

Minutes of the Meeting  
of the Parish Council  
of St. Vincent de Paul Church  
September 13, 2011

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Jim Casey, at 7:31pm and a prayer was offered by him. In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence (Pastor) Jim Casey (President), Christopher McCullough (Pastoral Associate), Anne Maura English (Adult Ed. Staff), Audrey Rogers (Acting Chair Communications and Outreach Committee), Deacon Bill Pearson (Social Action Committee), Maureen Fitzsimmons (Finance Committee Chair), Teresa Payne (7:15 Mass Rep.), Colleen McCahill (Education Committee representative) Jack Bonner (9:30 Mass Rep.), Jim Lochner (9:30 Mass Rep.) Bill McNamara (Liturgy Committee Co-Chair), Pat Ball (Facilities Committee Chair), Peggy Meyer (Social Action Committee Co-Chair), Anne Marie Freeberger (Corporator), Peter T. McDowell (11:45 Mass Rep.), Peggy Cronyn (Social Action Committee) and Graham Yearley (Corporator and 12:15 Mass Rep.).

### **Introduction of Chris McCullough**

After Fr. Lawrence introduced him, Chris said he looked forward to deepening his relationship to St. Vincent's by attending committee meetings and parish council meetings. The Council welcomed Chris to our staff.

### **Pastor's Report**

1. A lightning strike on the church caused a strange mixture of certain electric items (fire alarm, television, printer and other items) being burned out while others were not. All items are now functional except the fire alarm.
2. Hurricane weekend: only 94 in attendance at all masses. Leakage from the "Bridge" between the church and rectory is causing concern.
3. The six local parishes and shrines that have come together to do parish resources planning are now five parishes as St. Jude's Shrine decided to withdraw from the group. As our Archbishop is moving on to a new position, parish planning on the Archdiocese level will come to a temporary halt, but our group can continue to meet and plan on the local level.

### **Finance Report**

1. Maureen Fitzsimmons described some of the highlights of the Finance Committee Report which was sent out prior to the parish council meeting. Attendance at mass is up as well as plate collections and donations. The budgets for church maintenance, the Liturgy Committee and the Adult Education have all been increased. Chris McCullough's salary and benefits (health insurance still to be worked out) are accounted for in the budget for 2011 and 2012. The Budget was approved by the Council with one dissention by Audrey Rogers who argued that the budget was just an adjustment by percentage of

last year's budget and was not a budget that was reflective of the needs of a mission directed parish.

2. Anne Maura English asked for Adult Education and other parish groups submit budgets in advance. She was told that some groups were already doing that. Audrey Rogers asked if the Downtown Partnership was being paid for their work in the park. Fr. Lawrence reported that they have not asked for payment and continue to do their work, so we are allowing the situation to go on. Audrey also asked about the continuation of the cemetery rehabilitation. It was reported that a border to the cemetery has been marked and that members of the golf club whose course that surrounds the cemetery have been playing within the boundaries, so it might be advisable to ask for a contribution to the maintenance from them. When asked about the replacement of vestments, Fr. Lawrence said to go ahead with the project. There was a conversation about the budget for the Family Religious Life fund. Were funds from it being used to mail copies of "Together Sharing Christ" when the periodical has been put on line? Anne Maura said some people outside the local region want copies mailed to them.

### 3. Historic Trust Fund

There is currently \$2,700,000.00 in restricted funds and about \$177,000 in spendable funds for major projects. We can expect about \$75,000 to \$90,000 in donations and gifts each year. As we estimate each window in the south wall of the church will cost \$30,000 to be replaced, it is planned that we will do three in the next fiscal year. The windows project, the air conditioning and the font projects are all on the agenda, but one or two of the projects will be delayed and the windows will be done over three or four years.

4. A lucky break (permission from the Archdiocese) has allowed St. Vincent's to direct all contributions to the major Archdiocesan campaign starting in January 2012 to the endowment fund for Saints James and John School. St. Vincent's must decide in the near future how much money can we or should we raise towards this end.

