

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
of St. Vincent de Paul Church
February 10th, 2014**

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Audrey Rogers at 7: 35pm and started with a group prayer.

In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Audrey Rogers, *President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Sara Kelley, *Vice President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Rosie Graf, *Secretary, 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Bethany Gregg, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; John Kober, Sr., *7:15 Mass Rep.*; Denise Hamilton, *11:45 Mass Rep.*; Laureen Brunelli, *Communications and Outreach Committee Chair*; Peggy Meyer, *Social Action Committee Co-Chair*; Peggy Shouse, *Education and Enrichment Committee Chair*; Dan Rolandelli, *Facility Committee Co-Chair and Dennis Flynn (Finance Committee).*

Excused Absence: David Potts, Facility Committee Co-Chair; Maureen Fitzsimmons, Finance Committee Chair; Anne Marie Freeburger, Corporator; and John Helie, Liturgy Committee Chair.

Missing: Graham Yearley, *Corporator.*

Pastor's Report:

Fr. Lawrence noted with pleasure that we have been adding new members and families. He also reported that the parish has received the final set of recommendations from the Archdiocesan Audit. Fr. Lawrence and Chris McCullough met with the audit team to go over that text and are awaiting a response to the meeting. One recommendation we will undertake is the need to establish a formal conflict of interest policy. Fr. Lawrence took the opportunity to review for Council the results of a church-commissioned survey published in the New York Times on Sunday. The survey results show that the practices in the North American Catholic Church are more progressive and pastoral than the Catholic Church in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries. This certainly will present a challenge for Pope Francis in communicating his vision for the church to be a more welcoming, healing presence.

Pastoral Associate Report:

BRIDGE Event with RAISE Maryland- On Monday, February 3rd, St. Vincent's hosted a BRIDGE event in support of raising the minimum wage. Fox News, CNN, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake, Governor Martin O'Malley, Senator Cardin, City Council Representatives Carl Stokes and Mary Pat Clarke along with nearly 250 attendees participated. The organizers from BRIDGE were appreciative to have held it here. The event was a highly publicized success.

Status Report on Catholic Churches of Central City:

No report from CCCC. The pastoral teams of the churches within the CCCC Cluster have been asked to meet with Church leaders on Tuesday, Feb 25th, with the next

scheduled cluster meeting two days later. Fr. Lawrence will report on this at the March Parish Council Meeting.

Finance Report:

Dennis Flynn reported on our financial status for the month of January. Total attendance, average weekly attendance, donations, and total offertory giving were all down for January compared to the previous months. It was noted that January weather was particularly and abnormally bad.

Old Business

Report on Fund-Raising Events:

Mary and Joe Strassner propose that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Fundraising be deferred for the time being. They have found it difficult to identify any project that could meet the criteria required by Council that would not interfere with the parish-wide participation that will be necessary for successful strategic planning at this time. They would be happy to re-visit this effort in the future if Council decides a re-examination is in order.

New Business

Implications of Parish Support for Raising the minimum Wage:

The Parish Council moved to adopt the policy proposed by Father Richard Lawrence that the parish raise the minimum wage of church employees to \$10.10 per hour beginning on July 1, 2014. The council asks the finance committee to implement this decision when constructing the FY 15 budget.

Town Meeting Review:

The Town Meeting was held on January 26, and went very well. In response to the report on the committees' self-evaluation, some parishioners asked how and in what ways they could volunteer. Audrey has initiated collection of this information from the committees and sub committees to prepare a bulletin insert in response (see below). The next Town Meeting will be on March 23rd after the strategic planning committee formulates their plan and presents it to the Council in March.

**Mid-Term Assessment of 2013-14 Goals:
(See addendum)**

Progress Report: Canvass of Volunteer Needs of Committees/Groups:

Audrey has heard back from several groups and committees; responses are due this week.

Parish Recycling:

Louise Gregg asked for this issue to be deferred to March.

