

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church Parish Council Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2015

In attendance; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*, Audrey Rogers, *President*, 9:30 Mass Rep; Bethany Gregg, Vice President, 9:30 Mass Rep Peter La Count, *Secretary*, 9:30 Mass Rep; Joe Yingling, 9:30 Mass Rep; Valerie Rolandelli, *Chair Liturgy Committee*; Mark Palmer, *Chair, Finance Committee*, Peggy Meyer, *Co-Chair, Social Action Committee*, Peggy Shouse, *Chair, Education and Enrichment Committee*, Kieran Ruppert, *Jesuit Volunteer Corps*.

Absent. Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; John Kober, 7:15 Mass Rep; Denise Hamilton, 11:45 Mass Rep, Anne Freeburger, *Corporator*; Bob Betta, Dan Rolandelli, *Co-chair, Facilities Committee*, Michael Keating, *Chair, Outreach and Engagement Committee*; Graham Yearley, *Corporator*.

Meeting began at 7:33

Pastor Report

No report this month, as Fr. Dick was out of town and not present at the meeting.

Pastor's associate report

Chris reported that the work continues for St. V restoration. Two grants have been received \$15,000 from the Baltimore Historic Association and \$2,000 from Preservation Maryland. Funds can be utilized for paint, woodwork and general restoration.

Chris will be taking a month sabbatical during the month of June.

The Accessibility project is going well, according to Chris. The ceiling and flooring are completed. Painting is being finished. Chris noted that soon he would like book donations for the parish library which will be available after the accessibility is complete. Any books that may entice thought and meditation would be welcome. Chris envisions a library-like atmosphere for study and reflection.

BGE was in earlier this week and completed connecting the panel to the main transformer. The church is now on a single meter.

Financial Report

Mark reports that the attendance and financial report represents 9 months into fiscal year. He noted that offertory and attendance had a March decline of about 13%. We are averaging 10% drop from the same time last year. However, he noted that the per person offertory donation is up from last year.

On the revenue side we are below budget by about \$1700. Mark reported a strong collection during the Christmas season.

All told financial picture is good given reduced attendance.

OLD BUSINESS

Draft Feasibility Criteria for Park

There was much discussion among the members present during the meeting about having both a financial analysis and an enhanced environmental framework included in the draft criteria for the feasibility study. The consensus was that there needs to be a budget framework that would entice any potential developer(s) with some sort of a financial model. There was also conversation regarding whether the recommendation should be a LEED Silver or LEED Gold. There was also discussion about what impact this would have on the feasibility study. There was also discussion about what kind of environmental impact statement should be included in the feasibility study. Valerie volunteered to suggest language regarding being more specific on the budget and Chris offered to make suggestions/conduct research on an environmental impact statement as part of the feasibility study.

NEW BUSINESS

Parish Council Elections

Audrey mentioned the Parish Council election schedule which had been confirmed by Council via email. Nominations will be Sunday April 19 and April 26. Elections will be held on Sunday May 10. Al Reichelt will be the Teller.

The Annual Report

The council approved an early submission of the annual report which will be out in May or June of 2015.

Church Restoration Proposal

Given new information, the Facilities Committee proposed that the restoration of the park-side church foundation and the repair of the underground water drainage system be moved up to the Spring of 2015, rather than be addressed in the future. given the extent of the water damage. The current gutter and drainage system was built about 170 years ago. The underground bricks are broken and have fallen in some spots. The foundation cement is pasty and falling apart. The first

collapse was noted about 10 years ago and nothing was done at that time to rectify the situation. Jim Dimmer has examined the building and noted the structural problem with the foundation. This was scheduled to be addressed in 2016/17; however, the feeling is that this needs to be moved up. The Council had consensus to approve this recommendation. The recommendation for approval will go to Fr. Dick.

Request was made for the Park Working Group to change its name to the Friends of the St. Vincent Park. The feeling was that this would be more inviting to potential partners. The motion to change the name was approved.

