

Dear Grail Sisters,

Thank you for your passionate responses to the news about the impending lease to Rural & Migrant Ministry, Inc. (“RMM”).

We take this moment to remind everyone that the Council decided to negotiate with RMM about rental of the Cornwall property at its October 17-21, 2019 meeting and included that decision in the meeting minutes. (<https://www.grail-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/10.17.2019-10.21.2019-Council-F2F-Report-1.pdf>). Further, the Council Note in the National Grail News on November 1, 2019 discussed the Cornwall property, saying that Council “will seek solutions” for Cornwall “that may include collaborations, programming, or long-term leases.” (<https://www.grail-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NGN-11-01-2019..pdf>). If there was disagreement with that decision and plan of action, an invocation of the 10% rule of the by-laws should have been initiated then or soon after, not now 9 months later. As there was no comment from members nor invocation of the 10% rule at that time, Council moved forward to negotiate with RMM in good faith. We are very pleased with where those negotiations have led.

Despite that, Council has been in regular contact with the small group of members seeking to work at Cornwall for several years now. In fact, a group of Council members met with their four appointed representatives on a May 28 Zoom call specifically to discuss what the group wished to be included (or not included) in the rental contract. They expressed positive feeling and respect for Rural and Migrant Ministries. They explained that they wished to meet occasionally at Cornwall and to have access to our memorial garden.

The draft contract has taken these expressed wishes and concerns into account, namely their desire to meet occasionally at Cornwall, and to have access to our memorial garden. The draft contract allows RMM to rent space for retreats to non-RMM organizations, including groups of Grail members. However, the decision to do so is RMM’s to make, as we cannot force or require them to act in a way that does not meet their mission needs, goals and resources. To repeat, the lease contract is a legal document that is open to the concept of RMM renting to other groups, but the decision to USE that option is RMM’s.

Rural and Migrant Ministries has a mission that is congruent with Grail mission and values, specifically our issues of racial, economic and environmental justice as well as concern for immigrants and migrants. Several Grail members already have relationships with RMM.

We have developed a beginning relationship with RMM that we hope will grow. There is a real possibility for Grail members to volunteer or participate in RMM’s activities, potentially, to act as mentors, and also for joint projects and initiatives. These relationships cannot be forced; they must grow organically, which is why they are not outlined in the legal contract. We must respect that RMM is its own organization with its own goals and culture. Recognizing the shared

concerns between RMM and the Grail, we believe that acting legally, responsibly, and graciously with RMM can lead to positive and productive opportunities for collaboration.

With hope for the future,
Deborah Sullivan on behalf of your sisters on Grail Council