

Minutes of the Parish Council Minutes
St. Vincent de Paul Church
May 14th, 2013

The meeting was brought to order by the Council Vice-President, Jack Bonner, at 7:31 pm with an opening prayer by Fr. Lawrence. As the Council President, Jim Casey, is in Spain on vacation, Jack Bonner, our Vice President, chaired the meeting.

In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Jack Bonner, *Vice President and 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Graham Yearley, *Secretary, 12:15 Mass Rep. and Corporator*; John Kober, Sr., *7:15 Mass Rep.*; Sara Kelley, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; Pete McDowell, *11:45 Mass Rep.*; Lauren Brunelli, *Communications and Outreach Committee Chair*; Audrey Rogers, *Liturgy Committee Chair*; Maureen Fitzsimmons, *Finance Committee Chair*; Pat Ball, *Facilities Committee Chair*; Peggy Meyer, *Social Action Committee Co-Chair*; and Anne Marie Freeburger, *Corporator*.

Absent: Jim Casey, *President of the Parish Council*; Rosie Graf, *9:30 Mass Rep.*, Kathi Jeffra, *Education and Enrichment Committee Chair*

Pastor's Report

1. The refurbishing of Fr. Lawrence's new apartment at Scarlett Place continues with the library shelving being built. Fr. Lawrence's book collection will make up the biggest portion of his move, but he also has personal furniture to move. He will either hire some helpers and borrow a truck or engage a small moving company closer to the moving date.
2. The budget for the next fiscal year is being worked on with sufficient money for providing for an administrative assistant. The transition is proceeding smoothly.
3. Our new pope, Francis I, continues to give us signs of new life in the church; we can hope that these signs will become new realities.

Finance Report

1. Maureen Fitzsimmons reported that in general our finances were in reasonable shape; there is a fair amount of cash in our bank account but this is owing to an annual large donation that must stretch into the next fiscal year. The next fiscal year will add new expenses in personnel and facility work (see Facilities Report). While the average offertory is down very slightly, average attendance is up.
2. Maureen asked that committee chairs submit any cost estimates for the next fiscal year to her in the next week or two, so that those needs can be worked into our budget planning process.

Restoration Update

The remaining church restoration projects include the restoration of the unfinished stained glass windows in the church and painting and wood restoration of the church

exterior. We had hoped to attend to the exterior restorations in the next fiscal year; however, the funds available in the Historic Trust Fund could not be stretched and Chris looked into the costs of just painting and refinishing the front of the church. The front church estimate Chris received also included repointing and cleaning the granite steps and amounted to approximately \$72,000. If we choose to delay work on the steps, the project would cost \$52,000. Unfortunately, inspectors have discovered major structural issues with displaced joist in the church and rectory (Fr. Caterna's bathroom is collapsing) that require immediate attention. This may defer the exterior church restoration project. The Archdiocesan insurance company is disputing the earthquake as the cause of the displacement so the cost of the joist correction in the church may be entirely ours.

Rectory Space re-allocated

Chris had presented proposals for facility use to Council several months ago. These were not discussed in any detail. Any final planning will have to await a more strategic examination of parish needs and available space. Some decisions have been made, however. Fr. Lawrence's bedroom will become a new parish library, perhaps with conference room capacity. The nursery will be moved to the first floor parlor to make it more accessible to parents. The pastor's office will remain where it is.

Administrative Assistant Position

The job of administrative assistant was posted with the Archdiocese's employment listing and also put on Craig's List and on our website and email mail tree. The start date is July 1st. Applicants will be interviewed in the near future.

Summer Parish Council Meetings

With the transition in progress and new parish council members coming in, it was thought having a July and August meeting would be advisable. The July and August meetings will be held on the usual second Tuesdays of the month at 7:30 pm.

Old Business

1. Colleen McCahill asked that the park be put on the parish council's agenda because the past plan for the park was not working. It is unclear precisely what this means. Audrey Rogers added that a comprehensive review of our policies on the park should be undertaken for the issues may be larger than finding replacements for people who have been volunteering in the park for weekend cleanup. Sara Kelly offered to speak with Colleen and get the park re-planning started and to add this matter to next month's agenda.

2. Chris added that excrement had been thrown on the front exterior of the church both last Monday and Thursday. It was placed too high to have been "an accident".

New Business

A celebration of our Pastor's forty years of service to St. Vincent's will be held on the exact weekend forty years ago that his ministry began here, June 30th. There will be only one mass on Sunday morning at 10:30 am with the reception to follow. June 30th will also mark the last regularly scheduled 12:15 am mass at St. Vincent's. It is hoped that many will join this small congregation on that night to celebrate the passing of this historical mass.

