

Minutes (Final)
Board of Trustees Meeting (at VOTF office and teleconference)
Voice of the Faithful, Inc.
January 25, 2011, 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM Eastern

Board Members Present: Elia Marnik (presiding and phone), Bill Casey (phone), Pat Gomez (phone), Ron DuBois (VOTF office), Ed Wilson (phone), Mary Pat Fox (phone), John Hushon (not on call) Jayne O'Donnell (absent first part of meeting and phone), Dan Bartley (phone) Mary Freeman (phone) and Mark Mullaney (phone)

Officers Present: Janet Hauter (phone), Kevin Connor (phone), and Nick Mazza (phone)

Executive Director: Donna Doucette (office), Julie Dutcher (Development and office).

Opening Prayer: Dan – Creative Spirit

Administrative Matters: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the consent agenda items and minutes to the November 23, 2010 meeting by a vote of 9 yeas- 0 no- 2 absent).

Finances: Treasurer Kevin Connors reported that we are meeting both our revenue and expense budgeted goals. Our financial position is now in the SAFE category. One positive aspect to our financial position is the success of the development program and specifically the most recent Christmas mailing.

Development Committee Report: Julie Dutcher, Development Associate indicated that the development program is progressing along well. As of January 17th we have reached approximately \$305,000 of our \$545,000 goal. Julie commented that we can make the goal by the end of this fiscal year.

The Emily and Rosemary Fund: The following is the presentation made by Mary Freeman during the BOT call:

We received 6 applications. Three (3) were rejected because they did not meet the criteria –

1. **to support women in financial need who have lost church employment as a result of discrimination or other injustices;**
2. **to financially support women who are working on projects / programs designed to advance the equality of women in the Church.**

The 3 that we selected were Paula Beaton (TX), Cathy Roldan (CA), and Keisha Veryser (MI).

1. Paula Beaton was an employee of the diocese for 20 years and editor of the diocesan paper. She was forced to resign when she met with the bishop to tell him that she intended to marry a former priest. She was only given her accrued vacation pay and nothing else. She needs the money for 2 courses to finish her degree. This will improve her chances of getting a job in a service agency or ministry. She knows that these positions usually require a degree. (\$3K)

2. Cathy Roland lost her position as Director of Religious Education after reporting an abusive boss/priest. She will finish her bachelor's degree in counseling. (\$5K)

3. Keisha Veryser was the principal of a school and was falsely accused of embezzlement by a priest. Priests who defended her were told by the bishop to stay out of it. The offending priest has since had other outbursts in the parish and was finally removed in December 2010. She will use the money for legal fees in the suit she has brought against the diocese. (\$7,500)

Next steps –

Letters sent to all applicants with a closing statement that is particular to each person. Checks will be included where approved.

A member of the committee will check in with the recipients in 3 months to follow up on the situation.

We are no applicants yet for the next round. The closing date for applications is 2/1/11.

There is approximately \$33,000 left in the fund.

The Board of Trustees discussed the Fund monetary balance including additional possibilities for donations and interest on the remaining cash in the Fund as the Fund approaches the third round of applicants. The agreed upon administrative fee must be considered as well.

It was generally agreed that a more assertive public relations effort will be beneficial. The Board voted on the recommended grantees and their monetary awards. The following resolution was offered:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approve the monetary award for each of the three individual candidates approved by the Fund committee. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the awarding of the monetary grants by a vote of 9 yeas, 0 no's and 2 absent.

Trustee Nominations and Advisory Council Report: Chair Elia Marnik indicated that she was very pleased to announce the members of our VOTF Board Advisory Council. The first meeting will be Wednesday, January 26, 2011. These members are:

1. Francine Cardman PhD, Associate Professor of Historical Theology and Church History, Boston College
2. Paul Lakeland Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies, Director of the Center of Catholic Studies, Fairfield University
3. William D'Antonio PhD, Adjunct Research Professor, Life Cycle Institute, Catholic University
4. Sister Christine Shenk CSJ, Executive Director of Future Church
5. James E. Post, Esq., Professor, Markets, Public Policy and Law, Boston University

Elia further mentioned that these descriptions are but a microcosm of the works, honors and accomplishments of these esteemed individuals. A formal letter of appointment went out to each of these members under her signature. We may all take great pride in the fact that respected

professionals such as these readily and with great enthusiasm agreed to serve on this Council. A formal press release was approved by all five members. The Council will meet approximately 4 or 5 times a year and Elia will be their contact. Additionally, MarCom may use their names on letterhead.

Elia further emphasized the experience; gender and geographic profile are varied. There are two women and three men, two are theologians, and two are versed in church history and one on VOTF history. Geographically, two are from the Boston area, one from Ohio, one from Washington, DC and one from Connecticut.

The committee made a point to compliment Elia on a great job she did in working with these candidates to bring them to accept the positions with the Council.

Survey Committee: Mary Pat Fox provided a summary of the committee's progress to date. The team had a conference last evening on Monday January 24. The conference call was very productive.

