

Additional Questions and Follow Up from Listening Sessions

In order to understand the full background for the recommendation of the Camp and Retreat Ministry Board, it is important to view the three informational videos at <https://suscrm.org/board-recommendations/>. Thank you! This document provides additional answers to some of the questions that have arisen at regional gatherings that were held.

- ❖ Is care being extended to the staff where the centers may be closing?

Yes. We have been in conversation with the directors and made a variety of support options available to staff. We deeply appreciate their faithful leadership and service, which has also been communicated by the Directors to the whole staff.

- ❖ How will the funding from the sale of properties be used?
 - a. Much needed new facilities and upgrades primarily at Wesley Forest**
 - b. Expanding breadth of program options and training across the ministry**
 - c. Funding staffing specifically for growth and program development**
 - d. Funds for long-term vitality of the ministry**

- ❖ What is the plan for transitioning programs at the centers recommended to be sold?

Many of these programs and their volunteer leaders are slated to transition to the remaining centers, so the majority will continue. Our directors have reached out to all the program leaders to assist them in transitioning.

- ❖ What are needed participation levels per center to reach long-term vitality?

Recognized national markers for nonprofit camp and retreat centers are 800-1,000 summer campers or 5,000 to 6,000 guest days annually. (A guest day is the equivalent of an overnight three meals). All of our centers combined only reach the threshold for one center. Camper numbers across the entire ministry are close to 800 summer campers total and retreat guest numbers do not reach the markers at any of our centers currently.

- ❖ Mount Asbury provides facilities geared specifically for adult retreats. Why is that facility being recommended for sale? How will those groups be served?

Unfortunately, at the time Mount Asbury was constructed, it was built too small and has never broken even in its entire history, despite very creative, diligent strategies implemented by the staff in recent years. Adult facilities are by far the most expensive to build and the estimated cost of another necessary wing is enormous. Wesley Forest can serve some adult groups, but groups who need hotel-style accommodation can reach out to us for suggestions of other facilities in the region.

- ❖ What is the estimated cost to upgrade facilities, diversify programming, and provide the additional staffing needed for growth to retain more of our current centers and move them to long-term ministry health and vitality? How would the estimated funding plan change in each scenario.

Scenarios	Estimated Upgrades, Program Expansion, Staffing, and Long-term Funding Costs	Estimated Funding from Property Sales & Resource Reinvestment in CR Ministries
Retain 2 Centers and Deepen Sky Lake Collaboration	5 Million	4.5 - 5 Million
Retain 3 Centers & Collaboration	7.5 Million	2 Million
Retain 4 Centers & Collaboration	11 Million +	No Funding from Sales

Note: None of the Funds from the sales of Susquehanna Conference centers will go to Sky Lake. They have their own funding sources.

- ❖ Why is the Camp and Retreat Ministry Board recommending that Wesley Forest be retained instead of Greene Hills?

Wesley Forest already has three winterized retreat facilities for year-round ministry. This means that significant investment of future resources can go to other expansions and improvements to grow the program and facilities in new ways. Wesley Forest has the largest number of campers and this has been true for over a decade. Its natural environment is similar to Greene Hills and has even more acres for programmatic expansion. Wesley Forest also has an excellent trout stream in Penns Creek, like Greene Hills. Wesley Forest is centrally located in the Conference. It is fully recognized that the RV park at Greene Hills is a unique experience not available at Wesley Forest. The Board is deeply sensitive to the very meaningful experiences many persons have had there and at all of our centers. The clear discernment is, however, that Wesley Forest is best equipped to meet the long-term missional priorities of the ministry.

- ❖ Why is Camp Penn recommended to be continued since it is a leased property?

The lease is only \$1,000 per year and our relationship with the state forest is very strong. The location is important to serve the congregations and people in the southern area of the Conference. Many improvements have been made at Camp Penn in recent years, and the cost of any additional upgrades is much less than other centers. Camp Penn can and will be operated as a seasonal camp, which maximizes its strengths as a true summer camp. The Director then will be free other parts of the year to help lead growth and programmatic expansion for the whole ministry.

- ❖ Will there be a gathering and service at each site to celebrate their impact, history, and lives touched before the properties are sold?

Yes, it is very important to have a time of gratitude, recognition and community gathering to give witness. The dates for each of celebration will be shared widely with services and times of celebration being a meaningful part of the transition. Aspects of these ministries will be incorporated and honored as part of the on-going ministry at the other locations.

- ❖ What are some of the ways Camp and Retreat Ministries plan to partner with local churches to help them reach new children, youth, and families?

An important dimension for expanding the reach and impact of camp and retreat and local church experiences is to partner with congregations to provide camp experiences in local communities, in order to reach new youth, families, and communities of color. A Coordinator of Beloved Community Camps will be hired to facilitate these new partnerships and opportunities. Please, let the Director of Age-level and Beloved Community Ministries (Rev. Kevin Witt) know if your congregation would like to explore the possibility of piloting a camp in your local community with us.

- ❖ Why is the expanding partnership with Sky Lake so beneficial and important?

Sky Lake served the churches of the Northern part of our conference for decades before the Susquehanna Conference was created. It is closer to many of our congregations and communities in that region and there is a strong connection still. Sky Lake is a United Methodist Camp and Retreat center operated by the Upper New York Conference with very similar core values and programmatic goals. We have an intentional, collaborative relationship with them already to make camp more available to reach more youth, families, and congregations. It is a year-round center with both summer camp, retreat facilities, and a beautiful lake.

- ❖ How will the sale of the properties be handled?

The Trustees of the Susquehanna Conference have both the responsibility and expertise related to properties owned by the Conference. They will be the group managing inquiries and processes for the sale of properties.

- ❖ What new roles will be created to specifically increase the capacity to grow the ministry?

CRM Vision Forward Director – primary responsibility is to facilitate and equip the Camp and Retreat Ministry team to follow up and fulfill the new directions of the strategic plan, develop outreach to community partners and new retreat groups, and lead the team in developing deeper training for staff and volunteers, etc.

Coordinator of Beloved Community Camp – primary responsibility to intentionally develop new forms of camp and retreat ministry that help local churches and camp/retreat ministry reach new children, youth, families, and communities of color.

Executive Assistant for Camp and Retreat Ministries – primary responsibility is to fulfill the role of the current CRM Registrar and Administrative Assistant with additional portfolios for reservation software implementation, online document management and processing, and enhancing the ministry's internet and social media presence.

If you have any question, contact:

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