

Minutes (Draft)
Board of Trustees Meeting/Retreat
Voice of the Faithful, Inc.
July 6, 2007 6:30-9:45 PM (EST)
July 7, 2007 8:30-4:30 PM (EST)

Members present: Dan Bartley, Bill Casey (presiding), Ron DuBois, Mary Pat Fox, John Hushon, Elia Marnik, David O'Brien, Maura O'Brien, Jayne O'Donnell, Jim Post
Officers: Mary Freeman, Gaile Pohlhaus (clerk)
Interim Executive Director: Mark Mullaney

Opening and Closing Prayer Sessions each day were led by Gaile Pohlhaus.

Agenda

The participants addressed major oversight and strategic issues in three sessions.

1. Session One (Friday evening): VOTF's financial and development plans.
2. Session Two (Saturday morning): VOTF's strategic direction.
3. Session Three (Saturday afternoon): Trustee Governance.

Session One

Summary Conclusions:

- VOTF's financial challenge is revenue development, not expense containment.
- VOTF's development challenge is drawing donations of \$500 or greater; number and amount of donations from those under \$500 have been largely constant.
- the revenue development plan proposed by the Development Committee is a sound approach to achieving FY 08 revenue goals by retaining donors of less than \$500 and increasing donations of more than \$500.

Actions:

1. the Development Committee will shepherd the revenue development plan adopted by the Board and develop materials to enable VOTF leaders to court donors who can contribute more than \$500.
2. Mark Mullaney, Dan Bartley, and John Hushon will develop a 12-month revenue budget to ensure timely adjustments in monitoring revenue development.
3. as an additional expense/revenue alignment action, Mary Pat, Mary Freeman and Mark Mullaney will identify approximately \$100,000 in further cost-savings in the FY 08 budget.

Session Two

Summary Conclusions:

- after 5 years of ecclesiastical responses to the sexual abuse crisis, the Board sees little evidence of systemic changes to the governance of the Church; responses have largely concentrated on symptoms of the underlying problems.
- VOTF's focus is wider than the particulars of the sexual abuse crisis.
- VOTF is a singular forum in which a broad cross-section of Catholics can influence systemic changes needed to achieve shared responsibility, transparency, and accountability.
- VOTF needs to re-energize its powerful statements of mission, goals and identity into a message that motivates a substantial number of lay Catholics to take responsibility

for the good of the Church—in a way that honors our foundational objectives, addresses the fuller context of the sexual abuse crisis, and is consistent with resources.

- VOTF’s message also needs to counteract the ecclesiastical message that the crisis is history—in a way that recognizes the changes that Church leaders have adopted as well as the complexity of changing deeply embedded structures.

Actions

1. Mary Pat Fox will revise her proposed Strategic Plan in light of meeting results.
2. Bill Casey and Dave O’Brien will develop an article around these themes and submit it to a Catholic periodical in order to move the discussion into the public square.
3. the Board Governance committee will sponsor a small group review of Officers, NRC and Board members to clarify roles and responsibilities in VOTF’s leadership structure in order to maximize message development and execution.

Session Three

Actions:

1. Executive Director— the Board unanimously endorsed Donna Doucette for the vacancy based on her outstanding management skills and contributions to VOTF.
2. Trustee Vacancies— the Board unanimously endorsed Dan Sullivan to fill one of the vacancies based on his overall accomplishments as a VOTF member and leader in Connecticut and on his strong fund-raising successes in a variety of non-profit organizations.

The Board also unanimously agreed to retain criteria it adopted at the April 2007 meeting regarding the eligibility of candidates for Trustee vacancies, namely:

- no person who is compensated by VOTF as an employee or independent contractor may serve concurrently as a VOTF Officer or Trustee.
 - no nominee to the VOTF Board of Trustees may be then-serving as an officer or members of the NRC, except for one or both of the BOT positions reserved for two NRC members as provided in the by-laws.
3. National Election—in anticipation of the next election of national Officers scheduled for February 2008 per the By-laws, and based on lessons learned from the last two elections, the Board charged its Governance Committee to recommend members for a nominating/elections committee to oversee the next election. The Board also agreed to hold a runoff election one week after the next election date IF neither of the TWO candidates who garnered the highest number of votes received a majority of the total.
 4. Standing Committees—for FY08, the Board elected Bill Casey as chair and established 5 standing committees: Audit/Finance; Development; Strategy; Governance; Trustee Nominations. Bill Casey will designate committee chairs, members, and charges based on Trustee feedback.
 5. Regular Meetings—the Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month, except in December, from 7-10 PM. Trustees will attempt to meet face-to-face twice a year.

Other Matters

1. Minutes—the Board approved minutes for the meeting on June 4.
2. Annual conflict of interest statements- the Trustees signed the statements.

The meeting ended with a final prayer at 4:30 pm.