

Notes from Public Policy & Environmental Action Team Meeting
Tuesday, 13 October 2020
6:00 PM via Zoom

Present: Sarah Braik, Ralph Cordes, John Hennessy, John Leddy, Mary Linneman, Liz Parsons, Barbara Ryland

Sarah opened and closed our session with prayer.

Diocesan & Legislative Updates

- John Hennessy joined us having just come from a Zoom town hall about Diocesan Convention that drew over 200 participants.
- During this town hall there was discussion of Resolution 7, the carbon offset program our Team has proposed. One participant was disappointed that the resolution wasn't more extensive. So we talked about writing another, more far reaching, resolution for next year. This could include more about waste reduction and draw inspiration from the Portland-South Portland joint climate action planning process: [One Climate Future](#).
- At the state legislative level nothing of substance will go on until after the election.
 - Sarah asked for clarification on the Diocesan resolution concerning [LD2094](#). John responded that this bill won't be dealt with in 2020 but might go before the legislature in 2021. Therefore, it's good for the Diocese to know what's in the bill and the resolution is raising awareness of the [Committee on Indian Relations](#).
- The Diocese's new [Justice Commission](#) is intended to work like a steering committee for [Maine Episcopal Public Policy Network](#) (formerly Maine Episcopal Network for Justice); the Committee on Indian Relations; and other justice-related initiatives throughout the Diocese. Led by Eleanor Prior, this commission's purpose will be to coordinate efforts amongst all parties.
- The new Maine Episcopal Public Policy Network newsletter is now being drawn up by Teresa Pinney in the Diocesan office. Team members congratulated John on the name change and high-quality newsletter.

Voter registration

- Mary Linneman has been leading this effort on Tuesdays and Thursdays at St. Luke's food pantry and St. Elizabeth's Jubilee Center respectively. So far, they have registered 9 new voters and initiated 3 absentee ballot requests. Despite these numbers being lower than two years ago, the group has been giving out a lot of voter information. This has led to some very good interactions with community members.
- Ralph Cordes talked about the voting assistance 75 State gives its residents and suggested we find out if there are shut-in St. Lukans whom we could help vote. Liz offered to talk with the Fowlers who chair the Pastoral Care Team. Ralph said he would check with Eleanor and Ben.

New PPEAT co-coordinator needed

Liz reminded the group that we need someone with social justice expertise to co-lead the Team beginning in January. Anyone interested should contact Liz or Sarah.

Budget for 2021

Sarah reported that the Team got \$700 from St. Luke's outreach program and, due to COVID, only spent about \$100. We talked about what we should do next year in light of this. Sarah said she would find out if this year's money will roll over to next year and we can then decide.

Better PPEAT promotion at St. Luke's

Sarah noted that her interactions with the Outreach Committee have shown that committee members are not very aware either of PPEAT or MEPPN. We talked about writing periodic articles for the e-pistle and agreed that the first such article could be a reprint of information in the most recent MEPPN newsletter.

- John offered to set up a meeting with relevant St. Luke's staff to discuss communications strategies. Barbara agreed to help with this.

Racial equity

We talked over ways that the Team could contribute to this justice issue. John noted that Eleanor would likely welcome our involvement via the new Justice Commission. Barbara recommended reading [Caste by Isabel Wilkerson](#). Sarah Braik will invite Sarah Dowling, who is in charge of St. Luke's formation efforts, to join our next gathering. The theme for this year's formation education is *Beloved Community*, a phrase particularly associated with the work of Howard Thurman and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Community Solar Farm Initiative

Although many people have signed up for this via Next Amp, Revision Energy will also make a presentation to the Diocese about their portfolio. Revision has made clear they are focusing on larger projects these days. Next Amp has identified churches as a priority and has already worked with the Dioceses of New York and Albany.

Diocesan-wide creation care team

Sarah would like to see such a team set up. John observed that a number of new clergy will be coming into the Diocese in the near future. It would be worth finding out if any among the group view this issue as a ministerial priority.

Next meeting

Tuesday, 10 November, 6:00 PM via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6726711515?pwd=bGdpWnVZRnlhaTZRTC8rTGxnbytqQT09>

Meeting ID: 672 671 1515

Passcode: 330947

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