Children's Program

The Council did not consider the materials submitted in response to the December recommendations on the Children's Program responsive. Further, the Council believed that we should adhere to Archdiocese procedures and have certification for teaching staff. The following actions were taken by the Council:

- Chris will determine the procedure to obtain immediate certification for those current teachers with Masters Degrees who are certifiable as teachers through the Archdiocese;
- Mission statement for the entire children's program will be written in the Family Life Committee working with Anne Gibson;
- The job description or the part time middle and high school program employee will be vetted by the Family Life Committee

Peggy mentioned great publicity on the radio recently. Maria Mercy on a radio show on 1010 am talked about those without homes. She stated that St. V is doing a fantastic job with The Resource Exchange program with apartments and furnishings.

The meeting ended in prayer at 9:00 pm

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Liturgy Committee: Valerie Rolandelli, Chair

The Liturgy Committee met on Saturday, March 14, 2015. Lent liturgy planning to date was reviewed. We discussed the decision to have announcements provided by one person at the end of the service. This practice was going well and several parishioners have commented that they liked this practice. It was decided to continue this practice through the Easter season. Holy Week planning was discussed and all liturgies were in good shape regarding planning. Holy Thursday still needed washes for the service and it was suggested that we ask those people involved with the Social Action activities of the parish. Jack Gohn was finalizing the Easter Vigil scheduling. Colleen McCahill agreed to again be the threader for this vigil. Chris McCullough will handle the program for the Vigil. The Vigil will start at 9:30 pm on April 4 with the fire service and exultet. As well, Anne Maura English was drafting a blessing for those who were staying for the Vigil as

well as a sending forth for those who will leave to return on Easter morning. (A blessing also was used on Palm Sunday to signify the start of Holy Week.) The Summer Series will be held on July 12, 19, and August 3, if three weekends are needed (July 26 is Vacation Bible School liturgy). It was suggested that with the Pope's encyclical on the environment to be released soon, that perhaps the Elizabeth Johnson book Ask the Beast could be the theme for the Summer Series. Audrey Rogers approached the Women in Ministry to see if they would be willing to plan this series since they were studying this book. They have agreed to do so. The committee will also reconsider scheduling teaching masses for late summer/fall. The purpose of these would be to bring back sacred space and educate the parish about St. V's and the Mass. Matt Hill will be the chair of the committee beginning May 2015. A co-chair is being sought. The next meeting will be May 9 from 10 am to noon in the education room off of the parking lot.

Education & Enrichment Committee: Peggy Shouse, Chair

The E. & E committee met on March 19, 2015.

1. Plans are well underway for the Parish Retreat in May. Fliers will be out within the next week. In-person registration will start this Sunday.
2. Cape May Enrichment Weekend, October 16-18, has been booked. The weekend is open to any member of the parish. Cost is usually about \$100 per adult, depending on the number of people attending.
3. Rita and Denny McMullin have agreed to be co-chairs of the E & E Committee for the next year, beginning with the June Parish Council meeting.

Social Action Committee: Peggy Meyer and Ray Heil, Co-Chairs

The Resource Exchange: We supplied 8 Health Care for the Homeless clients with furniture and starter kits in March. We are moving from our third floor units at Eastern Ave. Extra Space Storage to 2400 N. Howard St. so that we have ground floor units to save time loading the truck on move days and storing the furniture on pick-up days. The Baltimore Sun ran our ad twice recently so we have much furniture to pick-up. We could really use lamps if anyone has ones they are not using. We received some great publicity when a parishioner was on the radio touting St. Vincent de Paul Church ministries and describing the TRE ministry.

