

Parish Council Meeting Minutes 10/14/14

In attendance. Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Audrey Rogers, *President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Peter La Count, *Secretary, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Joe Yingling, *9:30 Mass Rep*; Peggy Meyer, *Co-Chair, Social Action Committee*; Laureen Brunelli, *Chair, Communications and Outreach Committee*; Mark Palmer, *Chair, Finance Committee*; Peggy Shouse, *Chair, Education and Enrichment Committee*; Graham Yearley, *Corporator*; Kieran Ruppert, *Valerie Rolandelli, Chair Liturgy Committee*; Bob Betta and Dan Rolandelli, *Co-chairs, Facilities Committee*; Anne Freeburger, *Corporator*; Anne Gibson, *Minister of Education for Children*; Kieran Ruppert, *Jesuit Volunteer Corps*.

Absent. Bethany Gregg, *Vice President, 9:30 Mass Rep*; Denise Hamilton, *11:45 Mass Rep*; John Kober, *7:15 Mass Rep*.

The 10/14/14 Parrish Council Meeting was opened at 7:30 opened with a prayer

Audrey handed over approximately 70 signed conflict of interest statements to the pastor. This satisfies the recommendation of the Archdiocesan audit.

Pastor's Report

Preliminary Report on the Synod

Fr. Dick related his preliminary interpretation of the synod. He feels as though we are already doing many of the activities regarding openness to which the synod is alluding. There is an opportunity here to help meet our strategic goal of bringing more parishioners into St. Vincent's. Fr. Dick stated that the official synod report will be posted on the St. Vincent's web page in due time and recommends that all parishioners should read this very 'readable' document.

Historical Trust Fund

The priorities for the use of this fund continue to be the Accessibility project (\$40,000 estimate). The other project is the west side of the church. The administrators of the Historical Trust have been willing to lend for an 'overhang' project, but not more than for one year.

Pastoral Assistant's Report

1. Custodial position has had 5 responses. Chris will set up interviews with the three viable candidates. Chris noted that he has advertised in various print and on-line publications.
2. Facilities repairs that are in process include hiring a tree service to do pruning and a gutter cleaning service.

3. The estimate for restoration of church exterior at \$200,000. There is an existing grant of \$3500 from the Maryland Historical Trust that is available but must be used before the end of 2015. The west façade restoration will be one of the projects. Chris noted that he expects the scaffolding to begin going up Oct. 16, 2015. He noted that the structural repair in the uppercroft will happen at the same time. This work will be aided by the access through the circular window.
4. Accessibility project at St. V is currently waiting for the contractor who has already been identified. He should begin work by the end of October 2014. The start date was delayed because of delays on his current project.

Finance Report

Expenses remain below budget while offertory fell almost \$5,000 in September compared to August, and almost \$4000 below monthly budget.

The budget for social ministry expense has been increased by \$6000 (full year) for Bridge and Habitat, paid for by applying money from the maintenance salaries based on the (still) unfilled position.

The \$12,900 payment to the Foundation has been reclassified from expense (previously charged to "strategy reserve" under "Word"), to the balance sheet, essentially treated as an investment.

On the ordinary income side about \$5,000 below the budgeted amount.

On the expense side we have under spent about \$20,000 in the first 3 months. This has largely been due to vacant positions.

Set aside for strategic investments – expenditures \$7,000 less than budgeted

Offertory and attendance – for the first 3 months the collections has been better by 12% as compared to this time last year; however, attendance has been down double digits from the previous year.

The next financial council meeting is scheduled for 7:00 pm on October 23, 2014

Old Business

Strategic Planning Report

Audrey stated that our primary objective is to stop the slow loss of parishioners and to grow the parish community. To do this there were a number of tactical steps in the plan. The immediate tasks were first to examine our budget process, make it more intentional, align it with the Strategic Plan, and communicate our financial state in an understandable and transparent manner to the Council and the community. And then move to identify what was needed in terms of central staff and, given resources and constraints, reconfigure our current staff to best address these needs.

Another goal is centralizing our communication to the parishioners; we have no immediate effective way of getting important information out to our community. Critical too is effectively maintaining the parish registry as this responsibility is currently shared among several staff positions and is a critical metric of the strategic plan.