### **Social Action Committee Proposal: The Resource Exchange Project**

Deacon Bill Pearson and Peggy Cronyn presented a plan proposed by the Social Action Committee to give furniture and start-up kits and to provide pick up and delivery of these items to the homeless transitioning to housing through the agency of Health Care for the Homeless. That agency will provide the ongoing support services to the newly housed; our endeavor only involves receiving and transferring furniture and household items. They proposed a "Beta Project" that would last six months to see if the plan would work. The council discussed how success or failure could be measured. The Resource Exchange Project group will divide into three teams; those providing transportation, those receiving and transferring furniture, and those providing start-up kits. All bedding items will be bought new for sanitation reasons. Bill and Peggy presented a budget for the plan of which St. Vincent's will contribute one quarter (\$2,000) from the monies collected in the Poor Box. The Council enthusiastically gave its approval to the Resource Exchange Project.

## **Air Conditioning Report**

Pat Ball reported on the ongoing process of restoring air conditioning to the church. It was learned that the compressor was non-functioning. It was originally suggested that the compressor alone be replaced for \$30,000. But quickly several consultants said it would be smarter in the long run to get a completely new system as this one has been problematic from the start. Representatives from Schlenger/Pitz, who did the design for the system in the rectory, felt it would not be cost effective to create the same kind of system for the church.

Pat described three possible options that S/P suggested: 1) remove the existing compressor and evaporation condenser and replace them with 2 dedicated compressor/condenser units; 2) remove the existing compressor and evaporation condenser and replace them with one attic handling unit only. This option would provide cooling for the church, but not the undercroft; 3) the existing compressor and evaporation condenser and replace them and replace them with 1 air cooled chiller. Replace existing refrigerant coils and piping with new chilled water coils and piping. With all three options, the outdoor equipment would probably have to sit on a structural steel platform located above the wall (as it is now) or on the ground.

Harford Refrigeration has this report and is working on cost estimates of all three options. On the recommendation of Bob Meier, We consulted with another firm, Min Engineering and Mr. Min is preparing a report as well.

Pat added that any option would have to include a maintenance contract good for fifteen years. Bill McNamara said that thirty year maintenance policies are common and would send information to Pat about that. Jim Lochner said that, if we want this system in place by next June, we would have to put some pressure on the companies to get estimates back to us more quickly. Several people objected to Option 2 if it meant leaving the Undercroft uncooled. The heat downstairs has already created problems.

## **Communication and Outreach Committee Plans**

1. Audrey Rogers once again reminded committee chairs to get their editors on the St. Vincent website to keep information current.

2, Audrey requested an ad hoc committee be formed to look into what options were possible for a new sign on the Fallsway as this was outside the duties of the C & O Committee. Jim Casey said he would look into getting people involved. The C& O Committee would be responsible for the maintenance of the sign.

3. Audrey described the three pronged approach for outreach to attract members: neighborhood, nominal groups and networking. Efforts in the past to recruit new members from our immediate neighborhood of Jonestown have not been successful and have even caused resentment. Since many of our ministries are directed to helping our

neighbors already, it may be considered our outreach to the neighborhood. The C & O Committee will therefore focus on the other two areas for recruitment of new members.

### **Committee Reports**

Before the committee reports were made, Graham Yearley interjected that, since we were using the website as our primary information provider and with the change in the mission of the Parish Council, did it make sense to take up parish council meeting time with these reports? The reports the secretary was receiving from the committees were several pages long, was it expected that he transcribe these reports? Maureen Fitzsimmons suggested that committee reports be sent out in advance of the meetings and be read before the meeting. Then only business from the committees that needed the council's input or was crucial to report would be included in the oral reports at the meeting. Jim Casey said that the reports be sent to him before October's meeting and that they be attached this month to the minutes of the meeting.

### **Liturgy**

Bill McNamara handed out copies the sheet with the new People's Responses to the various parts of the mass which will be in the pew racks for parishioners. Fr. Lawrence noted where he thought the changes in the text were appropriate and illuminating. He added that gender specific language had already been removed. At Fr. Lawrence request, Jack Bonner recited the Suscipiat in Latin; the council was duly impressed.

### **Social Action Committee**

Peggy Meyer reported that men from the Helping Up Mission and Christopher's Place who have regularly assisted in our ministries would be honored at the 9:30 mass on the festal day of our patron saint, St. Vincent de Paul.

### **Facilities Committee**

Mold that was once in our food pantry has been removed and a de-humidifier will be installed and the project cost less than what was budgeted.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

In the Peace of Christ, the minutes are submitted by

Graham G. Yearley, secretary to the Council.