. AMENDMENT TO 2019 SYNOD ASSEMBLY RULES OF
ORGANIZATION & PROCEDURE**

EC2019.02.01 Amended the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2019 Southeastern Synod Assembly, as previously approved at the meeting of the Synod Council in January 2019, so that the following wording is included as a new second paragraph in Section 3, entitled "Assembly Presiding Officer":

The representative of the churchwide organization shall preside over the assembly whenever the assembly is in session and considering business related to the election of the synod bishop, or when the assembly is casting ballots in this election. Upon conclusion of balloting or of specific business related to the election, the bishop shall resume presiding over the assembly.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & RATIONALE: The Office of the ELCA Secretary has been in conversation with all synods who will be electing synod bishops at this year's synod assemblies. One of the suggestions from the

Secretary is for synods to include something in their Rules of Organization and Procedure to specifically allow the churchwide representative to preside over the assembly during all election procedures for synod bishop. The Rules document that the Southeastern Synod Council already approved (Exhibit E.1, January 2019) contains the following within Section 3, which is entitled "Assembly Presiding Officer":

As this synod's pastor, the bishop shall...preside at all meetings of the Synod Assembly.....

The additional proposed wording is what is recommended within the ELCA's 2019 Bishop Election Tool Kit. By approving the amendment now, it will be possible to include only the amended document on the Assembly website this spring, thereby eliminating opportunities for confusion that might otherwise occur if the proposed amendment were to be brought for consideration on the floor of the Assembly.

IV. PARTICIPATION IN GRANT REQUEST TO LILY FOUNDATION

EC2019.02.02 Approved the following actions.

- 1. Authorize and request that Bishop Gordy or his designee communicate that the Southeastern Synod requests that the North Carolina Synod include the Southeastern Synod in its scaling grant application for the Lifeline Fund Lily Grant for purposes of assisting pastors in improving their financial skills, helping congregations to develop effective stewardship programs, and assisting congregations in increasing engagement with their communities.**
- 2. Authorize disclosure to the North Carolina Synod that the Southeastern Synod commits to providing matching funds for the Lifeline Fund grant of up to \$50,000, payable over a three-year period.**
- 3. Establish a new designated account entitled "Lifeline Grant Matching Funds" with initial funding of \$50,000 from the Synod's existing designated account "Doraville Property Administration," with future disbursements from the new account contingent on renewal of the North Carolina Synod's Lifeline Fund Lily Grant, with participation by the Southeastern Synod.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & RATIONALE: The North Carolina Synod is considering applying to renew a Lily Grant that would have three goals:

- a. Grants to assist pastors develop financial training to manage personal debt and stewardship

- b. Grants to congregations to develop effective stewardship programs (which has resulted in increased mission support)
- c. Grants to assist congregations to develop ministries of vitality through community engagement

The original grant in the NC Synod has been overwhelmingly well received and has shown measurable results for pastors, congregations, and the synod. The renewal application by the NC Synod could be for the NC Synod only or it could be a scaling request wherein the grant would be shared by other synods. At present the Virginia and Florida-Bahamas Synods have expressed interest in joining the grant application.

If approved, the Lily grant would be for \$500,000. Grant levels to synods would be determined by the NC Synod and would depend on how much each synod can create in matching funds. The maximum a synod could expect is \$125,000. Matching funds from Synods would need to be provided over a three-year period. This information was shared with Southeastern Synod Deans at their retreat in early February. The recommendation at the Deans' Retreat was for the Synod to ask the NC Synod to include the Southeastern Synod in the scaling grant request – provided that is the direction the NC Synod Council takes. The NC Synod Council meets in early March to determine how they will structure the grant request.

The Doraville Property Administration account included as a funding source in the proposed action was established when the Interfaith Outreach Home (IOH) began paying rent to the synod to lease the ground on which the IOH building was constructed. Funds in this account are used to maintain the church building and grounds of the former Advent Lutheran Church in Doraville. The balance in the account as of 1/31/2019 was \$94,044.

During the summer and fall of 2017 when the synod was experiencing cash flow problems, \$40,199 of the Doraville Property Administration account was used temporarily for synod operations. When cash flow improved later that year, the full amount was repaid to the Doraville Property Administration account. With the anticipated sale of this property to IOH later in 2019, the diversion of \$50,000 from the administration account is not expected to be an impediment to paying expenses that may be incurred during the remaining time that the synod owns the property.

V. CLOSING PRAYER: MR. STEPHEN SCHRADER

Mr. Schrader closed the meeting with prayer.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Siddiqui adjourned the meeting.