Report on Issues in the Park:

Sara Kelley had no issues to discuss this month and will defer her report until March.

Committee Reports

Liturgy Committee (*John Helie, Chair*)

The Liturgy Committee met on Saturday, February 8, 2014 to continue planning for Lent/Easter Cycle. The theme will be "What? So What? Now What?" (details to follow.....) Liturgy Planners for the 9:30 Masses for Lent/Easter will be assigned by Janice Bonner; Audrey Rogers will lead the group of assigned planners so that their openings and petitions coordinate from week to week as well as address the established theme. In response to the 2013 parish survey about the Lent/Holy Week/Easter Services, the committee also continued to reconstruct the Good Friday liturgy and Stations of the Cross service. The Good Friday Service was finalized at the meeting. The two primary revisions to this service are that the Gospel will be read by Fr. Lawrence (rather than sung) and the veneration of the cross by the parish will be communal from the pews with optional individual veneration after the conclusion of the liturgy. Audrey Rogers and Chris McCullough are also planning a family-oriented Good Friday Service for the afternoon.

A sub-committee is still working on reconstructing the service for the Stations of the Cross. They have recommended that the Stations be more-scripture based as well as to keep the movement from station to station aspect of this service.

St V's will host the Reconciliation/Penance Service on April 2, 2014. This is a joint service with Corpus Christi and St. Ignatius. The committee is in the process of recruiting a 'threader' for the all night Easter Vigil as well as planners for each of the hours. The Committee decided to continue discernment about the all-night Easter Vigil at its annual retreat, traditionally held in August of each year.

The committee discussed several ideas related to communications of the Lent/Holy Week/Easter Services. Bulletin announcements (both pre-Lent and during Lent), a flyer with the schedule and explanation of the theme, and large poster board in the Gathering Space as well as updates to the website will be used.

The committee also provided to Audrey Rogers a list of the committee's tasks that have volunteer opportunities.

The next meeting was scheduled for May 3, 2014 at 10:30 am.

Education and Enrichment Committee (*Peggy Shouse, Chair*)

The summer session of Faith, Fun, Fellowship will be July 21-25, 2014.

There are 7 children making their first communion, but the date was not definite at the time of the meeting.

Fr. Julio Martinez will be our retreat director, speaking on “St. Francis of Assisi and the Taming of the Wolf – Living a God-Centered Life.” He will be preaching at St. Vincent’s before that, probably April 27. The same people who led last year’s children’s program have agreed to do it this year. If enough people with babies/very young children sign up, we will ask one of our nursery workers to care for them during the sessions.

Sign-up for new groups for Dinner for Eight will begin in March, with new groups starting in April. People already on the list can sign up with Rita via email.

The Family Life Subcommittee has several activities planned and underway.

Our Lenten series will be on the Pope’s document, “The Joy of the Gospel.” The full text is online, or individuals who prefer may buy it for themselves. Chris McCollough will provide discussion questions for the specific sections we will discuss. The fall discussion/book series will probably be by geographic regions. No book has yet been selected. Alternatives to actually meeting together were discussed but not finalized.

The E & E Cape May weekend will be either September 12-14 or October 17-19, according to availability of the house. Emphasis was given to the fact that this trip is not limited to E & E members, but is open to others on a first-come basis. Cost for the house is usually around \$100 per adult (depending on how many there are) and children are free.

Our next meeting will be March 27 at 7 PM.

Social Action Committee (*Peggy Meyer and Ray Heil, Co-Chairs*)

Peace & Justice Committee: We supported the Faith based BRIDGE gathering, including Bishop Madden, Rev. Allen of Interfaith Worker Justice, and Rabbi Cotzin Burg of Jews United for Justice, on February 3 at St. V’s, to share our support for raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 with the Governor. In addition to the Governor, speakers included the Mayor, Senator Cardin, Director of Catholic Charities, CEO of Healthcare for the Homeless, Chair of MD Alliance for the Poor, and Director of MD Hunger Solutions. The news coverage was great with all major stations here including CNN. St. Vincent’s was mentioned and tapes on the news were all in the church. We continue to help plan the Candidates’ Night on 2/13 for those running for Governor. Please reserve your seat on the bus if you haven’t already.

