

**Minutes**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting (at the VOTF office)**  
**Voice of the Faithful, Inc.**  
**September 22, 2009**  
**7:00 pm – 10:00 pm**

**Board Members Present:** Bill Casey (presiding, phone), Dan Bartley (phone), Ron DuBois (phone), Svea Fraser (phone), Pat Gomez (phone), John Hushon (phone), Mary Pat Fox (phone), Elia Marnik (phone), Jayne O'Donnell (phone), Ed Wilson (phone).

**Officers Present:** Kevin Connors (phone), Julie McConville (phone).

**Executive Director:** Donna Doucette.

**Opening Prayer** was led by Ron DuBois.

**1. Administrative Matters:**

a. Upon a motion duly moved and seconded, the Board approved the minutes of August 25, 2009. (7-0-0)

**2. Finances:**

a. Treasurer Kevin Connors reported that as of August 31 VOTF had over \$90,000 in reserves and that VOTF's cash position is significantly improved due to the response of members to our financial crisis appeal in July.

b. Kevin cautioned that VOTF has not yet resolved its longer-term revenue-expense alignment.

c. VOTF's appeal for annual financial commitments by October 15 (payable by December 31) are off to a slower start than anticipated due to end of summer and beginning of a new school year. The office has recently mailed copies of the Strategic Plan and the request for financial commitments to 5000 members who have been generous contributors in the past. When the Board meets on October 30-November 1, it expects to have a realistic basis on which to set its annual budget.

**3. FY 10 Budget:**

a. BOT Chair Bill Casey reviewed the Board's decisions and the strategy it developed in July to address VOTF's cash reserve crisis, namely, (1) to stabilize VOTF's short-term financial condition; (2) to implement a sustained predictable funding source; (3) to resize the FY 10 budget consistent with the responses from members by October 15 for annual financial commitments and a reasonable expectation of an end-of-year appeal; and (4) to institute a fiduciary framework that precludes the recurrence of a precipitous decline in cash reserves.

b. President Dan Bartley outlined the key elements of a business plan framework that the Officers and Executive Director are currently drafting. It will be

implemented after determining likely revenue for the rest of FY 10 based on members' financial pledges due by October 15 and projected income from an end-of-year appeal.

c. Dan also reviewed the Guidelines that the Officers introduced at the August meeting to ensure VOTF's liquidity. After discussion and some modifications, the Board approved the proposal with the following resolution.

*Resolved: that the Board of Trustees adopts the Standards For Preserving VOTF Liquidity (see attachment to the minutes). The Board of Trustees, Officers and Executive Director will adhere to these Standards unless the Board, by majority vote of its members, amends them. (10-0-0)*

#### **4. Strategic Plan:**

a. Dan Bartley praised all those who are working hard to get their platform initiatives out to the membership. He said that the Webinar, (a voiceover and slide presentation about the Voices in Action Campaign) is to be released this week and promises to be a good marketing tool to get more members involved in the initiatives.

b. Dan said that the presentations by each of the five Strategic Action/Plan platform committees to all attending the National Conference on Friday evening are designed to inform and invite members to join at the end of the presentation or in the near future.

#### **5. Committee Reports:**

##### **a. Audit Committee**

Committee Chair John Hushon reported that the auditors have not yet completed a review of VOTF's financial statement for Fiscal Year 2009.

##### **b. Development Committee**

Committee Chair Jayne O'Donnell reported that the committee will renew their efforts to solicit contributions from major donors as well as from foundation or grant sources following the results of members' response to the October 15 appeal. Discussion revisited a cost-cutting measure decided at the April meeting to limit postal solicitations to twice a year. Executive Director Donna Doucette will resend the materials she prepared on the results of postal solicitations. If any Trustee wants to revisit the decision, he or she will propose it for the October Board meeting.

##### **c. Governance Committee**

\* Co-chairs of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Grassroots Involvement (Elia Marnik and Mary Pat Fox) led a discussion on the task force's final report and recommendations. With one committee member's minority report to the contrary, the task force recommended that VOTF solicit and ensure grassroots participation by relying on existing mechanisms, including the Affiliate Listserv, the Strategic Plan Core Team that is overseeing the implementation of the Voices in Action Campaign, the VOTF website, the Vineyard publication, and member surveys. The majority task force recommended against replacing the inactive National Representative Council with a new governance entity. The minority recommendation was to reform and re-

establish the NRC. Upon a motion, duly made and seconded, the Board approved the following resolutions.

*Resolved: that the Board of Trustees accepts the Report of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Grassroots Involvement (see attachment to the minutes). (10-0-0)*

*Resolved: that the Board of Trustees approves the Task Force's recommendations to eliminate from VOTF By-Laws all provisions relating to the National Representative Council and to present the Board with a revised set of By-Laws for approval at a subsequent meeting. (10-0-0)*

*Resolved: that the Board of Trustees agrees to notify the members of its decision to eliminate the National Representative Council and to cultivate grassroots involvement through existing alternative sources. (10-0-0)*

\* Trustees Elia Marnik and Ed Wilson proposed a resolution to implement a dues structure consistent with a Board decision passed in April 2009. The resolution linked eligibility to vote in VOTF elections to payment of dues. Discussion focused on the merits of the proposal versus the timing of implementing it before the 2010 election of national officers. Upon a motion duly made, and seconded, the Board approved the following resolution.

*Resolved: that the Board of Trustees approves the recommendation of Ed Wilson and Elia Marnik to implement a Board decision made at the April 2, 2009 meeting to allow voting in VOTF elections for those members who pay dues in accordance with the April decision and the particular provisions of the recommendations. (see attachment to the minutes). (7-2-1)*

In favor: Dan Bartley, Ron DuBois, Mary Pat Fox, John Hushon, Elia Marnik, Jayne O'Donnell, Ed Wilson.

Opposed: Bill Casey, Svea Fraser.

Abstention: Pat Gomez.

## **6. Leadership Reports:**

### **a. Officers**

\* Dan Bartley reported that the officers and Executive Director are discussing motivational techniques as a means to encourage more volunteers to join the Voices In Action Campaign and to contribute their ideas. Dan asked that all the trustees and officers support these efforts personally and with a pledged donation by December 31.

\* Long Island National Conference - Committee member Kevin Connors reported that ticket sales have been slow, but they are expected to pick up as the Conference dates get closer. Committee members wrote letters to the pastoral ministry offices of Catholic colleges in the NY area to invite students to come to the conference for a special price of \$10.00. Everyone is asked to keep promoting the conference with affiliates, members, friends and family. Kevin reported that the Catherine of Siena Award will be given to Jason Berry and the press release will include a description

of the award. The Priest of Integrity Award will be given to two priests this year, Rev. Donald Cozzens and Rev. Joseph Fowler.

**7. Miscellaneous:**

- a. BOT Chair Bill Casey will send out to the Board a preliminary agenda for its meeting to be held at the conclusion of the conference. Bill requests feedback on topics, timing and sequences before the final agenda is completed.
- b. Bill reported that Bob Ott (Chair of the Nominations Committee) and Sheila Peiffer (Chair of the Elections Committee) have begun to solicit members for their respective committees and to identify the implementation steps and schedule for the national election of officers in February 2010.

**8. Closing Prayer**

**The next meeting is October 31 - November 1, 2009 (Hilton Hotel, LI)**