

HAITIAN EDUCATION SUPPORT TEAM

Minutes of the January 16, 2024 Meeting of the Board of Directors By Zoom on the Account of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Virginia

In attendance: Kathy Dowdy, Chair; Pamela McKinney, Vice-Chair; Dave Bucheit, Treasurer; John Beall, Secretary; Dan Burns; Rhonda Childs; Paul Fuhs (arrived 5:20); Kathy Gross; Cyndy Unwin (left at 5:30); Tina Wandersee, Director of Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Office of Social Ministry, Diocesan Representative (left 5:35)
Absent: None

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Kathy Dowdy with prayer.

REPORTS.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the Special November 18, 2023 meeting were approved on motion of Cyndy Unwin, seconded by Rhonda Child.

Treasurer's Report: David Bucheit reported that the Shalom Fund as of December 31, 2023 contained \$160,323.61, up from \$153,391.85. The General Fund as of November 30, 2023 had \$15,487.55, but that would be lower in the next report by about \$10,000.00 due to transmittal of second semester funds to the BDE and Formation Project for 60 teachers in Science and Mathematics, an ambitious project aimed at secondary school education in contrast to the Kellogg Foundation project that focuses on elementary school teachers. The vehicle Fund contains \$3,563.49.

Diocesan Report: Tina Wandersee repeated that planning for the diocesan Gathering devoted to Haiti in the spring months continues and that Registrations were being taken. That event is at St. Bede's in Williamsburg on February 17th. Tina also noted that the SHINE meeting is set for March 2 at Church of the Redeemer from 9-3.

Shalom Fund: Kathy Gross mentioned that it was time for term reports to be sent in. The academic progress of students on probation will become known then. There were 32 scholarships awarded this year.

BUSINESS.

Fundraiser Update. Tina Wandersee related that the Diocesan fundraising committee/consultant was recommending that the goal for the Fund Raising effort be raised to \$50,000 from the modest \$20,000 that had been the initial goal. In addition, Tina suggested that the "Ask" letter might need to be redrafted somewhat to justify the higher "Ask" figure. Discussion evolved about whom would be receiving the "Ask Letter"—the Diocesan mailing list with tens of thousands names or the HEST mailing list which has about 634 persons on it. That list has not been kept up and is quite outdated. And, those fund-raising efforts have not been very successful, frankly. Tina reminded

the committee that she had turned over the HEST's effort to be reformatted, while retaining the substance and pictures of the effort that the "Ask" document that HEST had developed. She noted that there would be a cost figure, including postage, that needed to be accounted for, too. The cost figure for the previous HEST mailings including printing ranged near \$500.00. Mailing costs to tens of thousands names that are on the Diocese's mailing lists and the as yet undisclosed cost of the Diocese's fund raising outside contractor gave the Committee pause. Tina mentioned that there might be some "bridge funding" available to cover some or all of the costs, but members of HEST noted that based upon earlier discussions under the Treasurer's report the amount in the General Fund was about \$5,000.00. The Committee decided to take up the matter at The Gathering when all of us could be available in person or on the telephone to decide which way to go. Having the "Ask" go out to a larger audience in May with the larger costs seemed the way to go, and the prospect of this effort becoming an Annual Diocesan effort has great promise for the sustainability of HEST's support of the Bureau Diocesan d'Education (BDE), but there is a larger cost risk to be considered.

Richard's 2024 Visit: Richard Joseph arrives in Richmond Thursday, February 15 at 6:54 p.m. on American Airlines Flight No. 4673. John Beall will pick him up and take him to Paul Fuhs' home where Richard will stay. Dave Bucheit will drive Richard to The Gathering in Williamsburg on Saturday, the 17th, picking him up at Paul Fuhs' home. Kathy Dowdy will take Richard back to Virginia Beach after The Gathering. Probably, immediately after The Gathering, HEST will host Richard at a nearby Williamsburg eatery, if not for dinner, a proper tea session. Kathy Dowdy will organize events for Richard, who departs Richmond on the morning of February 25 on American Airline flight no. 1063 at 6:24 a.m. He will spend the night of February 24 at Paul Fuhs' home. Dave Bucheit has agreed to take him to the airport very early in the morning, if an Uber is not arranged for. Details of getting Richard from Virginia Beach to Paul's house are to be arranged.

Assignment of Twin Parishes: Kathy Gross presented this matter. She is willing to provide the data that HEST has accumulated to persons assigned to various Richmond Twins, but she needs to know to whom to provide that material. Twins need to be assigned. A preliminary discussion developed. For instance, Kathy Dowdy and Pam McKinney would take the Tidewater area. The Southwest area has great distances and only Cyndy Unwin lives in the area. The Central area is more widespread than Tidewater. At The Gathering this might be discussed, but certainly at the next meeting. Perhaps at The Gathering initial contact with those twins with schools can be initiated and then followed up by members of HEST later in the spring and in 2024 generally.

Adjournment: At 6:18 p.m., the meeting adjourned with a prayer, offered by Kathy Dowdy.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next regular meeting would be Tuesday, February 20, 2024, 4:30 p.m. using the Zoom technology of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. It is expected that discussions at The Gathering will be listed as a Special Meeting and memorialized.

