

St. Vincent de Paul Parish Council

November 12, 2019

Minutes

1) Attendance

- a) Present: Amber Hendricks (9:30 rep, Parish Council President); Fr. Ray Chase (Pastor); Colleen McCahill (Pastoral Associate); Anne Freeburger (Corporator); Mark Palmer (Chair, Finance Committee); Peggy Meyer (Chair, Social Action Committee); Alana Florio (ALIVE); John Moore (Chair, Education & Enrichment Committee), Al Reichelt, (Co-Chair, Liturgy Committee); Gerry Fialkowski (Co-Chair, Liturgy Committee); Peggy Shouse (9:30 rep, Vice-President), Corinne Agren-Barnes (9:30 rep, Secretary); Ned Banks, (9:30 rep); Tom Fialkowski; Charlie & Andy Chapman (Facilities Committee)
- b) Absent: Graham Yearley (Corporator); Dennis & Rita McMullin (Facilities Committee); laisha Payton (11:45 rep); Chris Whitney (7:15 rep); James Casey (Chair, Ad Hoc Committee)

2) Pastor's Report

- a) Fr. Ray shared that we have an unusually high number of people in the parish community who are struggling with health issues (Ruth is at University Hospital; Mary Jo underwent a surgical procedure and is struggling with anxiety related to that; Lorna is recovering from her fall and Friday she was transferred to rehab; Sylvia is doing better but still in a lot of pain. She was at mass on Sunday; Joann is struggling with a lot of issues, some related to her fall; Gil is slowly leaving this world, gently & peacefully; it is difficult time for Lee; a number of others are struggling with health issues privately)
- b) He reported that he received an invitation from Bishop Madden: the Western region of the city is going to be talking specifically racial justice & the church, but it is open to priests on the East side. Fr. Ray said he would share the information that comes out of this meeting with the Education and Enrichment Committee.

3) Pastoral Associate's Report

- a) Colleen shared that on Monday (11/11) three gentleman came from HP Electronics to begin installing our new sound system. They are figuring out how to best hang the new speakers. They are not sure if they will be ready by Sunday (11/17). There will be a training on how to use the new system for those who need it.
- b) She informed the Council that the Archdiocese is digitizing all sacramental records of all parishes in the diocese. This will make it easier for those needing and/or wanting to look up this information for various reasons.
- c) She brought up the closing of Ss. James & John School that will happen in the next couple of years, depending on when the new school is finished. Currently, there are 31 different scholarship endowment funds (from about 100 different donors) that are directed towards Ss. James & John from St. V's. The

understanding right now is that, should the school close, these funds would be used to serve students of financial need in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Colleen asked the question: *Are some donors interested in specifying that the aid from these funds continue to help students from the east side of city, which is where Ss. James and John School is located?* She is speaking with The Catholic Community Foundation about what will happen with the funds and the Foundation is happy for the change/amendment/addendum that specifies that the funds support east side students. They have discussed that, for students of Ss. James & John, as long as they stay in catholic school (even if not on the east side), they will still be eligible for aid as if they were still at Ss. James & John student. The funds will track with the students. Colleen is helping with this process and is working with donors who are on the Ss. James & John school board. She raised another questions, asking, *is there some value in letting the endowment fall where it might?* Historically, when a catholic school closes, the system loses some students. *Can we retain 100% of J&J students in Catholic school system when school closes?* As there is attrition of Ss. James & John students, the bolus of aid available needs to be decided. The current proposal is that the PIE system—the system presently used by the Archdiocese to help distribute aid within the school system—be used to distribute the funds.

- i) Questions from Council Members:
 - (1) How will funds be distributed?
 - (a) Through PIE (Partners in Excellence), which has Archdiocesan staff. It is funded through the Annual Appeal and provides funds for needy students. The Catholic Community Foundation works with PIE. A separate program (FACTS) is used to determine financial need.
 - (2) Will there be any consideration for race since Ss. James & John is the last African American elementary parochial school?
 - (a) Overall, there is a high African American enrollment in the city parochial schools.
 - ii) The new school is to provide quality education for inner city children.
 - iii) There will be an effort to try and get out video/virtual tour of the new school, so those interested can see it.
- d) Brian, the current Jesuit Volunteer (JV) & Outreach Coordinator, is doing a fantastic job. Part of his job is to help manage the St. V's Food Pantry. Since he has started the numbers of those coming each month are up. They had been down for a number of months. (The Food Pantry is open every Monday from 12:30-2p; A person can come 1 x per month; it is not limited to specific zip codes)
- e) It is time for Colleen to apply for new JV. Needs parish council to affirm. It costs the parish approximately \$16,000 to have a JV. Colleen shared that it is of great value to everybody to have a JV at the parish.
 - i) The Council voted all in favor of applying for a new JV.

4) Committee Reports

a) *Education & Enrichment Committee (EEC)*

- i) The EEC is working very hard on a racial justice program that will run during the next year. It has moved from the planning stage to the implementation stage very quickly. It will start on Dec. 3 with a movie.

b) *Facilities Committee (FC)*

- i) Nothing to report.
- ii) The FC wants to establish process & routine for assessing all the buildings so that it will be able to see things that require attention before they become problematic.
- iii) The FC wants to take on a more active role in dealing with issues related to the St. V's facilities.

