

**Eastern District Board of Directors
February 1, 2013
Telephone Conference Call**

Voting Directors Present: President Chris Wicher, Mark Lambrecht, Lyle Heggemeier, Gordon Tresch, Rev. Dan Strussenberg, Rev. Karl Haeussler, Irene McFadden, Jacqui Green, Michael Fenger, Rev. Peter Richert, Larry Thompson, Rev. Ron Breight, Rev. David Bernard

Voting Directors Absent: Rev. Howard Alexander, Rev. Greg Tafel

District Staff Present: Barb Sigafos

Welcome: President Wicher

Roll Call: Secretary Richert. Chairman Mark Lambrecht declared a quorum.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Karl Haeussler

October Minutes: M/2 to approve the minutes from the October 2012 meeting, *passed*.

Agenda Approval: M/2 to approve the agenda for this meeting, *passed*.

Member Sharing: Board members shared updates on personal lives and life in our congregations.

Eastern District [Sigafos, Wicher]:

2013 Budget approval: Barb highlighted and summarized her reports. She began with the Financial Dash board, highlighting the positive points. She then reviewed her report. Congregation pledge giving was \$41,000 plus short of anticipated receipts. She has modified the proposed budget, reducing anticipated pledges by 37,000 (about 6%) from the previous year. 96% of congregations responded to direct billing. Barb summarized other points of her report, especially those items of change from last year. She also pointed out the difference in pledges received this year as of January 15th in comparison to last year at the same time. In light of the decrease, Barb made adjustments to the proposed budget. The long-standing trend of declining congregation contributions continues. Barb also made specific reference, line by line, to suggested decreases in spending, coming up with more realistic figures in her opinion. The synod pledge in the proposed budget is lower than last year. Other discussion and questions regarding the budget were addressed.

M/2 to accept the budget as submitted, *passed*.

2013 Housing Allowance for President Wicher and Bob Forester:

M/2 to adopt the recommended Housing Allowance for President Wicher (\$24,000) and Bob Forester (\$21,000), *passed*.

M/2 to adjourn as the Eastern District Board, *passed*.

Break until 11:20 am

The Eastern District Board reconvened as the Board for Camp Pioneer & Retreat Center

Roll Call: Secretary Richert. Chairman Lambrecht declared a quorum.

2013 Pioneer Camp & Retreat Center Budget [Rev. Alex Knowles]

Larry Thompson provided opening comments. Rev Knowles continued by updating the Board on significant changes to Pioneer's financial position. His email of yesterday is the most accurate as to said financial position. The biggest improvement from October, 2012 was in the annual Christmas appeal. Normally about \$15,000, thanks to increased donors and donor contributions, in conjunction with a \$25,000 matching gift, the Christmas appeal was \$61,000 plus. Retreats and Retreat revenue were up as well. Revenue of 2012 was about \$60,000 higher in comparison to 2011.

Expenses increased in line with projections. Some expenses were re-categorized as needed. Program expenses increased by about \$80,000; again as needed. Other increases in expenses were due, for the most part, to increased staffing and cost for staffing. Rev Knowles then highlighted and explained the 2012 year end numbers as shown on his slides. He also explained Pioneer's line of credit status, including its payment. Larry also spoke to the line of credit situation.

Rev Knowles proceeded with a presentation of the 2013 Budget. He first discussed the projection of revenue. For retreats, the projection is \$191,000. Most weekends from March – November are booked for 2013. Rev. Knowles also reviewed other projections, including the Country Store and summer campers. He also discussed the line item of donated services. Without Linda, Rev. Knowles discussed the challenges of grant writing and donations. Overall, his projections are conservative in nature.

Rev. Knowles discussed summer camp for 2013 with greater specificity. Projections for participation and revenue are up over 2012, but he believes that these numbers are realistic and achievable. The big decrease on the expense side is in the position of Finance Director. Food costs are harder to predict and could be higher. More participation in the Food Bank is anticipated.

In the area of gift development. Rev. Knowles has received training in St. Louis (3 classes), and other changes in the area of gift development are in the works. He discussed the ongoing consulting relationship that has been established. Rev. Knowles will be filling in where Linda left off. Larry Thompson stated that improvements in the Gift Development office are underway.

Rev. Knowles presented a balanced budget to the Board for consideration and approval.

M/2 to accept Camp Pioneer's 2013 Budget as presented, *passed*.

President Wicher then brought up the matter of the Gift Development Office, discussing meetings that he has attended with Rev. Knowles and others. The District's relationship with the Lutheran Foundation will continue at this time. With Linda's departure, the position is open and available. It only costs the District \$20,000. President Wicher highlighted the financial blessings that this office has brought to our District and organizations and congregations in our District over the last 20 years.

M/2 to adjourn as the Board of Directors of Camp Pioneer & Retreat Center, *passed*.

The Eastern District Board reconvened and Chairman Mark Lambrecht waived the need for a poll of the Board.

President Wicher's Report:

The Board meeting continued, with President Wicher discussing the world and church history at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire and comparing that history to the present day. President Wicher loves his work and is truly humbled and blessed by his work and the work of everyone else in our

District. He explained his concern for the health of our church workers and leaders.

M/2 to accept First Trinity, Tonawanda constitution as submitted to the District, *passed*.

M/2 to accept Redeemer, Newark constitution with recommended changes of the Constitution Committee, *passed*.

President Wicher transitioned to Convention Memorial rework. He explained the change of the last *resolved* and submission date.

M/2 to accept Convention Memorial rework as presented, *passed*.

Next, President Wicher discussed the status of the Clyde property and described its physical characteristics. A neighbor next door has been caring for it for over a decade. No offers to purchase are on the table and expenses continue to climb. The property is deteriorating. President Wicher proposes that the stain glass windows be removed and restored. He also proposes that we demolish the building and give the property to the neighbor next door. Demolition costs would be about \$8,000, plus landscaping and legal costs. Maintenance costs are about \$1,000 per year. Demolition costs could be higher because of asbestos abatement, permits, utilities, etc. A buyer for the windows will be pursued to mitigate some of the demolition costs.

M/2 demolish Clyde property and gift it to the neighbor (Tom) next door with the understanding that he will accept as his expense the legal costs that are incurred to receive clear title to said property, *passed*.

President Wicher then directed us to his written report, specifically to boxed sections describing Health, Spiritual Growth and Kingdom Growth. President Wicher then commented on various portions of his written report. Rural ministries will be the topic of the Fall Conference. Other Districts will be invited to this conference. He is telephoning pastors throughout the District to see how they are doing. President Wicher highlighted other events and developments coming in 2013 and beyond. Going forward, regional mission organizations will be a very important part of what we do in the District to reach out with the Gospel. He discussed CLIMB and is hopeful that it will get started again. He has recently read the book *Unchristian* and recommends it as a very “eye opening” reading. He also discussed the Healthy Congregations program and how that may develop going forward. President Wicher also brought up Mission U and the concept of catalyst communities. He is devoting some of his time learning about this and how it may be developed in the Eastern District.

An assessment of President Wicher's work in 2012 was conducted by the BOD Executive Committee consistent with Board Policies. Pastor Wicher's goals for 2013 will be presented at the Board's May meeting.

PLM: Irene provided a quick update of PLM.

Other Business: Mark reminded the Board of our May 3 & 4, 2013 meeting in Rochester.

Closing Prayer: Rev. Ron Bright **M/2 to adjourn, *passed*.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Peter A. Richert, Secretary

Eastern District, LCMS