

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
of St. Vincent de Paul Church  
July 9th, 2013**

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Audrey Rogers at 7:33 pm and started with a group prayer.

**In attendance:** Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Audrey Rogers, *President, 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Sara Kelley, *Vice President, 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Rosie Graf, *Secretary, 9:30 Mass Rep.*; John Kober, Sr., *7:15 Mass Rep.*; Bethany Gregg, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; Ray Heil, *Social Action Committee Co-Chair*; David Potts and Dan Rolandelli, *Facility Committee Co-Chairs*; Laureen Brunelli, *Communications and Outreach Committee Chair*; Maureen Fitzsimmons, *Finance Committee Chair*; Anne Marie Freeburger, *Corporator* and Nan Astone *presenting Good Shepherd Program*.

**Missing:**

Denise Hamilton, *11:45 Mass Rep.*; John Helie, *Liturgy Committee Chair*; Kathi Jeffra, *(though September) Education and Enrichment Committee Chair*; and Graham Yearley, *Corporator*.

**Pastor's Report**

Fr. Lawrence thanked all for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and informed the council that he moved July 1- 2<sup>nd</sup> and is still unpacking. The cat moved a week later because she was resistant to leaving. All are welcome to visit but there is no parking in the Scarlett Place building. Visitors should use street parking but be aware that ticketing occurs after 3 hours. Fr. Lawrence is visibly maintaining things here in the rectory but moving his living quarters there. The library and living room will not be cleared out completely until Labor Day.

**Status Report on Catholic Churches of Central City [CCCC]**

Fr. Lawrence shared that the representatives of the five parishes continue to meet to compare notes on policies and programs. The RCIA teams had hoped to start a common program in the fall but are moving slowly. The cluster parishes have a meeting with Bishop Madden on July 12. They will discuss the CCCC plan, which was submitted last year and also address the CCCC response to the Archbishop's preliminary plan earlier this year.

**Finance Report/ FY14 Budget**

Maureen Fitzsimmons thanked Barbara Hodnett for the extra effort it took to provide the information for the annual report because of the delay in receiving monthly statements. In preparing the FY14 budget, Maureen also created an annual and monthly fixed cost analysis for Council's review within the context of estimated annual and monthly income. This 'fixed cost – offertory income' analysis shows a *monthly* shortfall of \$5K; when maintenance, supplies, and programs are factored in, we are almost \$23K short *per month*. This annual deficit is not new; it has been offset in previous years by one large annual donation which has allowed us to maintain the *status quo*. Most of the annual

donation received in March was used to cover FY13, leaving approximately \$50K in cash to offset the monthly deficits until March 2014 which is frankly untenable financially. Parishioners are not aware of these conditions and the Council discussed ways to remedy this situation. The Finance Committee only received the proposed FY14 budget Monday evening and declined to forward it to Council for approval pending their closer review. It will be submitted in August.

### **Strategic Planning Proposal**

Audrey Rogers presented some material on “*The Parish Council as Communio in Action*” obtained from the National Leadership Roundtable presentations at the Mid Atlantic Conference that Audrey, Laureen and Chris attended in March, 2013. Audrey proposed that the Council should operate this year by planning and decision-making that is mission-driven, data-informed, and discernment-derived. This includes accurately and carefully assessing our current reality to know who we are, what are we offering, and what are the key areas in which we need to invest time and talent. An Ad Hoc Committee was requested last month to start this information-gathering process. This phase will include broad consultation with the parish community. The data from this phase will be used by a Strategic Planning Committee (to be identified and recruited later in the year) to study the data, explore viable options, identify resources, and propose evaluation measures to Council. The Council will enter into a discernment process to choose among the options and produce a ‘thin plan’ that lays out a vision and goals. The work of adding programmatic ‘flesh’ to this plan will fall to staff and committees. The built-in evaluation measures will assist in fine-tuning programs or adding/deleting efforts, giving us flexibility and responsiveness. The Council approved moving ahead with this kind of strategy. The strategic planning will start after data collection is complete (which may be as early as November). **Note:** While our planning process will be focused on our own parish’s needs, efforts, programs and evangelization, it will certainly be coordinated with the planning of our parish cluster (Catholic Churches of Central City) and the Archbishop’s reorganization plans for the Archdiocese.

