

Alabama-West Florida Conference
CORE Team Meeting
December 6, 2018
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The meeting was called to order by Ashley Davis.

Those present were: Ashley Davis, Lisa Hunt, Michael Cobb, Bill Kierce, Steve Lewandowski, Brennan Peacock, Emily Kincaid, Bishop Graves, Debbie Bell, Jeremy Steele, Jonathan Hart, Beverly Maddox, Tim Trent, Steve Reneau, Suzanne Krejcar, Mary Catherine Phillips, Celeste Eubanks, Lance Eiland, Clara Ester, June Jernigan, Nathan Dickson, Ron Penton, Susan Hunt, Misty Barrett, Olivia Poole, Jim Sanders, David Morris, Sarah McWilliams.

Welcome and introductions were made. Steve Reneau offered a devotional and prayer.

A motion was made by Tim Trent to approve the October meeting's minutes as written. Celeste Eubanks seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Suzanne Krejcar began the discussion on the budgeting process and stewardship report. She articulated the 2019 line items and presented the proposed 2020 income budget. The proposed 2020 budget is essentially the 2018 budget less 10%. The question was raised in light of the upcoming special session of General Conference in 2019, could we reduce by 25%? Hurricane Michael has had a significant impact. 28 of our churches were negatively impacted. There are 5 with severe financial hardship. The recovery effort will likely take 10 years. The current 2018 figure is \$200,000 less and may increase to \$500,000 in 2019. In light of this reality and that 2019/2020 hold a great deal of uncertainty, everyone is asked to take a hard look at their 2020 askings. Bishop Graves offered a conservative estimate of \$1,000,000 less in 2019 over 2018 due to economic factors, hurricane, and General Conference.

It is important to note that the AWFC is moving toward a zero based budget model. Many funds have been operating with a surplus (not to be confused with reserve funds) that will eventually run out. Many figures below reflect a lower cost than the ministry actually requires due to these funds. These figures are noted as such.

The individual budget teams presented their askings, a spreadsheet of which is attached to these minutes.

Leadership Team- Jeremy Steele

- Higher Education- Total asking for 2020 budget is \$612,539 which is the 2019 + \$17,000 to cover the costs of interns.
- Board of Ordained Ministry is asking for level funding in 2020. While this figure looks static, in reality it is a decrease since usage of monies from the Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) will decrease.
- Equitable Compensation- Asking for level funding of \$50,000 in 2020
- Board of Laity- asking for a 19% increase in funds for 2020 to cover increased travel costs, Annual Conference Laity Banquet, and Lay Servant Ministries

The Leadership Team requests were approved.

Administrative Team- Suzanne Krejcar

- Archives and History- asking \$54,000 for 2020 budget. The bulk of that figure is salary for the archivist and 2 part time workers. They are working down a surplus figure.
- Trustees- 2020 asking is \$162,000 which is a 10% reduction over the 2019 figure. They are running a significant surplus and are trying to work it down.
- Episcopal Office- asking for level funding of \$130,000. The fund already shows a deficit of \$20,000
- Fiscal Office- 2020 asking is \$342,000 which is a 10% reduction from 2018. This figure includes the voting machines for Annual Conference. The fiscal office is expecting to have a small surplus this year.
- Pensions and Health- 2020 asking is \$11,000. Their 2019 asking was 0 due to their operation off of surplus funds.
- Homes for Claimants- this fund is operating from surplus. There is no 2020 asking.
- Health Insurance- 2020 asking is \$900,000. \$500,000 goes to the UM Foundation each year for retired clergy.

Mission Team- Ashley Davis- a handout detailing line items was given which is attached to these minutes.

- Global Ministries- 2020 asking is \$6,075. This figure pertains to the board only.
- Conference Resource Center- 2020 asking is \$684,659. The communications line item is now listed by itself.
- Mission and Ministry- 2020 asking is \$376,200.
- Hispanic Ministry- 2020 asking is \$51,526.
- Emergency Relief- 2020 asking is 0 due to a running surplus. Hurricane Michael relief funds are in a separate line item.
- Communities of Transformation- 2020 asking is \$168,910
- Town and Country- 2020 asking is \$2700
- Ethnic and Local Church Concerns- asking for level funding of 4000

Blue Lake- Steve Lewandowski

- 2020 asking for the operation fund is 192,960
 - 2020 asking for the capital improvement and debt retirement fund is \$135,425
- Steve did ask that we note that he still hasn't received the 2018 asking. He typically only receives 70-75% of the yearly figure they request. The asking only reflects a portion of costs. Special offerings have dramatically reduced. Blue Lake is looking for other ways to encourage donations and solicit support. Steve is working to find ways to champion his cause.

The CORE Team did not receive a request from Huntingdon College which is listed as a standing line item. It was raised that Huntingdon and Birmingham-Southern Colleges may be calculated by a formula. It was proposed that we approach both colleges with the same cut we are asking all ministries to take. The team does need to consider the impact a reduction of funds will have on Huntingdon and BSC when the line items are reduced.

Jim Sanders noted that it would be helpful for the team to know how much of the overall CORE Team budget is salary and how much is for ministry.

The 2019 Annual Conference special offering will toward the Tanzania initiative which focuses on a partnership with the Tanzania conference to build a seminary and develop leadership. Hurricane Michael relief was considered, but donations for that effort are healthy. Focusing on Tanzania allows our conference to look outside of ourselves.

Kristi McClellan has been very successful in her grant writing efforts to assist ministries throughout our conference in finding supplemental funds.

Following the budget team presentations, a lengthy discussion was held regarding the need to reduce the overall budget of the CORE Team and the ministries it represents. The team discussed and proposed reductions to nearly all areas in order to meet our budget goal of an overall reduction of no less than 10%. These reductions are necessary in order to plan and be good stewards during a time when funding might not be as readily available. The final budget adjustments for 2020 are attached to these minutes. A motion to accept the budget following these changes was made by Steve Reneau. The motion was seconded by David Morris. It was mentioned that the budgeting process likely needs to begin in June or July of the coming year to have time to adequately prepare, evaluate, and discuss.

Beverly Maddox gave an update on the lay delegate election process. Handouts are attached. The handouts explain the process, requirements, and outline the application.

Upcoming Meeting-

The next CORE Team meeting will be held on March 19 at Church Street UMC in Selma, AL from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned.