

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting (at VOTF office and by teleconference)

Voice of the Faithful, Inc.

January 16, 2007

7:00 – 10:00 PM (EDT)

Board members: Present in office: David Castaldi (presiding), Elia Marnik, Svea Fraser, Maura O'Brien, Ron Du Bois; present by phone: Jim Post, Dan Bartley, Bill Casey, Mary Pat Fox, David O'Brien (joined at 7:10); officers present in office: Mary Freeman, Gaile Pohlhaus (clerk), by phone: Sally Vance Trembath others in attendance: Ray Joyce, Mark Mullaney

Opening prayer was led by Ron DuBois

Administrative tasks:

The minutes of 12/5/06 and 1/8/07 meetings were approved unanimously as amended.

Future dates for regular meetings of the Board were set for Feb. 6, Mar.6, Apr. 3, May 1, and June 4. The June 4th meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Board.

Mary Pat Fox and Mark Mullaney reported on the search for a new Executive Director to replace Ray Joyce. Members of the Search Committee include: Evelyn Seeley, Alice Campenella, Svea Fraser/ Elia Marnik, Gaile Pohlhaus, Ed Wilson and Mark Mullaney. The job may need to be reconfigured. Many non profits do not merge media, program and development functions into one job.. Mark reported that he had consulted with a leaders of a non-profit group of which he is a member who counseled that adding fund raising unless fund raising was separated from the media and program functions, the Executive Director's job would be very difficult..

A treasurer's report was made by Mary Freeman.

She discussed the financial statements for the first seven months (ending December 31, 2007) of the current fiscal year. Compared to the prior year, major donors gave less this year. On line and mail donations also dropped both in number of donors and the dollar amount received. David Castaldi asked the Finance and Development Committee to review these results to determine what appropriate actions should be taken.

Committee reports & issues

A. Audit Committee report was made by its chair, David Castaldi

The financial statements for fiscal year 2006 and audit report from our public accounting firm, Parent, McLaughlin, and Nangle, have been reviewed by the audit committee. Mr. Castaldi reported that PM&N's report

included a “clean opinion.” Having previously distributed the financial statements and audit report to Board members, he asked the Board to accept the. Based on a motion properly made and seconded it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That the audited financial statements for fiscal year 2006 and report from Parent, McLaughlin, and Nangle are accepted and posting of the final version of the statements to the organization’s web site is authorized.

B. Finance & Development was made by Jim Post. The committee has had teleconference and e-mail conversations. Leadership donations in calendar year 2006 were made by all trustees and all officers. Leadership cash donations and in kind donations totaled more than \$35,000.

C. Strategy: Identity Discussion

The Board engaged in an extensive discussion regarding the strategy the organization should pursue. Given that the sense of the Board was that the development of an appropriate strategy depended upon reaching agreement on a new identity statement for the organization, Board members discussed those elements that should be part of such a statement. Following this discussion and based on a motion properly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: The Board commits to complete in a timely manner a position on VOTF’s identity that addresses core issues that polarize its membership, including but not limited to differences regarding: a) the place and role of VOTF's mission statement and three major goals, b) the “Catholicity” of VOTF's organizational focus, c) the boundaries of issues that fall inside/outside of VOTF's pursuits, d) the level of commitment by VOTF to work within/outside of the institutional Church, and e) the revised text of a Statement on Who We Are taking into consideration the opinions expressed by the Board and officers at the January 16th meeting. The Board’s position on these identity issues would be circulated for review by the President and other officers, the National Representative Council, and the national Working Groups.

Since the members of the ad hoc committee that had been working on a revised identity statement are all members of the Strategy Committee, David Castaldi asked that, unless there was an objection, the task on completing the revised identity statement be subsumed into the work of that Committee. There was no objection and Bill Casey, chair of the Strategy Committee agreed on behalf of the Committee to take on that task.

The National Representative Council had asked the Board to comment on a celibacy proposal that has been developed by a working group. Following a brief discussion, the Board concluded that was that it was premature for the Board to comment in a formal sense. Dave Castaldi, therefore, asked and Dan Bartley agreed to respond to the NRC request in an informal manner.

Governance/Nominating Committee report was made by its chair, Elia Marnik.

The Board agreed to go into executive session.

Following the executive session Elia Marnik reported that following David Castaldi's request to relinquish the role of Board chair, the Committee had consulted with Board members about candidates for this role. The committee recommended two candidates, each of whom was willing to serve. These two members were excused from the meeting. Following discussion and based on a motion properly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That the Board elects Bill Casey as its chair to serve until its next annual meeting.

The closing prayer took place at 10:10 PM.

Minutes of Executive Session (draft)
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(By unanimous agreement of the Board the minutes of executive sessions of its meetings are not to be published on the VOTF web site or otherwise be made publicly available).

Elia Marnik reported that members of the Governance Committee were disturbed that discussion on the organization's internet listserves had, at times, a tone that was uncivil and derogatory to individuals and groups. Following extensive discussion and based on a motion properly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That the current atmosphere of uncivil and derogatory, often personal attacks reflects poorly on VOTF, an organization which aspires to heal wounds caused by the sexual abuse crisis. The committee wishes the minutes of the 1/16/07 BOT meeting to reflect its profound concern that these attacks are undermining our ability to serve the cause of survivors and church reform.

After further discussion about how this resolution should be used, David Castaldi summarized the sense of the Board that it did not want to air its internal dissensions and negative tone in a public manner but that the President and other trustees could, exercising good judgment, use this unanimous-passed resolution in a constructive way to reduce derogatory attacks and uncivil tone when they appear on listserves.

The Board agreed to return to open session.