c) *Finance Committee (FC)*

- i) The FC sent out the report for the last fiscal year.
- ii) The parish is continuing to see a drop in attendance. It is down about 6% from 1st Quarter of the previous year.
- iii) There has also been a small increase in the per person collection amount.
- iv) It is hard to say what the parish might be able to expect in terms of a longer trend in terms of attendance and giving.
- v) The parish received the rebate from the Annual Appeal. The amount was just above \$36,000 and it will go as a payment to Ss. James & John School. The other large expense was the \$58,000 that the parish had to pay for the Archdiocesan Cathadraticum tax.
 - (1) The Cathadraticum provides support to parishes in need. There are areas—charitable ministries of church—that are exempt from this tax. The parish receives services (e.g. legal aid, accounting, etc.) that are paid for with the funds from this tax.
- vi) The approved budget for this year has over \$100,000 deficit.
- vii) There is not much that is significantly different from what was expected.
- viii) Thoughts from Council Members:
 - (1) Father Ray asked, "Is it possible for us to gain some understanding about what is going on? Why the decrease in attendance? Is there anything we could do regarding these trends?" He suggested that there is some value in thoughtfully assessing the situation so that we might gain some understanding. He also mentioned writing letters to known individuals who have left the parish.
 - (2) Amber would like to hear thoughts on why these trends are happening. She is also interested in putting what is happening at our parish in context of what is happening at other parishes to gain perspective on what is "normal" (e.g. people moving), and how we fit into bigger picture;
 - (3) Gerry F. brought up Evangelization & "welcoming former parishioners back home"
 - (4) Al R. asked, "Can we get a report on attendance from the Archdiocese?"

- (5) Fr. Ray & Colleen said they will put their heads together to come up with ideas for a policy/method by which we, as a parish community, continue to care for those who have stopped attending. In the meantime, Colleen asked that people email her or Fr. Ray to report absences.
- (6) Peggy M. suggested that if the Pastoral Care Committee were resurrected, it would cover some of these things.
- (7) The Council will continue to talk about this at next meeting.

d) *Liturgy Committee (LC)*

- i) The LC is working on its Advent program: Building the Peaceable World
- ii) The LC will provide an explanation to the parish regarding theme in end of November-beginning of December.
- iii) There will be a new banner by Janice.
- iv) The LC is working to finalize its document on "For Liturgy Planners."
- v) The LC is ready for Advent & Christmas.

e) *Social Action Committee (SAC)*

- i) Peggy shared some programming happening in the area:
 - (1) Sat. Nov. 16, "Showing Up for Racial Justice," working with MD legislatures.
 - (a) 10-1p meeting
 - (b) Jack Schmidt is attending.
 - (2) The New Ronald McDonald House
 - (a) On Thursdays there is a vehicle out front from 3-5p passing out treats to the community.
 - (i) We discussed doing some sort of formal outreach to families at the Ronal McDonald House to invite them to come to St. V's for support, guidance, etc.
- ii) Peggy S. reported that the craft sale made about \$2800.
- iii) The numbers have dropped for Friday night dinners in Oct. Some possible reasons are that 1. The Weinberg Center is doing dinners and 2. the park remains closed.
 - (1) Related to the closure of the park, the Police have been proactive on monitoring the Shot Tower & Memorial area; there has been less drug activity over there.

f) *ALIVE*

- i) Alana shared that there is a lot being planned for next year.
- ii) Some upcoming events include:
 - (1) Advent Prayer service on Dec. 3 7p—joint event
 - (a) Planned by w/ advent theme
 - (b) Open to everyone
 - (2) Presentation that Fr. James Martin gave; on Alive website; Very well done
 - (a) Might have view next year to bring people together
 - (3) Social Ministry Convocation
 - (a) Feb. 29, 2020

- (b) Workshop on Issues relating to LGBTQ+ community
- (c) Sharing info on Ministries

g) *Ad Hoc Committee*

- i) Monday (11/11) had mass for BWATCH (We Are The Church—Baltimore)
 - (1) After mass had discussion while had dinner together
 - (2) Real spiritual bonding around what we're trying to do in church reform, & where we're trying to grow internally
 - (3) Invited 14 bishops to come, but they had their own mass. Some replied to the invitation even though they couldn't attend.
 - (4) Reform process is long haul
 - (5) Trying to get together to build some kind of coalition so BWATCH can speak more from the same path

5) Old Business

a) *Update on Park*

- i) Colleen, Brian, Mike Kelly, Joe Yingling and Fr. Ray have been meeting to discuss future of park.
- ii) Topics of Discussion include:
 - (1) The importance of the discussion taking place within a Gospel reference
 - (2) Focusing on the importance of the park, in of itself—i.e./ greening of the park, impact of aesthetic of nature on those who visit
 - (3) The diverse understanding of the parish on those who frequent the park
 - (4) The parish affirming the park as an important commitment to social justice
 - (5) Consistent multi-form messaging (internal & external) about the park
 - (6) The importance to clear messaging to those who do not show care for park or others in park
 - (7) That everybody will be held responsible for care of park and others, and will be held accountable
 - (8) Drawing those who use park into the conversation regarding park use
 - (9) Determining accessibility of park--restricted to certain days/times?
 - (10) Determination of ongoing problems concerning donors
- iii) There are many facets to the relationship between the park & the community
- iv) The goal is to have concrete proposals by the next council meeting and to present recommendations to council & parish

b) Continued Conversation regarding Constitutions/Charters

- i) Language for executive community & council
- ii) Fr. Ray, Amber and Colleen have discussed potentially changing the way that the voting structure is currently organized in constitution
 - (1) It is a fuzzy area in the constitution
 - (2) Currently done by consensus
 - (3) Voting is designed to be used with items that are time sensitive where the Council cannot reach a consensus in a single meeting
 - (4) The Constitution says that voting limited to reps & corporators
- iii) Concern about changing constitution
 - (1) Need to submit for approval?

- (a) No indication
- (2) Worth trying to think about how things work?
- (3) More exploring regarding what changes would be made
- iv) To Be Continued...

6) New Business

- a) *2018-2019 Report*
 - i) Tabled for future discussion
 - ii) Email group if there are any questions
- b) *Evangelization*
 - i) Tabled for future discussion