

MINUTES

Voice of the Faithful, Inc.

Board of Trustees Meeting, January 27, 2015

Present via Conference Call: Larry Mulligan, Mary Freeman, Patricia Gomez, Mary Pat Fox, Anne Southwood, Philip Megna, Margaret Roylance, Mike Ryan President Mark Mullaney, Executive Director Donna Doucette; Jayne O'Donnell called in to give the Development Report.

President Mark Mullaney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Mark Mullaney

Draft minutes of the November meeting were reviewed and approved.

Finance Report – Presented by Anne Southwood who noted that we need to work on a strategy for increasing monthly donors whose number has been decreasing.

Executive Director's Report – Donna reported on status of the December appeal and indicated that we hope to have our new website online by the end of January. She also reported on her effort to support AUSCP, which is going well. She reported that Alan Doulton, representing a Catholic reform group from India, was visiting in NYC and had contacted VOTF about meeting with some of our members. We put him in touch with Francis Piderit who arranged a meeting. Alan has also been in touch with Jamie Dance of Bridgeport, CT. His group has put together a “diocesan health check” and has asked us to see if any of our affiliates would be interested in administering it in their diocese.

Healing Circle – The second Healing Circle will be held January 31 in Virginia with 15 participants and on March 25 there will be a Healing Circle in Naples, FL. By the time of the Assembly in Hartford CT we will have had the experience of three Healing Circles. The Boston committee facilitators paid for their own way to participate in the Healing Circle in Virginia and the local affiliate emptied their coffers to support the Healing Circle held there. In Florida a foundation gave some money toward the Healing Circle expense. Bill Casey and Jim Connell will present the Healing Circle workshop in Hartford.

Finance Working Group – FWG prepared a letter sent by Mark to Cardinal Pell on January 14th offering to share our diocesan financial data and highlighting our partnership with the CLSA.

VOTF Assembly – Jayne O'Donnell reported on the plans for the Assembly in April 18 2015. Everyone was encouraged to register as soon as possible. The current plan is for 4-6 workshops: Financial Accountability, presenting the new web portal and focusing financial reporting in the Diocese of Venice in Florida, Women and the diaconate, Tom Doyle and survivors, Restorative Justice/Healing Circles. The Board also supported a workshop on the Family Synod.

Mary Freeman presented the Working Group Initiative Report, which is appended below.

8:37 PM - The meeting ended with a prayer.

Initiative Report from Mary Freeman:

Protection of Children: Pat Gomez

The Office of Child and Youth Protection of the US Bishops has recently released items for April: Child Abuse Awareness Month. Their slogan now includes the word healing: “Promise to Protect; Pledge to Heal,” which ties in with VOTF focus on Healing Circle.

1. Pat will prepare VOTF news items for February & March distribution, and include resources for local parish based actions, including suggested Bulletin announcements for April.
2. The National Review Board is currently chaired by **Francesco Cesareo, Ph.D., Chairman**, who is president of Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts. Because he is “local” it may be possible to have a conversation with him about the current focus of the Review Board. Pat is thinking that an interview with him would provide a nice lead-in for a *Vineyard* article about April: Abuse Prevention Month.

Women’s Role in the Church: Pat Gomez

1. Working to update our multiple resources for the website.
2. Putting together a program for the Assembly that would turn talk into action (search not fruitful yet). I should have an update by Tuesday.

Married Priests: Ron Dubois

No specific activity planned.

Bishop Selection: Info from Nick Ingala

A group of Catholics in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, called the Ambrosians of Greensburg PA put together an online petition, which currently has more than 400 signatures:

<http://www.greensburgnextbishop.org>.

Last year, Catholics in NY formed the Albany (N.Y.) Bishop Search committee, to help in the search for their new Bishop. More recently, Concerned Catholics of Vermont worked to be included in the search for their Bishop. Bishop Coyne was recently installed. This year, 6 bishops will turn 75, the mandatory retirement age for bishops.

Survivor Support: Bill Casey

The second Healing Circle is scheduled for Sat., Jan. 31, at the Virginia Theological Seminary. Fifteen participants are confirmed, including Jim Connell, Jan Ruidl, Jayne and Bill from the RJ Committee, and Mary Pat, and others who reflect the composition of the initial one in Boston. It is scheduled from 8 am-5pm. The third one is scheduled for March 25 in Naples FL but details are not yet set since the affiliate board just approved the HC to be held on Thursday of this week. The committee hopes to draw on the three HCs as the primary basis for the workshop at the April assembly.

Financial Transparency and Accountability: Mike Ryan/Margaret Roylance

1. Parish Financial Accountability - Mike Ryan

Parish Financial Accountability project was highlighted “In The Vineyard” on 1/16/15. It encouraged readers to take the [Financial IQ Test](#): a simple yes/no assessment to see how secure their own parish's collections are and help parishioners tighten security against theft. Mike also completed a handout on Sunday collection security that could be included in each registrant’s packet at the April Assembly, or be made available at the handout table for those who have an interest in the topic. It is being reviewed.

2. Diocesan Financial Accountability and Transparency - Margaret Roylance

The Finance Working Group met on January 10, 2015 and discussed a couple on ongoing initiatives.

Joe Finn has drafted a letter to Cardinal Pell offering to share our diocesan financial reporting data. Joe’s intention was that it would be sent jointly from the CLSA and VOTF, and also offer to share the CLSA Canon Law study. Mark and Joe agreed to coordinate with the CLSA and work together to send the letter.

Plans for the Assembly - We are planning to roll out the VOTF financial portal at the meeting, which will include a lot of information on diocesan financial reporting on line. We are considering presenting a case study on financial reporting in a specific diocese at the Assembly this year, highlighting how reporting can be used to share or hide information.