

MINUTES
Voice of the Faithful, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting
Face-to-Face Meeting April 22-23, 2016

Friday, April 22, 2016 – Meeting of Board Members only

During the executive session these topics were discussed:

The role of the Board

Fiduciary considerations

Our vision for VOTF

Our vision for the Church

Setting priorities

How to coordinate work of the BOT and the staff

How to fund our work

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Present: Mark Mullaney, Mary Pat Fox, Mary Freeman, Larry Mulligan, Mike Ryan, Phil Megna, Dave O'Brien, Anne Southwood, Donna Doucette, Executive Director and Nick Ingala, Communications Director

Not Present: Margaret Roylance (attending a Healing Circle at St. Anthony's Shrine, Boston)

An opening Prayer was offered by Mary Freeman.

Minutes of the March board meeting were approved.

Executive Director's Report

There were no specific questions or comments on the ED's Report.

A discussion followed concerning the best way to get VOTF's message across. Donna suggested that the trustees and staff need to share VOTF's message by making better use of media. The VOTF brochure "Become a 21st Century Disciple" was noted as an effective summary of who we are and what actions we plan to take. "Keep the faith, change the Church" was viewed as still being a powerful VOTF slogan.

Nick reminded the trustees that VOTF has a Facebook page and a blog and he explained how they can access the blog from VOTF's web page. Go to "Media" at the top of our homepage (www.votf.org) and the drop down menu will give you easy access to "In the Vineyard," the VOTF blog, and Nick's press releases and publications. Reviewing these periodically is an easy way to stay current with what VOTF is doing. Nick said that communication is key to our success and we all bear responsibility for spreading the message. He spoke about Ed Wilson who wrote letters to local papers and made comments on what was written about the Church in the paper. He was also available to be our spokesperson in the NY area if a radio show wanted an interview. We need "Ed Wilsons" all over our country to make people aware of what VOTF is doing.

Mark noted that it is difficult to generate the kind of interest that we once had in 2002 but we have several activities worth publicizing. Perhaps Healing Circles should have more visibility. Mark sent the trustees a copy of a laudatory letter sent by a priest who attended the Philadelphia Healing Circle. We have a Healing Circle planned for Omaha with six survivors participating.

We also plan to hold three Healing Circles in Ireland in the fall. There is also a Healing Circle planned for Minneapolis/St. Paul area for July 16.

We have other success stories. Donna and Svea Fraser are giving a presentation on the subject of “clericalism” at the AUSCP (Association of U.S. Catholic Priests) Assembly in Chicago in June. Donna, Svea and Mary Freeman have been asked to plan a vespers service for the Assembly. Donna will bring copies of the Healing Circle brochures to the Assembly. VOTF sent an open letter to Cardinal Kurtz, President of the USCCB, on the issue of collection security. Nick sent copies of the letter to religion writers and editors throughout the United States.

A dialogue between Nick and BOT focused on ways of enhancing our PR efforts. Phil said we need to establish relationships with the press and suggested taking religion editors out to lunch. Nick responded that he does keep in touch with religion editors but the media landscape has changed. He said VOTF currently uses Meltwater to take our PR and social media marketing to the next level. Mark asked how we can be more active. Nick said that he sent out e-mail information on *Amoris Laetitia* to 113 reporters and only 23 even opened it. If we want to appear regularly in the Catholic media we need to advertise and do it consistently. We also need to get on more radio talk shows. Mark asked what we can do to enhance our branding. Nick suggested we might consider expanding our mission.

Mark asked that Nick start with VOTF’s 2013 PR plan and include some specific suggestions to enhance our PR efforts for BOT consideration.

Financial Report

Anne submitted the Financial report, which was accepted by the board. She noted that VOTF’s projected revenue for next year is \$373,000. The situation of the Naples in Florida Affiliate was discussed. They have deactivated their 501(c)(3) and plan to work through National in the future. They are sending the National office their mailing list.

Development Report

Priscilla Deck sent her report to the board. It included her assessment of the “Spotlight” event which was very successful in raising money for Healing Circles and other VOTF projects and acquainting people with our work. She suggested that we make planned giving a priority next year.

At Priscilla’s request the board agreed to schedule their face-to-face meeting dates a year in advance for planning purposes. The next face-to-face meeting will be Nov. 11-12 and the spring meeting April 21-22, 2017. She also recommended that the Development and Financial reports continue to be issued monthly but the Executive Director’s Report be submitted quarterly instead of monthly. There was a suggestion that the board meetings be held every other month but the board agreed that monthly meetings served the organization better. It was agreed that meetings would **not** be held in December, July, and August. VOTF board meetings will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

Donna suggested we try using GoToMeeting for Trustee meetings. There would be no cost for 0 to 3 participants. If there were more than 3, the monthly cost would begin at \$14 a month. There is a free 30 day trial. Donna will look into it.

The Development report was approved.

Nominating Committee Report

Mary Freeman reported that Sandra Guynn from Great Falls, Montana has agreed to serve on the board. Mary read a brief biographical piece that she received from Sandra. The board accepted Mary's recommendation.

Mark presented the officers for next year:

President – Mary Pat Fox

Vice President – Margaret Roylance

Treasurer – Anne Southwood

Secretary – Larry Mulligan

The slate was unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Activity Update

Statue of Limitations: Francis Piderit of the NYC affiliate is working with groups interested in extending NY's Statute of Limitation legislation for victims of child abuse.

Healing Circles: Several Circles are planned in the next six months. Facilitator training will be held at Suffolk University in Boston in July. The cost is \$4,300.

Financial Transparency and Accountability: We need funding for this effort, and Priscilla is doing groundwork for grant applications. We are looking for a database manager for our Diocesan Financial Accountability portal. Phil offered to have his accountant meet with our Financial Accountability working group.

Women's Roles: A suggestion was made to look at women's roles from a social justice point of view. Are Church workers paid a living wage and is women's pay equal to men's? How might we obtain information about Parish finances? Mary Freeman will find out if there are salary guidelines.

Bishop Selection: It was suggested that Jack Doyle should write to the new US Vatican Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, to inform him of our relationship with his predecessor, Carlo Maria Vigano. We had an agreement between VOTF's Bishop Selection portal and the Archbishop that he would receive email from the portal.

Child Protection: Pat Gomez will continue with Child Protection.

The meeting concluded with a prayer by Phil.

The next BOT meeting will be held on May 17, 2016.