

## HAITIAN EDUCATION SUPPORT TEAM

### Minutes of the September 19, 2023 Meeting of the Board of Directors By Zoom on the Account of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Virginia

**In attendance:** Kathy Dowdy, Chair; Pam McKinney, Vice-Chair, Dave Bucheit, Treasurer; John Beall, Secretary; Dan Burns; Rhonda Childs; Paul Fuhs; Kathy Gross; Tina Wandersee, Director of Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Office of Social Ministry, Diocesan Representative

Absent: Cyndy Unwin;

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Kathy Dowdy with prayer. Prayer was offered for the restoration of health for Cyndy Unwin's husband, Brian.

#### REPORTS.

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes of the August 15, 2023 meeting were approved on motion of John Beall, seconded by Dave Bucheit.

**Treasurer's Report:** David Bucheit did not have any specific numbers to report as the Diocese was finishing up its annual financial records. The miscoding of the remittance of \$7312.00 to the BDE plus the transmission fee of \$24.00 that caused the money to be taken from the Shalom Fund, not the General Fund was discussed. Tina Wandersee reported that steps had been taken to reverse that error, but due to the closing of the 2022-2023 financial records of the Diocese of Richmond, documentation of that fact was not yet available. The hope was expressed that any fees associated with that miscoding would not affect the funds that HEST has responsibility for. It is expected that the General Fund contains about \$20,000.00 and the Shalom Fund about \$156,000.

**Diocesan Report:** Tina Wandersee repeated that planning for the diocesan Gathering devoted to Haiti in the spring months was being initiated. Tina Wandersee told of her meeting with the Haiti Committee at St. Bede's in Williamsburg that has become more active lately. Tina is slowly meeting with the Haiti Committees throughout the Diocese, in person and through media.

**Shalom Fund:** There were 32 scholarships awarded last year. Eight of those students had graduated. It appears that \_\_\_ of the others had not achieved the requisite scores, but instead of losing the scholarship, those students would be placed on academic probation for the next semester, per Bishop Jean's suggestion. That suggestion came about after HEST agreed to allow a failing student last year to retain the scholarship although he had not achieved the academic standards of the Shalom Fund, after the student's Pastor and Principal made a special plea to HEST pointing out extenuating circumstances affecting the student. Another point of discussion centered around how to determine the amount of scholarship funds that will be available for academic year 2023-2024. HEST has been

using the formula of 4.5% of the balance in the Shalom Fund as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Richmond Diocesan financial department suggests, that HEST use a rolling average of the last 3 years value of the Shalom Fund as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. That is not a dictate, but a recommendation. The value of the Shalom Fund as of June 30, 2023 is \$151,071.91. Using the 4.5%, money available for scholarships is \$6798.00; using the rolling average concept, the money available would be \$5637.00 or about \$1100.00 more dollars would be available for 2023-2024. Final discussion of this was deferred until Kathy Gross obtains the tuition figures for the current schools that scholars in the program are attending. If the number of scholarships remain at 32, there are 8 open. The sense of the Board was to be conservative given the instability of the various financial markets and economic forces at work at this time, but no final decision was made.

## BUSINESS.

**Richard Joseph's Computer:** Kathy Dowdy reported that the computer was received by Richard and is being used. And, all but about \$109.00 was covered by special donations and not from the General Fund.

**Richard's October 2023 Visit:** Kathy Dowdy reported that Richard Joseph concurred that postponing his visit to coincide with the planned Spring Haiti Gathering was appropriate.

**Richard Joseph's new Initiative:** Formation Project for 60 teachers in Science and Mathematics. Kathy Gross forwarded to HEST Richard Joseph's request to fund this initiative for Math and Science teachers. He sent a proposed Budget totaling \$6,332.46. It is ambitious project aimed at secondary school education in contrast to the Kellogg Foundation project that focuses on elementary school teachers. Besides the obvious cost of money versus the amount in the General Fund, members of HEST questioned the cost of flying instructors from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitien necessitated by the turmoil taking place in the Capital drew most of the discussion. Kathy Dowdy is going to discuss with Richard the concerns of HEST with Richard during the next month.

**Donation/Fund Raiser:** It was evident that the Board had not fulfilled Tina Wandersee's request to respond to the questions that she submitted to HEST after the August meeting. After discussion, it was decided that a special meeting would be held on Zoom on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, to draft an appropriate and needed response.

**Adjournment:** At 5:45, the meeting adjourned with a prayer.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next regular meeting would be Tuesday, October 17th at 4:30 p.m., using the Zoom technology of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. A special meeting described above would be held on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m., using the Zoom technology of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.