Committee Reports

Facilities Committee Report [Pat Ball, Chair]

- 1 Another break-in occurred through the nursery window off the roof over the offices. The individual was caught in the church and police processed him. In addition to breaking the window it is evident he tried to get in by way of the elevator as the pad for the button was damaged and the key slot had been tampered with. It appears the exterior elevator door was unlocked.
- 2 We are waiting for the restoration of the stained glass windows to begin again. The middle window on the south wall has not been done and the two west windows will also be done.
- 3 Baltimore Trades Guild was out to replace the caulk on the exterior the stained glass windows on the north side of the church. It was observed that some of the issue with the leaking is that the windows were never painted on the exterior.
- 4 Painting of the Church. Baltimore Trade's Guild submitted another bid for just the front of the church. They were asked to do this so we might see if we could start with part of the church this summer which would mean a much smaller cost for us. Their bid is attached for review. It amounts to nearly \$70k. If we do not refurbish the front steps then it is even less. That would amount to just over \$52K.
- 5 We received bids for the Upper Croft joist repairs from contractors. We also heard back from the insurance company who has denied coverage of the repair, because they have determined the need for repair was caused by the 1990 air handler installation rather than the earthquake. That means a \$18k repair for us. Tom Alban from the diocese is trying to see if they will pay for part of the repair.
- 6 A representative from the health department came by just after Easter to check on our status. He instructed us not to serve any food until we had our permit. In conversation with Deacon Ed, he said the old health inspector had come to the Friday night feeding program, saw what we are doing and approved of it. At this point Chris is managing this process and will see if he can arrange a meeting with the new health inspector.
- 7 We have received bids on our extra, older, unused liturgical items. That list is attached for review.

- 8 We have signed a maintenance contract for our HVAC system with Harford. Our contract year began on May 1.
- 9 Peggy Meyer has been looking into the possibility of having solar panels installed on our rectory roof.
- 10 The roof of the rectory offices (aka potential roof deck) was discovered to be leaking. The north east corner of the church roof is also apparently still leaking. These leaks are being examined for repair.
- 11 Structural repair of joist under Fr. Chuck's tub will happen after Fr. Dick moves in July. This will cost around \$10k.
- 12 We are still waiting on Harford to get heating system improvement prices.
- 13 The approved BG&E lighting upgrades will begin later this month/June.
- 14 Rectory doorbell still does not work. Chris is going to contact an electrician to do the work.
- 15 Some of our homeless clientele have taken to decorating the front of the church with human excrement. This has created another issue in the maintenance of the church facility.
- 16 Jerome Bird has retired as chairperson of the A&A working group and declared that the work of that group has been completed with the consecration of the baptismal font. Chris and Pat are working on a restructuring plan for the Facilities Committee to incorporate issues that may previously been designated for the A&A group.

Communications and Outreach Committee [Lauren Brunelli, Chair]

The C&O Committee met on May 12. In addition to the items below, the Committee decided that Lauren Brunelli will serve again as Chair, and Jackie Range will become Vice-Chair.

Survey Results

These results were distributed to Council members. The Committee plans to further condense these results and publish them in the upcoming issue of *Together Sharing Christ* as well as publish small items about the survey in the bulletin. The attached summary will be available on the website.

Below are a few points about the survey, and in italics are summaries of the Committee's discussion for each point.

- Many people who are not on Facebook seemed to be mistakenly under the impression that social media would replace current lines of communication and were very negative about its use. Most who do use social media, however, seemed positive about its use. - *Social media is meant to be an outreach tool as much as an internal communication tool. Since most people actually using social media are in favor of it and those not using it won't be affected by it, we still plan to create social media outlets for the parish.*

- New parishioners are often unaware of the email tree and/or *Together Sharing Christ*. - *To increase distribution of the email tree among new parishioners, the Committee plans to announce its existence and how to sign up in the bulletin periodically and to add a more expanded explanation of it in the new parishioner welcome materials. For TSC, newly registered parishioners will be sent the most recent issue with instructions on how to access it online.*
- After-Mass announcements were generally favored by people. However, there was a vocal minority who would like to see the practice stopped or improved. - *At a later date, the committee will explore ways to ensure that information conveyed in announcements is appropriate and is also sent out via other channels (bulletin, email tree, website). In the meantime, the Committee will remind announcers to identify themselves and their organization; speak clearly, slowly and loudly; and be brief!*
- While most people (80 percent) have used the website and, of those, 91 percent are satisfied with it, 83 percent of people use it monthly or less frequently. *Sending out new website content via the email tree and social media as well as generally improving and adding to the website's existing content may increase the frequency of use by parishioners.*
- Of the 65 percent of survey respondents who receive the email tree a large number--83 percent--were satisfied with it. *See more below on email tree discussion.*

Email Improvements

Though there is a generally high level of satisfaction with the email tree, there were several types of information being sent out on the email tree that the majority of those people don't want, e.g. product recalls, secular news, etc. Also for respondents under 50, 33 percent were *not* satisfied with the email tree. Overall, though, email was the preferred method of communication for the most people.

Because email is preferred by so many respondents in the survey and 1/3 of respondents under 50 were unsatisfied with the email tree, the Committee thinks it's important to consider improvements to the email tree by segmenting types of information sent into different lists and possibly eliminating some types of information from it. Since segmenting the email tree by topic could make it more work intensive for Terri, Jackie volunteered to investigate the cost and ease-of-use of email services such as *ConstantContact*. A service like this would allow parishioners to opt-in for only the topics they prefer.