Jonestown Planning Council: The developer for the Hendler Creamery Space showed us drawings for their plan and Ronald McDonald House will use part of the space for their new location. Also discussed the plans for McKim Park. They will work with the developers and the Recs and Park advisory board. The Recs and Park will look at additional space in the neighborhood for more park space,

one for a dog park and one for a regular park, and will work with the neighborhood. The Rabbi of the Jewish Museum said their visitors substantially increased this year and talked to neighbors about developmental needs for the neighborhood so their visitors feel safe. Jewish Federation of Baltimore for individuals is willing to work with the Jonestown community for progress planning. They will have an Albemarie Square day for neighbors to visit for free. Lindsey and Jonestown City Lab Team want to launch one of their projects and distributed choices. Ellis Prince from Gallery Church said they are hoping to serve.

City Springs Elementary School said they would break ground the end of this month.

Emergency Services: The food program gave groceries to almost 30 families in January and spent \$35. The men's program gave clothing to 41 men in January and spent \$304.

The Resource Exchange: We supplied 8 individuals, whom Healthcare for the Homeless placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in January. We are applying for a grant from Johns Hopkins for additional funding because as we continue to do more moves our expenses increase. We use most of our funding to purchase beds. Our second highest expense is for our storage units. We are blessed with continued donations of furniture.

Friday Dinner: We distribute clothing most Friday nights that people drop off at the rectory or with our committee and continue to serve 140-320 guests dinner each Friday evening.

Helping Up Mission: HUM are cleaning the park the first and third Saturdays of each month. They also give us a multitude of back packs and suitcases a couple of times a month that we pass out on Fridays during the dinner.

Christopher Place: The men at Christopher Place continue to clean the park on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

Facilities Committee (*Dave Potts and Dan Rolandelli, Co-Chairs*)

January 23, 2014

In Attendance: Audrey, Rogers, Chris McCullough, Dave Potts, Bob Reuter, Pat Ball, Mary Otterbein

Absent: Bob Ball, Bob Beta, Dan Rolandelli

Facilities Committee Charter

The charter for the facilities committee was reviewed.

It was suggested that the committee keep a "Maintenance Schedule or calendar" so that routine maintenance can be carried out on a regular basis. It is thought that Jerome Bird may have started such a plan.

Dave suggested that we divide up the church, interior, exterior, parking, landscaping, etc., and two or more members of the committee take responsibility for an area or areas relative to tracking items that need addressing and keeping the maintenance schedule up to date. We could brainstorm on what needs to be done and break it down into smaller projects

Old Business:

Church Exterior/Park

Solar Panels-Bob Reuter has given some information. Peggy Myers will check and see if the grant would subsidize the understructure to support the panels.

Arborist- The bid to have the trees trimmed was \$11,000. This includes trimming all trees, pruning branches so that they are 1 feet from the church and also trim the trees near the street lights.

Parking-The satellite lot is available for use on Sunday and Holy Days. The church parking still needs to be re-measured and striped.

Park Benches-need good weather for work to be completed

Park Working Group-Sarah Kelly has worked with parishioners to get them signed up for clean up duty. She has also brought in other groups to help with clean up.

Window flashing/Caulking-There has been new water damage in the rectory. It has been determined that the windows were not flashed properly when they were installed. Chris proposed using Baltimore Trade Guild to have the windows repaired.

American Institute of Architects (AIA)-Is willing to provide assistance. We need to submit an application. They will assess our needs and help with fund raising. They have access to groups looking for projects to fund. The application may take a few months to be processed.

Interior

New Boiler-New boiler has been installed. The cost was covered by insurance. The only cost to the Parish was the \$5,000 deductible. The air handler still needs some work on so that the heat can be distributed evenly. Chris met with a mechanical engineer, who will submit a proposal to evaluate the air handler.