### **Annual Objectives for the 2013-2014 Parish Council**

The Parish Council accepted the following objectives for the upcoming year:

1. Establish a Five Year Strategic Plan
  - A. Undertake and complete the data collection phase of strategic planning;
    1. Form Ad Hoc Group to collect and analyze data;
    2. Communicate process to the parish community and invite participation in various response and feedback exercises.
  - B. Undertake and complete strategic planning focusing on mission and mission support activities, articulating the *theological* (why), the *pastoral* (what), and the *temporal* (how);
    1. Form Ad Hoc Group to process data reports and draft a strategic plan for Parish Council review;
    2. Review, discuss, debate, and revise as indicated the Ad Hoc Committee’s draft strategic plan and approve it for implementation.

## 2. Revise the Parish Budget Presentation Process

Devise and implement a budget process that integrates finances and assets, understandably presenting all revenue and expenses, allowing for modeling of the parish planning, and clearly aligning staff positions and expenses to parish planning;

- a. Direct Finance Committee to work with the Ad Hoc Committee(s) to produce a more coherent budget process;
- b. Communicate an understandable report on revenues and expenses to the parish community;
- c. Identify and provide up-to-date mechanisms for parishioner donations;

## 3. Immediately Address Identified Needs of Families with Young Children

Establish a structure and process for addressing the needs of families with young children in the parish community.

- a. Build on information from these families collected in Spring 2013;
- b. Establish a Family Life Subcommittee under the Education and Enrichment Committee with a mission and scope;
- b. Identify individuals to coordinate specific activities within this subcommittee.

## **Old Business:**

### **Issues in the Park**

Colleen McCahill requested the Council to address the policies for the park last spring. **Sara Kelley** volunteered in June to follow-up with Colleen. Problems include lack of weekend volunteers to clear and clean the park, needed repairs to the benches and chains, and attention to the status of the arrangement with the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore which (we assume) has been offering their services to the park through a contract with the local hotel owners. The Park Working Group, under the Facilities Committee, was active when first organized but has ceased to function effectively. Issues in the park continue to spill over to the whole St V campus. The Facilities Committee is organizing under the new leadership of Dave Potts and Dan Rolandelli and Sara will coordinate with them to identify the issues and resources to move this forward.

### **Parish Council Retreat**

Sara reported that the retreat date is Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9:30 am -1:00 pm with continental breakfast from 9:30-10:00 am. The agenda will consist of an activity using an abbreviated version of the Meyers Briggs, how each of our personality types might interact with consensus decision-making, a discussion of a short video on parish councils and the Council's constitutional responsibilities.

## **New Business:**

### **Family Life Subcommittee**

Chris conducted a focus group with parishioners with children to explore what programming young families want. From these results, a survey ascertaining interest and likelihood of participation was developed and distributed in April. Audrey worked with

**Bethany Gregg** to develop a mission statement for a Family Life Subcommittee and Bethany presented the mission and the establishment of this subcommittee to Council for approval. Bethany also noted that she has recruited parent volunteers to staff each of the five mission areas (parental enrichment/education, communication, social and service projects, and family-based activities). The Council approved this subcommittee as an adjunct to the standing Education and Enrichment Committee and encouraged the new Family Life Subcommittee to coordinate their efforts with FFF and sacramental preparation for children.

### **Catechesis of Good Shepherd**

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd [CGS] is a religious education program for children aged 3-12 focused on story telling the parables and experiential play on the parables' themes, based on the Montessori Method of education. It is national program, well recognized and well loved by the participating parents. **Bethany Gregg** was exposed to the program when living in Seattle although her daughters were too young to participate. **Nan Astone**, who has taught in St V FFF for 22 years, has her daughter enrolled in a DC program, and enthusiastically spoke of the experience. Bethany and Nan propose that the CGS program for children 3 – 6 years old take the place of FFF for that age group. The directors of the program do need training and the program itself will need resources and funding. Bethany, Nan, and **Anne Gibson** have met with CGS staff and visited parishes in Baltimore conducting the program. All involved feel this will be an attraction to parents who will want their children to receive this catechesis and the council agrees. This item was brought to Council for information-only at this time. Council encouraged the team to continue exploring options associated with their proposal.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Liturgy Committee** – John Helie, Chair; Valerie Rolandelli, Vice-Chair

- Summer Series on the Eucharist is currently underway for July 6-7; July 13-14; and July 20-21 using Part 2 of the Rolheiser book, *Our One Great Act of Fidelity*. We will conclude this series with three Sundays in 2014.
- The Liturgy Committee Retreat will be August 24 from 10 am to 1 pm. Topics will include planning for committee goals/objectives for 2013-2014; the structure and meeting schedule of the Liturgy Committee; and planning and restructuring the Lenten/Holy Week Services using feedback received from the parish survey for Lent-Easter.