Peace & Justice Committee: We joined Pax Christi for the Social Action Way of the Cross through town on Good Friday. We attended a workshop by Dr. Rosann Catalano of the Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies at a synagogue about our challenges 50 years after Vatican II. She and a Lutheran, Muslim and Rabbi responded to questions and we networked with other faith groups. We participated in the CRS Rice Bowl Lenten offering. The regional Pax Christi meeting is here at St. V's 5/9 and we are planning the 30th year anniversary celebration on 5/24 at St. Matthews. We will work with Esperanza

Center on 5/2 to help immigrants prepare DAPA applications so they may stay here legally with proper immigration status since Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is about to expire. Please consider attending a workshop that day and helping. Also on 5/2 8:30 - 4:30 is the Maryland United for P&J. (There is a reception on 5/1 in the evening.) The featured speaker 5/2 is Phyllis Bennis, Institute for Policy Studies, talking about "The Mess in the Middle East: What can we do?", with workshops all day. Let us know if interested. Beyond the Boundaries is looking for a Hopkins School of Social Services intern to work on the legal write-up to help fix the Inclusionary Housing Bill, flawed with loopholes.

Emergency Services: The food program gave groceries to 83 families in March and spent \$660. The men's program gave clothing in March to 66 men and spent \$240.

Friday Dinner: We had 1025 guests in March.

Jonestown Planning Council: The Hendler development and Ronald McDonald House are both moving along. We met with Dr. Thornton of the School Board to plead the case for funding for Dr. Rhonda Rochetta, Principal of City Springs Elementary/Middle School, because the school is bursting at the seams. They went from 350 students 7 years ago to 700 with terrific attendance, good discipline and few suspensions. City Council invited us to the high school game 4/18 at the stadium at 1:00. The Rabbi talked about their interest in acquiring the property across from the Jewish Synagogue for mixed use, 20-30 residential units, a community center, retail and possibly day care or retirement center. The Mayor's office has taken an interest to figure out how to get tax credit investor with veto power to approve a plan. Lindsay Thompson's Johns Hopkins City Lab group updated us on their efforts with the Housing Authority to acquire property with restrictions and other endeavors. The last Saturday in April is the Mayor's clean up day and Jonestown will work on Jonestown.

Helping Up Mission: HUM men are cleaning the park the first and third Saturdays monthly.

Outreach and Engagement Committee: Michael Keating, Chair

Attending March 16 Meeting: Fr. Dick Lawrence, Chris McCullough, Joe Yingling, Michael Keating, Laureen Brunelli, and Lee Krempel (Brenda Smith was out of town and unable to attend).

1. Old Business

Banner

Chris updated us on the status of the "Be Surprised by God" banner and reported that it should be installed within the next two weeks. Because the frame will be installed high up on the building there is an added cost to have the vendor install each new banner. Chris is looking into cheaper options that can work down the road as we hope to rotate messages a few times over the course of the year. The current cost is \$600 per banner; \$700 to install. Chris continues to research other vendors who might print the banners for less cost.

Gathering Space and Way Finding Signage

We continued our discussion of how best to resolve the gathering space issues regarding information clutter and ease of use and signage. It was determined that bulletin boards and wall-hanging Lucite pockets would be best. There should be designated areas for each committee's literature as well as a "New at St. V's? Here's How to Get Involved" section.

Action Item: Chris will send a sketch around of his ideas for placement, as well as a cell phone photo to orient us.

There was split discussion as to whether way finding can be accomplished by floor plan signage, or separate signage with arrows. We will discuss again at the next meeting.

MailChimp/Email Tree

Joe has established the free account.

Action Item: Michael will send some sample emails with repurposed content from the email tree in advance of the next meeting.

2. New Business

St. V. Evangelization Mission Statement

Laureen shared a new St. V. Evangelization Mission Statement that she worked on with Fr. Dick and Chris that can help guide the committee in its deliberations and actions – see text below. Accepted and approved without dissent.

Technology Updates

Laureen and Chris shared that we need to find a new solution to filming and posting our Sunday homily online. Jerome no longer wishes to perform this responsibility and we need to find a new alternative. There was discussion of developing a technology subcommittee and to reach out to parishioners who might wish to start an "AV Club" to handle this and perhaps other tasks listed below.