North Window Repair is finished and they even repaired the plaster on the inside.

Accessibility-need to have a hand rail installed on the choir side of the altar. Parts have been ordered and this will be completed in February.

Stabilize ladder behind altar-to be done.

Electric Inspection-need additional outlets for the coffee. Chris contacted Hirsch who came out and did an evaluation and said it was safe to add outlets. We need to task someone with doing it now.

Security Systems-The alarm companies have not gotten back to us with an estimate or plan.

Underlayment-the underlayment in Father Chuck's bathroom will be done when we do the accessibility project.

Repurposing-Father Dick's old living is almost cleared out. Most of Dick's stuff has been moved.

New Business

Chris suggested securing the floor boards in the back of church to help lower the noise level. There are several pews that need to be repaired and kneelers need to be recovered.

The repair of the North Side windows and the resulting water damage has been completed. The Council noted with gratitude the beautiful appearance of the floor after cleaning and waxing by Larry Fenaroli.

Communications and Outreach Committee (*Laureen Miles Brunelli, Chair*)

The C&O Committee met on 2/6/2014 and welcomed three new members. In addition to the meeting, C&O would like to report that an ad on the pharmacy bags of Harris Teeter near Fort McHenry for St. V was purchased. Scroll down to see ad.

Below are the minutes of the 2/6 meeting. Note: Action items are in bold.

After introductions, Audrey and Laureen presented some background information on the committee's establishment, goals and history for the benefit of its new members. *In attendance:* Jackie Range, Michael Keating (new), Megan Hamilton (new), Joe Yingling, Audrey Rogers, Laureen Brunelli, Anne Maura English (new) and Chris McCullough

Internal Communications Discussion

Laureen made a brief presentation describing how communications from committees and individual parishioners at St. V flow out to the larger St. V community. (See figure below).

As illustrated, communication can go through channels that largely bypass staff/C&O involvement (email tree and announcements after Mass) or go through staff/C&O but via a variety of forms of communication, e.g. bulletin, email or emails, phone calls, in-person discussions and meetings. Either way, staff/C&O picks up the information from the many different sources and sends it out through all the channels appropriate, which may also include website, Facebook, *Together Sharing Christ*, bulletin, etc.

We agreed that this is not an efficient or effective way to get information out. However, the traditions and culture of St. V may keep committees and individuals

from adopting new methods of communications. It was decided that **we should have “mission outreach” to other committees** where a C&O member would attend another committee meeting to present some best practices in communicating that committee’s mission, events and goals.

However, before that can be done we must outline the process and procedure for communications, and so a **subcommittee was formed** to study the process and develop new procedures. Jackie, Laureen and Anne Maura will be on the subcommittee.

While the committee decided that our focus should be on improving the process of communications before tackling specific issues, we did have some discussion about these issues:

- *Email tree* – Discussed having a separate newsletter, more focused on events at St V, in addition to the email tree.
- *Website* – Discussed recruiting new website editors or communications liaisons in each committee. These people would be trained (or retrained) on the website and calendar.
- *Webinars* – At some point in the future, the parish should have the capacity to do video conferencing or webinars so people can participate in activities like Bible Study from home. Developing this capacity would be the C&O’s committee’s responsibility, but putting on the programming would be up to all committees where this is applicable.

Outreach Discussion

Given the ongoing parish strategic planning, C&O committee’s planned to discuss what members think the Ad Hoc Planning Committee should consider about outreach in formulating its plan as well as what can we glean from the data collected in the planning process (or what other data we need) and what C&O’s role as “mission support” to other committees in terms of outreach.