**Education and Enrichment Committee** – Kathi Jeffra, Chair

- The committee has not met since June Council meeting; next meeting is scheduled for July 15<sup>th</sup> to identify new chair and discuss evaluation data from retreat.

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

- Friday Dinner for the Hungry: We continue to serve 150-250 guests each Friday evening. We began distributing United Way cards to help people in need learn who can help them.
- Peace & Justice Subcommittee: We attended the BRIDGE overnight retreat to plan agendas for the next two years.
- Environmental Focus: We are still working to get solar panels for the rectory but the Archdiocese is reviewing the project since it is a capital improvement. Exelon (BG&E's parent corporation) approved our grant request for \$10,000.
- Beyond the Boundaries: We participated in the Beyond the Boundaries planning meeting.
- Peace Focus: The President of Loyola agreed to start classes for peace or integrate "peace" into existing classes but is now requesting funding.
- The Resource Exchange: We supplied 6 individuals, whom Healthcare for the Homeless placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in June.
- Jonestown Planning Council: We did not meet the first week of June.
- St V Park: Christopher Place's manager is checking to see if they can help us at all on Saturday mornings in the park.
- Emergency Services: The men's program gave clothing to 46 men in June and spent about \$500. Expense for the food program will be reported in August.
- Other activities: We held the Pax Christi DC meeting at St. Vincent's. We financially supported San Juan de Limay.

**Facilities Committee** – Dave Potts and Dan Rolandelli, Co-Chairs

This committee will meet on July 29 to reorganize under its new leadership. In the interim, Chris submitted this report:

- Work on the restoration of the last south facing stained glass in the Church is scheduled almost complete. A contract for restoration work on the west windows is in process. Work is being done to look for grant money to create a scope of work for the restoration of the exterior of St. Vincent de Paul Church.
- There is no progress on the insurance company regarding reimbursing the cost of joist repair in the upper croft.
- We have yet to receive confirmation on the exemption from the city's requirement to get a permit for our undercroft kitchen.
- St. V's received a \$10,000 grant from BG&E for the purpose of adding a solar array to its roof. An application has been submitted to the diocesan offices to move forward with the project.
- Bids are still being collected for the repair of the structural damage under Fr. Chuck's tub.
- Hirsch Electric was out to examine the rectory doorbell. The problem was diagnosed and parts ordered for its repair.
- The gutters on the south side of the church continue to clog (with leaves) and overflow causing water to flood the undercroft as well as create potential damage to our newly restored windows. A complicating piece is the inadequate diameter

of the existing downspouts to accommodate heavy rainwater from the size of the large church roof.

- A security company was contacted to examine our property regarding the issue for the church and rectory. A proposal and breakdown of costs is being prepared. Once all information is gathered it will be brought to council for discussion.

**Communications and Outreach Committee** – Laureen Brunelli, Chair;  
Jackie Range, Vice-Chair

The C&O Committee has not met since the last Parish Council meeting. We have a meeting scheduled for July 14 to discuss the website management only.

- Social Media - The St. V Facebook page is now live. All can view it at <https://www.facebook.com/StVChurch>. People with Facebook accounts can “like” it and will receive a news stream with event updates and news stories. Currently we have pictures from the retreat up.
- New coverage of the Last Midnight Mass - Both *The Baltimore Sun* and *The Catholic Review* ran articles about the end of the Printer’s Masses at St. V. Links to the articles: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/bs-md-rodricks-0623-20130621,0,5334778.column> and <http://www.catholicreview.org/article/commentary/amen/put-a-30-on-the-printers-mass>.
- Registration/Directory - The directory is moving forward but will probably take a couple months to complete. We must submit the contact information roster for the publishing company which needs to come from the registration database. This database we have discovered has incomplete data and duplications of entries which we are scrambling to correct. We apologize for the delay. When all material is submitted to Lifetouch and we have a firm date on its completion, we will communicate that to the parish.

**Meeting Close**

Audrey requested meeting process evaluations from the council members and adjourned the meeting at 9:36 pm with the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer.

**Reminders:** The Next Parish Council Meeting is August 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm.  
The Parish Council Retreat is Saturday, Aug. 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9:30 am – 1:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by

Rosie Graf, Secretary to the Council