Signage

The sign for Fallsway and Fayette is at the printer and will be ready this month. The C&O Committee will form an ad hoc committee to work on how to create and keep up-to-date sandwich board signs for the parking lot entrance.

Social Media Policy

The Committee discussed a draft of a social media policy, created by Laureen. The draft is a good start but further work needs to be done, specifically the Code of Conduct and Social Media and Children sections need to be further developed. The Committee decided that the policy should remain fairly broad--not giving specifics for any given medium--but that plans for individual social media outlets would be added as addenda as they are launched. This social media policy in the future will be one part of an overall external communications policy that the committee will develop.

Next Meeting

In July, we plan to schedule a meeting that focus on the website.

Added at Parish Council Meeting

Voting for Parish Council candidates will be available on line. In House voting will take place Sunday, May 19th. Short biographies of the candidates are available on line and at the back of the church. There are two positions open for the 9:30 am Mass and one for the 11:45 am Mass; the 12:15 am Mass representative's position is being eliminated and John Kober still has another year as representative for the 7:15 pm Mass.

Social Action Committee [Peggy Meyer, Co-Chair]

Peace & Justice Subcommittee:

We want to develop a relationship with a local mosque and are looking to work together on a "gleaning" day. We joined BRIDGE in a leaders' retreat, planning a candidates' night in the fall to discuss raising the minimum wage and affordable housing, and working to change the "source of income" discrimination on rental applications in Baltimore County. We attended the signing of the law to repeal the death penalty and training for the fair development initiative with *United Workers*. We joined and worked with *Pax Christi DC* for their meeting at St. V's. We are still working to get solar panels for the rectory. We are working on funding for San Juan de Limay. After a meeting with the President of Loyola, they are considering starting classes for peace or integrating it into existing classes.

The Resource Exchange:

We supplied 7 individuals, whom *Healthcare for the Homeless* placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in April. One was a mother with 2 small children and we gave them 3 beds.

Jonestown Planning Council:

(1) Two developers attended and gave updates on the properties at 921-923 E. Baltimore Street and the Hendler redevelopment. The Hendler group is talking to *Ronald McDonald House* about space for them. The city rep also said they think they have permission from the holdout owner for access in the alley behind 1000 Baltimore Street which will help development. Businesses in the neighborhood attended and relationships formed that will help solve space issues. The Principal

of City Springs Elementary/Middle School talked about building an athletic complex this summer and the *SquashWise* leader was very interested.

(2) Johns Hopkins had space for a year in *Helping Up Mission* for drug treatment. Because of its success they are looking for space in the GBMC building for this and a medical center for recovery for women. Pressley Ridge's rep shared info about their Treatment Center and Foster Care on Caroline Street.

Emergency Services:

We gave groceries to about 100 families and spent about \$83 in April. The men's program gave clothing to 57 men in April and spent about \$550.

Friday Dinners for the Hungry:

We continue to serve 150-250 guests each Friday evening.

Homeless Youth:

We delivered clothing for young adults to the *Youth Empowered Society*, a drop in center for any youth without a home or at-risk of homelessness.

Liturgy Committee [Audrey Rogers, Chair]

The Liturgy Committee last met March 4, 2013; next meeting May 20, 7:30 pm.

1. Training: Lectors

We have finished the first phase of training which included a review of the ritual and individual taping. Nine separate sessions were offered to 58 individuals who speak at the ambo in various ministries. There were 39/48 (81%) individuals attending from 9:30; few invited to attend from other Masses responded to the invitation. Second sessions reviewing the tapes with individual feedback are underway. This has been a massive undertaking and the committee is grateful to Don Henderson for his efforts and Jerome Bird for taping.

2. Survey of Lenten Services

As of May 7, there have been 64 surveys completed online using *Survey Monkey* (and an additional 5 in hardcopy). May 12 is the lockdown after one month's availability. We hope to have some results available for review at our May meeting.

3. Eastertide Events

Fr. Dick completed the Baptismal Exegesis Series (April 14, 21, and 28). Up next are our usual May services for First Communion (May 12); High School Seniors (May 19); and Marriage Vow Renewal (June 2).

4. Forty Years of Service Celebration

Fr. Dick became pastor on the last Sunday of June in 1973. Our parish community celebration of his 'King David-Reign-Equivalent Tenure' with us will be at one Sunday 10:30 AM Mass on June 30, followed by a reception in the Undercroft.

5. The Last Midnight Mass in the Archdiocese

The last weekly midnight Mass will be celebrated here at St. Vincent's at 12:15 AM on June 30 followed by a small reception for attendees.

6. 2013 and 2014 Summer Series

The themes have been set and the format designed for incorporating the *Dimensions of the Eucharist* into a Summer Series for July 7, 14, and 21.

Education and Enrichment Committee [Kathi Jeffra, Chair]

No report.

The Parish Council meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by Graham Yearley, secretary to the Council