However, the conversation evolved into brainstorming that coalesced around several themes and ideas related to outreach:

- Marketing
 - Determining our target market – Committee must determine whom we want to target.
 - Nominal/niche groups – LGBT community, younger Catholics, families are among the groups St V might appeal to.
 - Neighborhoods – Drawing new parishioners from nearby city neighborhoods could minimize the time/travel issues for events and services. Additionally, people from these

areas may be part of the niche groups we target and may be less likely to be deterred by issues

- Networking
 - Formulating a brand of St. V – Committee needs to define the “brand” that we want to project to attract new members. The brand should reflect the reality of our community as a whole but emphasize elements that are attractive to our target market. Elements of our brand might be social justice, Pope Francis, community-led worship, etc. A tag line should be developed.
 - Advertisement – Chris showed the committee an advertisement for St. V that will go on Harris Teeter Pharmacy bags. The ad features a quote from Pope Francis. This is a start on our branding efforts, but it could be tweaked or further developed as we further define our market and brand.
- Engagement of new visitors – A strategy for engaging/contacting new visitors needs to be developed. One idea for engagement was to create a high quality video “St. V in 7 Minutes” that could be viewed in the back of church or online to give information about St. V but also to generate excitement and communicate our brand to visitors.
- Publicity/Events – These can be a way to demonstrate what St. V is to greater Baltimore. However, they typically need a timely news hook to get traction in the local media.
 - Megan had an idea to develop an event around The Resource Exchange’s successful track record of furnishing homes for formerly homeless people. The hook would be 150th person served by TRE. The event might include a gathering of donors and recipients and an art exhibit, which would feature photographs that tell the stories of TRE clients. There was some discussion of tying it to Artscape where it would receive exposure to a broader audience. **Laureen will contact Peggy Cronyn** to find out when the 150th person might be served and for feedback on the idea. **The committee will then discuss via email.**
- Communication – Further refining our systems for internal communication will improve our communication to potential parishioners or new visitors. Finding ways to showcase the “content” that St. V develops for its parishioners (e.g. Advent booklet, presentations/lectures, TSC) to a large audience can be a form of outreach.

Next C&O Committee Meeting: April 10, 7 pm

Addendum: St. Vincent’s has purchased ad space on pharmacy bags at Harris Teeter in Locust Point. The committee welcomed 2 new committee members who bring many new ideas and much excitement.

Meeting Closed with Prayer at 8:45 pm.

Reminders: The Next Parish Council Meeting is March 11th at 7:30 pm.

Minutes submitted by
Rosie Graf, Secretary to the Council

Addendum:

Status Report on the 2013-2014 Objectives for the Parish Council

In 2013-2014, the Parish Council will

1. Establish a Five Year Strategic Plan
 - A. Undertake and complete the data collection phase of strategic planning;
 1. Form Ad Hoc Group to collect and analyze data;
 2. Communicate process to the parish community and invite participation in various response and feedback exercises.
 - B. Undertake and complete strategic planning focusing on mission and mission support activities, articulating the *theological* (why), the *pastoral* (what), and the *temporal* (how);
 1. Form Ad Hoc Group to process data reports and draft a strategic plan for Parish Council review;
 2. Review, discuss, debate, and revise as indicated the Ad Hoc Committee's draft strategic plan and approve it for implementation.
2. Revise the Parish Budget Presentation Process
 - Devise and implement a budget process that integrates finances and assets, understandably presenting all revenue and expenses, allowing for modeling of the parish planning, and clearly aligning staff positions and expenses to parish planning;
 - a. Direct Finance Committee to work with the Ad Hoc Committee(s) to produce a more coherent budget process; *Amended to work with Council.*
 - b. Communicate an understandable report on revenues and expenses to the parish community;
 - c. Identify and provide up-to-date mechanisms for parishioner donations;
3. Immediately Address Identified Needs of Families with Young Children
 - Establish a structure and process for addressing the needs of families with young children in the parish community.
 - a. Build on information from these families collected in Spring 2013;
 - b. Establish a Family Life Subcommittee under the Education and Enrichment Committee with a mission and scope;
 - c. Identify individuals to coordinate specific activities within this subcommittee.