Action Item: Chris and Laureen will reach out and try and find people wishing to help out.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is developing a new mobile app platform for every parish in the nation to use for free. The basic platform will include location, contact info, mass schedules, but can be expanded and customized by individual parishes. The expectation is that it will launch in advance of the Pope's visit to the US.

Action Item: Laureen will follow up and coordinate with Joe as needed for interconnectivity with the website.

Video

Chris shared a proposal from Advertising Media Plus to create two short videos about St. Vincent's for \$2,500. The idea is that this could be set up and played on demand outside the gathering space before and after masses, posted to the website, shared through social media and through other channels as available.

Action Item: Chris will share links to videos the vendor has created for other churches.

Website Updates

Fr. Dick is interested in doing a podcast (working title Unsystematic Theology). Further discussion and recruitment of people with technical skills will be needed to make this happen.

The website needs to be enhanced with responsive design as more and more people are accessing its pages from smartphones in which regular webpages do not render well.

Action Item: Joe is looking into this and will report back at next meeting.

Laureen suggested we create a blog on the homepage to post Together Sharing Christ essays, poems and content.

Tweeting the Vigil

Laureen suggested trying to get participants to tweet and Facebook observations, videos and photos from the Vigil.

Action Item: Laureen will reach out parishioners and post in the bulletin to try and make this happen.

Events

It was decided that it would be best for the committee to focus on trying to host one major event before the end of the calendar year. Ideas include an environmental talk or lecture series tied to the release of the pope's encyclical on climate change, a beers and theology night discussion series at a local bar, or a healing choir event. We will continue discussion at our next meeting.

Sandwich Board Advertisement

Joe suggested an idea that everyone loved for the sandwich board targeted at farmer's market walking traffic, which starts up again on April 5. One side would be a shopper's list of things to do/get, including attending the 9:30 mass at St. Vincent's. The opposite side would be for the 11:45 mass. Joe and Laureen will work on the wording and design. Joe can create a QR code to help measure impact.

175th Anniversary

2016 marks the 175th anniversary of St. Vincent's Parish. We are starting to discuss a year-long series of celebratory events. Initial ideas include: a "Homecoming party" to bring back folks who haven't worshipped with us in awhile; a flat roof deck party fundraiser of some sort for up to 50 people, a time capsule. More to come.

Other business

Joe shared that he will be transitioning off the O/E committee in favor of working with the Park Committee. Fred Jorgenson, who attended the February O/E meeting, will be unable to join the committee going forward, needing instead to focus his time on working with the youth committee.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, April 20 at 7:00 pm.

St. V Evangelization "Mission Statement"

Purpose: This statement is for internal use by staff and committees to help guide us in choosing and evaluating our evangelization, outreach, marketing and engagement activities and strategies.

At St. V the goal of our evangelizing is to encourage people to:

- See God as Good News, One who loves us and is "for" the human race.
- See Jesus as Good News, One who shows us who God is and how we can live in a way that will bring us closer to God
- See the Church as Good News, renewed by Pope Francis' vision as an accepting community of Word, Sacrament and Service, and
- See St. V as Good News, a community who knows God as being for us and is aligned with Jesus's action plan for us and Pope Francis's vision

Facilities Committee Meeting: Bob Betta, Chair

In Attendance at March 24 Meeting: Bob Betta, Bob Reuter, Chris McCullough, Pat Ball, Audrey Rogers, Jim Dimmer, Dan Rolandelli

Not present: Dave Potts, Bob Ball, Jerome Bird, Rita and Denny McMullin

Jim Dimmer gave a report on the state of the buildings. He has made great progress in cleaning out areas in the undercroft and has disposed of much trash and junk.

Jim also reported that in the subterranean drainage system, in particular, on the south side of the church, the drain lines are cracked and clogged, which accounts for a lot of the moisture that is a problem in the undercroft. It is also responsible for deterioration of the foundation of the church. After discussion, it was decided that we should propose including this issue as part of the restoration of the south side of the church, scheduled to begin this spring. It was felt that this is essential to the integrity of the building. Audrey will draft a proposal regarding this to be presented to the parish council in April. She will submit the draft to Chris and Bob Betta for review.