Our survey consultant, Joanne, indicated that she would contact Francis Piderit to solicit his insights on the survey's presentation and format.

Everyone on the call agreed that the focus of the survey should be to find out what our members think about the action projects of VOTF and if they are adequate and, if not, how should it change. This would include a description on how the VIA Initiatives were established.

The timing of the annual report is important and Donna is working on the details of the report so that respondents refer to the report when the survey is conducted. Work continues and future progress is anticipated.

Leadership Reports: President Dan Bartley reported on a number of projects that the Officer's are managing. He is pleased that our financial position is moving in a stable direction. The Core Leadership Teams are being asked to identify two specific actionable goals that can be accomplished this calendar year. A template is being developed that will assist the various initiative teams in presenting their specific projects, goals and objectives for this year.

Dan asked Nick Mazza and Janet to report on the conference call between the Bishop Selection team and the Chicago leadership team. The national team provided a history of the initiative in developing the document on Bishop Selection that was distributed to the Vatican and the US Bishops.

Discussion on the practicalities of accomplishing a successful campaign in Chicago was discussed. Jim Rooney outlined the scope and organization needed in order to spearhead this effort successfully in Chicago. Of primary concern is the development of feedback from the Chicago Catholic community. The scope and usefulness of a survey instrument was discussed as well as the participation of Cardinal George and diocesan groups of clergy and laity.

The Women's Initiative, although moving slowly, is working on drafts of their document on women in the church. Unfortunately, team head Kathleen Kichline is no going to continue to serve in this capacity; she will continue to assist the team with finalizing the women's document.

Priest's Initiative: Ed Wilson has established a team of committed individuals and is getting the team together. He will have more to report on shortly.

Other VIA Initiatives mentioned were the Protecting Children/Supporting Survivor's specifically Bill Casey and Jayne O'Donnell efforts to have supervised development of a new area on the VOTF web site where the resources and information developed by CPSS will be accessible to all Catholics. The area will include a forum for the stories of survivor and their families as well as the statute of limitation document, The Local Action Affiliate tool kit and best practices resources for parishes, and the success of the Spiritual and Communal Growth's successful e-mail campaign that brought in new members. This Team has been the most consistent (and persistent) in providing updates for posting to the web site and keeping their web offerings and notes to members "fresh."

Janet reported that the task of planning for the ACC is overwhelming and the clock is ticking. Currently there are 550 registered attendees, planning for the breakout sessions is underway and once the brochure is published attendance should increase as well. Logistics is a big job now and it involves scheduling rooms and planning transportation. All planning for the Council are very hopeful. VOTF's Friday morning meeting at the Marriott will commence at 10:00 AM to 11:30 and the afternoon session will run from 1:00PM to 3:30PM approximately. The ACC opens at 4:00 PM at Cobo Hall just down the street from the Marriott.

Officer/MarCom Initiatives:

Financial Accountability: Given that Jason Berry's book has been delayed until May/June coupled with the recurrent themes of financial mismanagement occurring, the team felt that it might be a good focus to develop a website that parallels Bishop Accountability but reports on Financial Accountability. There is one man who has done some work in this area and there is an effort to find out who he is and magnify his work on a broader scale. Members of MarCom and the Officers were asked to generate five questions detailing what they might look for if such a site were made available to give us parameters within which to structure such a site. Such a website is complex and requires some proactive thinking so that all elements are developed as the facts are populated into the design. We are excited about this project as it holds many innovative opportunities for people to visit our site and engage with us about the issue.

Officer priorities for 2011:

The officers are having preliminary discussions about our priorities for 2011 and have asked the VIA leadership teams to have a similar discussion. Thus far:

- Promotional measures for the ACC
- Developing a strategy for affiliate growth
- Vatican II initiative (celebration of 50th anniversary of V2)
- Development of a "Financial Accountability Website"
- Survey of VOTF members on key issues facing the organization

Executive Director’s Report: Donna Doucette, Executive Director, in the interest of time presented her report on new membership. This issue is featured in her report and is presented as follows:

New Members & Membership Totals

Attachment: New Members 2010

In calendar year 2010 we added more than 500 new members. The attachment shows the numbers per month; the spikes are contemporaneous with acquisition mailers we sent out. Also included on the charts are data about donations made at the time of registration and donations made over the course of the entire year by new members. Generally speaking, roughly half the new members donate at registration.

Coupled with this news, here is a report from Donna Salacuse about our total membership. As I noted in an email last week, we now have **more than 40,000 members in our database:**

Number records	33,210	
Plus spouses	4,821	
Plus Unknowns	3,273	(who open our emails; some “convert” to donors every year)
Minus DE,IG,WF	<u>654</u>	(deceased, inactive with gift, leadership spouse)
Total	40,650	

Other Business: Discussion took place on the preferred date for the upcoming Board face-to-face meeting. The group voted to meet on the weekend of March 25th instead of meeting in April and attending the Boston College conference and meeting at the Historical Society.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm (10-0-1 absent). The next scheduled Board meeting is set for Tuesday, February 22, 2011 at 7:00 PM EST.