The timeline called for these two things- finances and optimizing staffing- to be done as the first order of business: the budget so FY 15 could follow the new process; attention to staff so accurate and revised job descriptions could be in place so goal-setting performance reviews could take place in July at the beginning of the fiscal year. This would mean that an employee handbook also be in place at that time. The absence of written employee practices was also noted as a deficiency by the Archdiocesan audit and Fr. Dick assured them was being addressed.

Fr. Dick has involved the Council in the reformatting the budget and that item is only on the agenda for the purpose of having the Council meeting minutes reflect its completion. So the report requested on the agenda should focus on the status of the staff configuration and job descriptions, performance reviews, and employee handbook. It needs to be noted that by approved policy, Council has a collaborative role on staff configuration, only an advisory role on job descriptions directly or through its standing committees, and no role in supervision, for which the employee handbook is a tool.

Prior to the discussion, all church employees at the parish council meeting were asked to excuse themselves from the meeting until this discussion had ceased.

Fr. Dick and Chris reported that the handbook was completed and is ready to be presented to the employees the week of October 14, 2014. Some discussion ensued regarding who should review the employee handbook. The consensus was that the Parish Council should not review and edit the handbook as we believed having 'too many cooks' involved would be detrimental to the process. The handbook has already been vetted by parishioners with expertise in labor relations.

The job descriptions for all St. Vincent parish staff have not been completed, with the exception of the Superintendent's position which is current. In order to satisfy this part of the strategic plan, Chris and Fr. Dick stated that the job descriptions would be completed by the end of the 2014 calendar year.

Ad Hoc Committee on Park

It was noted that this Committee formed and will meet for the first time on October 15 2014.

Easter Vigil Report

The consensus of the committee was to keep the Easter All Night Vigil as the same process with the vision that this event be a Pilgrimage that not all parishioners may choose to do. However, this is a very worthwhile event on behalf of the parish. The committee will decide at a later date on the feasibility of babysitting and videotaping of the event in real or delayed time. All thought these were good ideas left up to the committee to decide their relative cost and feasibility.

Valerie also noted that the Liturgy for All Souls would be on Nov. 1st and 2nd.

New Business

Easter Vigil Report

The Liturgy Committee chair presented a proposal regarding the All Night Easter Vigil. The Liturgy Committee reported that it recently spent its August retreat discussing the current tradition of the All Night Easter Vigil. Following the retreat, the consensus of the Liturgy Committee was to keep the Easter All Night Vigil as the same process with the vision that this event be a Pilgrimage that not all parishioners may choose to do. However, this is a very worthwhile event on behalf of the parish. The report included recommendations regarding the Vigil. Representatives of the Liturgy Committee met with the Family Life Subcommittee (FLS) in early October. The FLS concurred with the Liturgy Committee's recommendations. The Liturgy Committee has formed a subcommittee to continue working on the logistics of the Vigil. The committee will decide at a later date on the feasibility of babysitting and videotaping of the event in real or delayed time. After some discussion, the Parish Council thought these were good ideas left up to the committee to decide their relative cost and feasibility.

STAND Office for Screening Process

Volunteers must go to www.shieldthevulnerable.org to register and complete the information on the web site. Anne Gibson, who is spearheading this, will find out the responsibility of registering non-parishioner volunteers who may work closely with the church. Compliance is targeted for December 31, 2014. Anne distributed instruction packets to each committee chair. Audrey requested that Anne broadcast the requirement and archdiocesan website to the parish via the parish email tree, bulletin, and website since everyone who volunteers in any capacity is required to be trained and the not everyone serves on a committee.

Puppet presentation on this Sunday Oct. 19 on good touch / bad touch for children after the 9:30 service.

Child protective service to do a presentation Mon Oct 20 at 7 pm. at St. Vincent's. Members should be strongly encouraged to attend.

Feedback on Annual Report

Audrey asked the Parish Council if there was any parishioner feedback on the annual report – No feedback was received.

Committee reports

Facilities Committee

In Attendance: Bob Betta, Bob Ball, Bob Reuter, Chris McCullough,

Not present: Dave Potts, Dan Rolandelli, Pat Ball, Dennis McMullin, Rita McMullin, Jerome Bird.

