

Notes from Public Policy & Environmental Action Team Meeting
Tuesday, 8 December 2020
6:00 PM via Zoom

Present: Connie Bingham, Sarah Braik, Ralph Cordes, Kathy Coughlan, John Hennessy, John Leddy, Mary Linneman, Lin Parsons, Liz Parsons, Charles Skold

Diocesan & Legislative Updates

- John Hennessy reported that, at the state level, committee assignments are being made and a published list should be available next week. Knowing which legislators have been assigned to which committees will help us determine whom to contact about the issues on which we'll be advocating.
- The approximately 400 bills that died at the end of March when the legislative session ended due to COVID will all be bought back in this new session. They will have new bill numbers and may have some changes but should be essentially like they were before.
 - This will include the bill championed by the Diocesan Committee on Indian relations.

Ongoing Matters

- We discussed how to spread the word about the Portland-South Portland [One Climate Future](#) plan and the [Maine Climate Council's plan](#) and also how this Team could be involved.
 - We agreed that Robert Stoddard of St. Alban's and a member of a Council working group should be invited to one of our meetings soon.
- As to creating a Diocesan-wide Environmental Justice Commission, John reported that the Bishop is interested in doing this if there are sufficient numbers of people who will lead in a substantive way.
 - Sarah Braik will contact Robert Stoddard, Peter Jenks, and Jennifer Reece all of whom have expressed interest this matter.
 - She also noted, and John affirmed, that there should be balanced representation between the 1st and 2nd Congressional Districts.
- We then had a long discussion about the special meeting Sarah had called about responding to divisions in the country and state. One idea emerging from the earlier discussion was for members of the Team to approach Senator King in his capacity as a member of this Diocese and seek his insights. We talked about the best ways of doing this that would keep the proper Cathedral and Diocesan leaders informed.
 - We agreed that John Hennessy and Ralph Cordes would draft a letter to the Senator and that John would communicate with Dean Shambaugh about the content and intent of the letter.
 - N.B. Subsequent to our meeting, John has reported that Ben approves of our planned approach and a draft letter will be ready soon.
- We also talked about getting to know more members of this Diocese who reside outside urban areas.
 - Ralph suggested waiting on this until after the Presidential inauguration so we can gauge the how that will affect currently high tensions.

- Mary offered to send around some information from an online coffee and discussion group she has heard about that tries to do something similar.
- Kathy suggested we review all this especially in relation to the balance between the 1st and 2nd CDs and take up that question at our January meeting.
- Charles Skold has agreed to take over co-leadership of this Team along with Sarah Braik as of the new year. We expressed our great appreciation and thanks to Charles.

New Matters

- The [Energy Star](#) information John Hennessy had sent around was for our general information. He will publicize this via MEPPN.
- The [HJ Res 48](#) matter that Liz brought forward is related to the Citizen's United Supreme Court decision. A recent *Press Herald* letter to the editor had encouraged people to ask Maine's two senators to sign on as co-sponsors.

Next meeting

Tuesday, 12 January 2021, 6:00 PM via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6726711515?pwd=bGdpWnVZRnlhaTZRTC8rTGxnbyTqQT09>

Meeting ID: 672 671 1515

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