

**Minutes**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting (at VOTF office)**  
**Voice of the Faithful, Inc.**  
**September 23, 2008, 7:00pm – 10:00pm Eastern**

*Approved Oct. 19, 2008*

**Board Members Present:** Bill Casey (presiding, phone), Ron Dubois (phone), Mary Pat Fox (phone), Elia Marnik (phone), Svea Fraser (phone), Jim Post (phone), Ed Wilson (phone), Dan Bartley (phone).

**Officers Present:** Janet Hauter (phone), Julie McConville (phone).

**Executive Director:** Donna Doucette.

**Opening Prayer** was led by Svea Fraser.

**1. Administrative Matters:**

a. The August 26, 2008 minutes had one misspelling. Upon a motion then duly moved and seconded, the Board approved, as corrected, the minutes of the August 26, 2008 meeting (8-0-0).

b. Bill Casey noted Dan Sullivan's September 15 letter of resignation, effective immediately, as a Trustee of VOTF. The Trustees accepted Dan's resignation and expressed their appreciation for his contributions over the last 14 months.

c. Bill reported on the death of Dean Hoge, an influential scholar and researcher of trends in Church life for several decades. Dean was an early supporter of VOTF. Jim Post volunteered to send a card to his family on behalf of VOTF, and Mary Pat Fox will write a piece for "In the Vineyard".

d. Due to a schedule conflict, Svea Fraser reported on two items covered later on the agenda. She briefly described a spiritual component that she is willing to lead at the BOT October 17-18 meeting at The Passionist Retreat Center in NY City. The Trustees agreed that it will help to re-invigorate our spiritual roots and will be an important part of our time together. Svea also agreed to arrange a report at the NRC meeting on November 7-9 in Dayton regarding the Priest Support Working Group's initiative to call for an ecclesial review of mandatory celibacy for diocesan priests. Svea also reported that VOTF recently sent a letter to all the bishops asking them to discuss mandatory celibacy at their next meeting of the USCCB as well as to Cardinal Sean O'Malley, who chairs the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the USCCB.

**2. Development:**

Committee Chair Jayne O'Donnell sent a report with some new fund-raising initiatives being discussed, such as affiliate fundraisers to benefit national initiatives; another "prize" to be offered to members like the successful drawing for Red Sox tickets; and an offer to members and businesses to sponsor one month of "In the Vineyard".

**3. Finances:**

Treasurer Kevin Connors sent a report on the financial statements for August and a summary of VOTF's financial condition in the first quarter of FY09. Despite close monitoring of expenses and increased efforts at revenue development, VOTF continues to struggle to build general reserves. Dan Bartley suggested that VOTF look again at the feasibility of membership along with continued fundraising for targeted initiatives. Executive Director Donna Doucette described opportunities for increased revenue on the horizon during the second quarter, including

the next general appeal to be sent to members in addition to continuing outreach to current and potential major donors.

#### **4. Committee Reports:**

- a. Governance. Elia Marnik sent a brief report that the Governance Committee had made progress on a review of technical and administrative proposed revisions to the By-Laws and that the committee had begun to look at the efficacy of the NRC component of the VOTF governance structure. During the second quarter, the committee will make a report to the Board on both matters.
- b. Audit. Executive Director Donna Doucette reported that the FY 08 audit is progressing smoothly and that the auditors appeared satisfied with their review.

**5. 2010 Election Planning:** Bill Casey noted that at the meeting on June 3, 2008, the Board agreed to put in place a committee to review and act upon the report of the Election Committee as well as on the full election experience in order to establish a plan for the next election based on lessons learned. Upon a motion duly moved and seconded, the Board approved the following resolution:

*Resolved, the Board of Trustees authorizes a 3-member special committee led by NRC member, Sheila Peiffer, and comprised of a Trustee and a VOTF member to be determined by the Board, to propose a framework and plan to conduct the 2010 election based on the lessons learned and committee reports submitted to the Board about the 2008 election. This committee will submit its proposal to the Board no later than January 31, 2009 (8-0-0).*

#### **6. October Meeting of BOT:**

- a. Time: 6:00pm Friday, October 17 to 5:00pm, Saturday, October 18.
- b. Bill Casey will propose a full agenda for Board consideration, but he indicated that the principal focus will be strategic direction and plans to be led by Dan Bartley and the officers. He welcomed suggestions from any of the participants in advance of the meeting.

#### **7. Leadership Reports:**

- a. Officers. President Dan Bartley reported that Janet Hauter and John Hushon had a successful meeting of the initial planning committee for an assembly of Catholics to gather around issues in the life of the Church, most likely in 2011. The participants represent a broad range of Catholic organizations and they expressed strong support for the emerging initiative. Dan added that he has contacted David Biersmith and Sr. Maureen Turlish to co-chair the Survivor Support Working Group, and both have expressed interest.
- b. NRC. Ed Wilson reported that the Ad Hoc Committee of the NRC recommended that Bob Schwiderski be removed from his position as an NRC representative based on its review of his access to the Donor Perfect database reserved to other representatives. The full NRC members are currently debating and voting on this proposal. Bill Casey added that the four affiliates in the DC metro area will consider a pilot program to assist survivors with emergency needs at their annual meeting on November 1, in response to an initiative proposed by Vice-President Janet Hauter in consultation with members of an ad hoc committee of survivor advocates.
- c. Executive Director Donna reported that the new office staff members are learning their responsibilities and quickly contributing to the work of the office.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.

**Next meeting: Friday and Saturday, October 17-18, 2008, Passionist Spiritual Center, Bronx/Riverdale, NY.**