The meeting began with a prayer offered by Bob Ball.

The following issues were raised in the recap of church area responsibilities:

-need for better plan for locking and unlocking doors to undercroft on rectory side on Sunday mornings. Current locks are difficult for many of the Coffee Klatch people to navigate. Plan to have one of the men to unlock those doors at the end of Mass and lock up again after CK

-need for permanent fix of locks on storage shed, which has been vandalized again. Will get estimates on repair and re-keying that door

-gates at the entrance to the ramp between the church and rectory need to be re-anchored

- the railing on the handicapped ramp needs repair. We will find a way to get this done.

The following issues were discussed as part of old business:

- Chris has gotten an estimate from Smith Landscaping for removal of dead trees and trimming back trees from the building. That estimate is for \$6875. He also got an estimate of \$3775 for trimming back the ivy around the rectory, which is going to cause problems with the integrity of the building, in particular, the roof. It was decided that we should proceed with these projects.
- Bob Betta submitted a diagram of the possible reconfiguration of the parking spaces, which he developed with Bob Reuter. Chris has an estimate of \$3200 from someone who will re-seal the parking lot and paint the spaces. It was decided that we should proceed with this project.
- Chris reported that the person who is going to be doing the accessibility work in the upstairs rectory will be starting that project in October. The repairs and renovation of Fr. Chuck's bathroom will be done in coordination with that project.
- Chris reported that the superintendent position has been submitted to the AOB HR office for posting. In doing so, we were informed that we may need to look at an hourly rate of closer to \$17/hour to attract the quality of person we were looking for. The AOB has learned this from several other similar experiences in other parishes. Bob Reuter offered to post position on a Veteran's website with which he is familiar. It was also decided that it would be advertised within the parish via the e-mail tree and website. In addition, we are considering other avenues, such as Craig's List. We will monitor the response we get and then, if unsuccessful getting the person we want, consider increasing the hourly rate. The rate will not be posted in the ads we place.

The following issues were discussed as part of new business:

- There is a group of parishioners, mostly associated with the Friday night feeding program, who are interested in cleaning out, painting, and reorganizing the kitchen in the undercroft. They have donations to date totaling \$8000, with which they hope to replace the stoves and refrigerators. It was decided that they should move forward with this by first submitting to us a detailed plan for the project.

- The committee considered suggestions given to us by Parish Council, which resulted from the findings of the Welcoming Focus Group. We will plan a weekend, when we remove much of the unnecessary stuff that fills the space at the foot of the stairs to the undercroft. It was agreed that space is not welcoming. It will be cleaned out, but we also realized that, until a new superintendent is in place, it will likely become cluttered again. Two other concerns will be addressed: signage in the gathering space reminding people of the need for quiet and providing direction to bathrooms, meeting spaces, and undercroft; the need for some sound control in the undercroft. Several inexpensive, but attractive solutions were discussed. Bob Betta volunteered to ask Jerome Bird for referrals, as this is his area of expertise.
- **Chris reported that the capital expenditures for west side façade renovations, the structural beam replacement in the uppercroft, and the accessibility project in the rectory were discussed at the finance council meeting. These capital expenses total \$110,000. At the finance meeting Fr. Dick stated that payment for these capital improvements will come from the Historic Trust Fund and can be done in this fiscal year 2014-15.**
- In looking at the financial report, Chris noted that church utilities were \$1000 under budget, rectory utilities were \$700 over budget, church maintenance was \$1200 over budget and rectory maintenance was \$594 under budget.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 28, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Education and Enrichment

The Education & Enrichment Committee met on September 11, 2014.

Fall geographic (cluster) groups are being arranged; Dinner for 8 will resume in January.

The small Bible study group will be studying the book of Mark this year.

The Women in Ministry group held its annual retreat at Blue Ridge Summit October 3-5 on the topic of Women of Wisdom. Fifteen members of the group attended.

There was discussion of next year's parish retreat and possible topics for Lenten discussion, but nothing is currently settled except that the leader for the retreat will be Gerry Fialkowski.

Suggestions from the brain-storming session at the September Cape May weekend were tabled until the next meeting on November 13, 2014 at 7 pm.

