

MINUTES

Voice of the Faithful, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting, September 20, 2016

Present via Conference Call: Mark Mullaney, Anne Southwood, Mary Pat Fox, Mike Ryan, Margaret Roylance, Sandra Guynn, Dave O'Brien, and Phil Megna (late). Also present: Executive Director Donna B. Doucette; Development Director Priscilla Deck.

Absent: Larry Mulligan (out of country)

President Mary Pat Fox called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

No Minutes were available from the June meeting, so they will be presented at a later meeting for approval.

Opening Prayer: Margaret Roylance provided the opening prayer, which she prefaced with these words:

In the name of God Who shares divinity with us,
In the name of God Who shares humanity with us,
In the name of God Who inspires us
Let us give thanks and praise.

Initial Remarks: Mary Pat began the meeting reminding the Board of her request that they listen to the reports without interruption. If there are questions, they will be addressed after the conclusion of each report. She said that the Officers had met the previous evening and discussed ways to keep VOTF viable.

Financial and Development Reports: Donna and Anne gave the financial reports. The bottom line is that we currently are bringing in about ¾ of the revenue needed to operate at the current level. Our present financial situation is both a challenge and an opportunity. Other non-profits working towards church reform experience similar situations. Currently the political situation also is exacerbating the problems that non-profits in the \$250,000 to \$700,00 revenue category typically experience.

Priscilla reported that she sent out personal letters to our most loyal supporters and had a positive response. But the summer efforts to identify potential major donors were disappointing because only a couple of trustees provided the introductions requested. Priscilla said that she is here as a Development lead to assist but needs the Board's help. She used the analogy of "Stone Soup" as an expression of her frustration with the lack of response.

Priscilla also has talked to several family foundations, but we do not qualify for most of the funds because we are a church-specific advocacy group.

The panel discussion in Rockport with members of the “Spotlight” reporting team and a showing of the film was well received. Also well-received was the event with the Chanoffs, which was held in conjunction with Boston College’s C21 program. These are examples of both friend-raising and fund-raising opportunities. Priscilla is now working on a presentation by Ron Heifetz of the Kennedy School at Harvard for Saturday, Oct. 29, in conjunction with the next Board meeting. He is an international expert in Adaptive Leadership.

Project Reports: Margaret reported on the **Financial Accountability** project. One member of the working group, Joe Finn, is leading an effort to collaborate with the Canon Law Society. He has tabulated information from our Diocesan Financial database to share with the Society. The group also is working on an evaluation and grade for each diocese. Other members of the working group are Mike Ryan, Sandra Guynn, Mark Mullaney, and David Castaldi.

For project development, Mary Pat emphasized that we need to stick to our mission and goals. She was interrupted by Dave O’Brien and Phil Megna. Dave said that he had called the Massachusetts Attorney General office and was told that trustees have a legal responsibility to spend funds however they need to in order to keep the organization running. Other trustees pointed out that restricted funds can be spent only for the purposes for which they were donated. Also, failure to adhere to our mission and goals would jeopardize the 501(c)3 status which is given by the federal government, not the state. Anne said the fiduciary responsibility of trustees is to use our funds to further the goals of the organization. Dave said he would write a legal brief for October proving Anne is wrong.

Phil questioned the costs of the Healing Circles. Donna explained that most of the money for Healing Circles has come from restricted funds that were donated specifically for that purpose. Others have donated services in order to keep the cost of each Circle as low as feasible.

Other trustees spoke to the efforts that promote our name recognition, the need to remain in synch with members, and the projects that grow naturally from our mission and goals.

The Board went into executive session.