

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Of St. Vincent de Paul Church
February 19, 2008**

(rescheduled from Feb. 12 due to inclement weather)

The Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Church met on Tuesday, February 19, 2008. Next meeting will be Tuesday, March 11, 2008. The meeting was brought to order at 7:35 pm by Colleen McCahill. In attendance: Fr. Dick Lawrence, Pat Ball, Joan Campbell, Peggy Meyer, Colleen McCahill, Chris Kreeger, Barbara Murphy, Bill Pearson, Dennis Moore, Graham Yearley, Kathy Brown, and Dennis Flynn.

New Business

Habitat for Humanity: Jayna Powell from Chesapeake Habitat for Humanity spoke to the Council about this years project with United Churches. She distributed information regarding Habitat for Humanity and this year's new construction build in Pigtown/Washington Village. She thanked the parish for its involvement and gave ideas about fundraising as well as recruitment of volunteers and donations.

Old Business

Financial Report: Dennis Flynn delivered the parish financial report. Parish Council reviewed the income statement through the end of January and most expenses were on budget. Offertories were over budget as well as poor box benefit income. There is a new poor box for emergency services. Utilities continue to be higher than usual and church maintenance is lower than budgeted. No surprises this month.

Parish Council: Bishop Madden, Baltimore's urban vicar, will visit St. Vincent's next week and will meet with various committees. Parish Council completed a survey in preparation for this visit and will meet with the Bishop on Tuesday, February 20.

Park/Response to Town Meeting: The town meeting in January demonstrated that there are still many strong feelings on both sides of the issue. It was clear that several people feel that some action should be taken immediately. Dick has said he cannot, in good conscience, ask the police to clear the park. There was discussion about the pace that the parish council

has been taking regarding this issue noting that patience of many parishioners has run out. Council feels strongly that we need to allow the partnership with the city to move forward as well as work on the Weinberg grant for funding.

There were several letters written by parishioners with concerns about the park. Colleen has reached out to some of the folks and talked to them personally. Audrey Rogers responded by email to one of the writers with specific points. Colleen will write letters of response to those who wrote to the Council regarding the park.

An ad hoc committee has formed including Dick, Colleen, Audrey, and Deacon Bill. They have been meeting with the city representatives regarding a memorandum of understanding and the next steps in addressing the problems in the park. This ad hoc group will operate independently but will consult with the parish council for any large decisions. Council approved the Park ad hoc committee.

Concerning the structures currently in the park, Dick intends to ask the city for help in dismantling the structures after the first of spring. Last year Dick and Officer Talley enforced the “no tent” rule which the residents did respect.

Deacon Bill will communicate news about the park on a weekly basis through the bulletin. The purpose of this is to share the victories and challenges that are happening with the park and clear up misunderstandings.

Council discussed the problem of well-intended people dropping off donations and the mess that is often left. Deacon Bill has made an effort to thank the donors but to ask them to bring trash bags to clean up. He also has asked them to coordinate donations through him to avoid duplication of services. There was a suggestion about removing some of the shrubs where the rats live.

Colleen distributed a nine month timeline regarding progress to date on the park as well as future tasks for the parish. She asked the council to read and review the timeline for the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Peace and Justice: The Living Stations of the Cross sponsored by Pax Christi will take place on Good Friday beginning at City Hall at noon. The committee recently distributed information regarding lobbying state delegates against the death penalty. The next meeting will be February 29 at the home of Peggy Meyer.

Liturgy Committee: Our next meeting is this Saturday, March 8 and we will ensure that Holy Week is covered, plan for the May events and the Summer Scripture series, and finalize the parish liturgy survey scheduled for the end of April. The committee is working with the music director to find the best way to display the words for hymns during liturgies. Several approaches have been tried and adjustments are being made.

Pastoral Care Committee: Approximately 25-30 people attended training for volunteers. Diocesan volunteer forms were completed and manuals were distributed. After all volunteers have been approved they will begin taking referrals.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Murphy