Communication and Outreach

The C&O Committee met on October 8, 2014. Below are the minutes from that meeting:

Attending: Chris McCullough, Michael Keating, Lee Krempel, Anne Maura English, Audrey Rogers

Excused Absences: Joe Yingling, Laureen Brunelli

Update on what's been going on with communications at St. V and Staff and committee roles in communication within the parish

Chris reviewed what staff has done: brochures for both the church community and *The Resource Exchange*, postings on the website, and maintaining *Facebook*. He noted that the work of the committee since its beginning several years ago has focused of necessity on our own internal parish communications which were poor. This focus resulted in a re-design of the bulletin and website. The website and email communication have both depended on off-site volunteers in the past, a situation that is not particularly desirable since any organization requires effective centralized communication lines with its members. A move to provide resources to accomplish this centralization this year proved unsuccessful, although eventual staff configuration to assume these responsibilities is still envisioned. For now, both staff and C+O must move forward sharing responsibility as they have in the past.

Revamping the publicity guidelines.

These guidelines were established two years ago when the committee was started to outline how C+O will interact with other standing committees and groups. The guidelines divide publicity into three categories: internal to parishioners (bulletin, website, email tree) for which each sponsoring committee or group has responsibility; external to the Archdiocese bulletin board or bulletins of our cluster churches for which the committees or sponsoring groups may (but are not required) ask assistance from the C+O; and external to the wider Baltimore area (through press releases, paid advertising, or op-eds) for which the C+O must be consulted.

Given C+O remains small and that it retains responsibility for publicity and given no dedicated staff time will be forthcoming, we decided to retain the approach outlined in these guidelines. The only component that is truly outdated is the 'mission-specific editor' model. **Chris and Lauren** will discuss the most efficient approach to the posting of events on the website and decide on editors.

Revisiting our top 5 priorities laid out in June (5 most important)

- Publicity for TRE - 5
Michael has a press release written and will obtain final sign-off from Peggy Cronyn, Peggy Meyer, and Chris. He will approach Dan Rodericks for publication. It was also suggested that his radio program may be an option. Lee noted that Sheila Kast's *Maryland Morning* show may be another venue to explore; he'll mention to his wife, Jamyla, who works at WYPR with Ms. Kast.

- Better configure Gathering Space for communication/engagement – 4
We discussed this item at length, virtually reformatting the space to clearly separate materials that newcomers need, St V programs and events, and regional events and issues not directly sponsored by our community. We decided that tables needed to be cleared and brochure racks installed on the walls. Signs that directed people to services (nursery, bathrooms, fellowship) needed to be posted as well as instructions that during services the Gathering Space area is an extension of sacred space and required silence. **Chris and Lee** will meet to determine the necessary signage.
- Improve signage - 3 and Creating a marketing plan and/or social media policy -3
We decided not to replace the small cloth sign at Fayette/Fallsway that has been taken down. Its visibility was always an issue.
We did get excited about an idea to place a very large banner across the Fallsway façade of the church that clearly and boldly links us to Pope Francis. It can go up soon after the restoration is complete. This is our most highly visible place, easily seen from the JFX and West Fayette, a very busy intersection. What we put on the banner has to be brief (but inspired). We played with different thoughts and decided to keep the interaction going on email.
Current ideas:
'If you like what Pope Francis is saying, you'll hear more here.' [Seems too long]
'What Pope Francis preaches, we live here.'
Others should weight in.
- Make changes to the email tree - 2
We did not get this addressed.

Welcoming focus groups' ideas and the C&O Committee's role in implementing them

Lee reviewed these ideas and we discussed them within the priority areas above.

Finishing the social media policy –

It was noted this was not far from done since considerable work had been done on it two years ago. **Committee members** are asked to review and send comments or concerns to Laureen so the draft policy can be finalized and taken to Council or action.

Slide show about St V's social ministries prepared by our JVC volunteer. We will discuss how to share it and what it needs.

Since we did not know what the content, purpose, or intended audience was, this item was tabled.

Sign the parish's Conflict of Interest policy

All committee members have signed the policy.