Audrey presented a summary of the current budget and remaining available funds, which was discussed in terms of needed projects. Available funds at this time are \$14,181. The following is a list of projects we will complete along with estimates of costs:

- Bench repair in park - \$1500
- Fr. Chuck's bathroom repair - \$2800
- Ivy pruning from roof and eaves - \$1500
- Replace batteries in all emergency lights - \$30/piece

Install exterior security cameras – to be determined

If there is any budget money left, it will be spent to insulate the ductwork in the undercroft. Jim also suggested that he get a bid for the resealing and repainting of the lines in the parking lot from the contractor who is bidding to do the work at his other parish, Corpus Christi, with the idea he may be able to give us a better price for doing both jobs.

Other ideas for better lighting, noise suppression and beautifying of the undercroft were discussed, but it was decided that the projects that involved security and building integrity were to be given priority.

Audrey has arranged for a \$2000 grant, which is designated to be used to replace the double doors to the undercroft. Jim will ask the contractor, who is working on the accessibility project, if he would like to give us a bid on that.

The accessibility project in the rectory has begun this week. The opening is done and the plumbing has been moved. Electrical work is in progress. As part of this, it has been determined that the beam under the floor in Fr. Chuck's bathroom is not in bad shape and does not need to be replaced. It was decided that we would replace the tub and surround with a one piece unit. The accessibility project is estimated to take approximately 3 weeks.

It is the time of year for changes in committee leadership. It was decided that we needed additional membership for this committee before deciding on future leadership. Chris suggested that each current member of the committee invite one new potential member to our next meeting. Voting will take place at that meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by
Pat Ball

Facilities Projects 2014 / 2015

Projects Completes FY14

- Electrical upgrade of undercroft bar
- Refinish church's west side exterior
- Upper-croft beam repair
- Repaint fire escape steps
- Repair/re-caulk north side windows
- Handrail for organ area steps
- Park tree trimming
- Handicap access on second floor of rectory

Projects to be done FY 15

- Bench and fence repair in the park
- Lamppost repair in the park
- Insulate undercroft ductwork

- Seal parking lot and repaint lines
- Refurbish Fr. Chuck's bathroom
- Ivy removal from rectory roof and eaves
- Refurbish undercroft kitchen
- Noise abatement in undercroft
- Refinish gathering space floor near bathroom
- New double steel door for undercroft

**Report to the Parish Council from the Facilities Committee
April 2015**

At the January Council meeting, Fr. Lawrence requested and received approval for requesting funding from the St. Vincent Endowment Trust for the following restoration plan for the church's exterior:

FY 15 (July 2014 through June 2015)	
Accessibility Project	40,000
West (Fallsway) Wall	56,000
Carry-over Deficit	-36,000
FY 16 (July 2015 through June 2016)	
South (Park) Wall	43,000
East (Front Street) Wall	52,000
Carry-over Deficit	-56,000
FY 17 (July 2016 through June 2017)	
Front Steps, South and East Foundations	41,000
Carry-over Deficit	-35,000

The Facilities Committee was presented with new information at its last meeting regarding a serious threat to the structural integrity of the foundation of the south side of the church from chronic water damage. It has been known for some time that a portion of the subterranean drainage system has collapsed and it is likely that further collapse has occurred since, leaving the entire system drain lines cracked and clogged. This causes water to settle and collect against the church's foundation which accounts for moisture along the wall in the undercroft, deterioration in the mortar, and drainage issues in the stairwell with occasional overflow into the undercroft itself. This adds to the gutter and downspout drainage and overflow issues observed during heavy rains, placing strain on the gutter system and causing it to pull away from the building.

It is the opinion of the committee that attention to correcting this problem in the foundation and drainage system should not wait, but be included during the work on the south side park wall this summer. In the committee's opinion, this is a structural issue too long ignored that can only worsen and must take precedence in the current plan.

Parish Council Minutes respectfully submitted by Peter La Count