Next meeting is Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

Social Action

Peace and Justice

- Kathy Ault and Liz Hasan volunteered to coordinate our Habitat builds
- The next meeting of Beyond the Boundaries is 11/11 at St. Francis
- The gleaning day with Gather Baltimore will be 11/22 so please mark your calendars for a joint event by P&J and the Family Life sub committee
- The International Pax Christi held a meeting in Germantown and included the Director from El Salvador, a Catholic priest who is Chairman of the Board and Marie Dennis our U.S. rep. It was excellent.
- We attended the 9/21 environmental march in New York.

Emergency Services: The food program gave groceries to families in September and spent \$993. The men's program gave clothing Thursday to 60 men and spent \$940.

Friday Dinner: Just to give you an idea of the guests, on Friday we had 251 come for dinner including 6 children under the age of 4, 33 over 65 years old, 5 using walkers, 7 in wheel chairs and about 12 using canes. We usually have about 25 immigrants. Father discussed those invited to the feast in his homily Sunday. Now you know who came to dinner this week!

The Resource Exchange: We supplied 5 individuals, whom Healthcare for the Homeless placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in September. Two others were not there when we arrived and one we cancelled because of bed bug issues. We also delivered beds to 8 individuals and will deliver their other furniture when scheduled. Many thanks to the parishioners who donated bedding for the "Bed Days".

Neighborhood Services: We assisted Johns Hopkins in compiling a list of services offered for those in need.

Mitten Tree: We will have a mitten tree again this year to help students at St. James & John School. We may collect additional items too so stay tuned.

Jonestown Planning Council: We have not met since last Parish Council.

Helping Up Mission: HUM men are cleaning the park the first and third Saturdays of each month.

St. Vincent de Paul feast day: The committee planned the liturgy for 9/28 and distributed brochures for service opportunities in the parish.

Liturgy Committee Report

- Last Meeting: September 27 (all meetings on Saturdays from 10am to 12pm)
- Next Meetings: November 15, January 24, March 14, May 9.
- Easter Vigil
 - The Liturgy Committee devoted their annual retreat in August to the Easter Vigil and examined the feedback and survey responses of multiple parishioners and participants. We discussed the vigil again at our meeting on September 27 and obtained feedback from the Family Life Subcommittee. The Committee considered various alternatives to the current practice as well as ways to make the Vigil more accessible to and engaging for parishioners. Based on this examination and group discernment, we have decided to keep the current structure of the Vigil with a number of changes to advance the following goals:
 - Educate the parish about the history and liturgical significance of the Vigil both in its own right and as the culmination of the Holy Week liturgy
 - Re-envision the all-night part of the Vigil as a pilgrimage for certain persons who make the journey for the whole community, i.e., better incorporate both all-night attendees and those who leave and return into one seamless liturgy in which all are equal participants whether or not they stay the night at church.
 - Enable better access to the vigil for families by opening up the rectory and possibly hiring a nanny and security guard.
 - Further details about the discernment process and plan are attached.
 - A subcommittee will plan and implement the 2015 Vigil. The subcommittee will be: Anne Maura English, Colleen McCahill, Chris McCullough, Joe Hamilton, Jack Gohn
- Liturgy Committee Goals for the 2014-15 Year
 - 1) Continue to educate parish about liturgy/mass through FAQs and possibly a "teaching mass" or series
 - 2) Restore greater balance of sacred space and community at Mass, including addressing issues related gathering space, the beginning of mass, announcements and sign of peace.
 - 3) Increase participation of new parishioners in liturgy committee with specific assignments and in various liturgical ministries (LoW, bread-baking, etc.)
- Advent
 - Cycle B Readings
 - Theme: Waiting for the God Who
 - 1st: Reveals
 - 2nd: Heals
 - 3rd: Inspires
 - 4th: Amazes
 - Further details described in the attached document

- To further committee goals in advent, 9:30 mass will not have oral announcements. We may ask Mary Lynn or Sue to make one announcement referring parishioners to the bulletin, reminding families of nativity practice, and inviting parishioners to the undercroft at the end of Mass.
- Advent 2014 – Cycle B
- Readings, Theme, Tasks, Order of Service

Final words: Chris offered tickets to the concert by Morgan State that we are co-sponsoring with First Unitarian Church on Friday, October 17th.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm. with a closing prayer

Respectfully submitted

Peter La Count