

**ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY EVANSVILLE DISTRICT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES FOR NOV. 5, 2024**

- **6:03PM President Dan Miller called the meeting to order in Rager Hall of Sts Mary and John Parish.**
In Attendance: Executive Board members Dan Miller (President), Jeff Kropfl (Vice-President), Melanie Seibert (Treasurer), Rosemary Beckman (Secretary), Sr. Doris Clippard (Spiritual Director), Joe Cook (Executive Director), Noah Werner (Director of Case Management), Mike McKee (Thrift Store Advisory Chair), Maggie Garrison (Thrift Store Manager), Sr. Donna Herr (Director of Food Pantry).
- **OPENING PRAYER: Sr. Doris led us in the traditional Society of SVdP Opening Prayer from green card.**
- **RULE 3.12 was read by Pres. Dan Miller: "It is essential that the Society continually promote the formation and training of its members and Officers, in order to deepen their knowledge of the Society and their spirituality, improve the sensitivity, quality and efficiency of their service to the poor and help them be aware of the benefits, resources, and opportunities that are available for the poor. The Society also offers members higher training in order to better help to raise the cultural and social level of those who request this support". Following this Sr. Doris spoke of Daughter of Charity St. Catherine Laboure, known as the Saint of Silence, because she did not reveal the appearance to her of the Blessed Virgin Mary until near death. Blessed Mother instructed her to have a medal struck in her image with the words "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee". This medal is known as the Miraculous Medal due to the many graces received by those who wear it. A Gospel reading, reflection, meditation, discussion for the Feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (Nov. 27) was read as well as a prayer for the United States on this Nov. 5 election day.**
- **MINUTES: The October 1, 2024, meeting minutes were emailed prior to meeting and reviewed. Tom Bryan moved to accept the minutes as written, and Joan Lutz seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the vote was unanimous to accept the minutes as written.**
- **TREASURER'S REPORT: Melanie reported the Financial Statements as of Sept. 30, 2024**

*******District Council*******

The 2024 numbers for Change in Value in Endowment Fund, Change in Value of Beneficiary Fund, and the Distribution from the Endowment Fund will all be adjusted through the year end audit. Last year that combined amount was

\$111,000. Melanie anticipates this number will result in additional income of \$200,000 or more this year. The distribution of this money will not necessarily come to us, only what they choose to give us. We received \$29,000 last year and \$11,000 from the Beneficiary Fund. Dan noted the bottom line is if we end the fiscal year with a deficit, the adjustment won't help our bank account. Melanie agreed but said it would help our Income Statement.

September donations were down compared with to last Sept. but ended the year with an increase over last year. Walk for the Poor and interest income also ended the year with increases over last year.

Conference grants were \$20,000 less this year than last, but this year we made a \$5,500 donation to the Disaster Fund.

District Council payroll expenses were about \$30,000 more than the previous year due primarily to having a Staff Accountant for the entire year.

Tons of Toys expenses were about \$2,000 more than the previous year but were more than offset by TOT donations which were up about \$6,000.

Program expenses were up about \$3,700 for the year to date and included "Getting Ahead Program" but were offset by grants received.

Web site costs were \$3,000 more than last year due to Regent getting caught up on their billing.

*******Food Pantry*******

Donations were down about \$65,000 or 17% for the year.

Annual food purchases were up by \$25,000--16% over last year.

Other operating expenses were about 7% more than last year, about half of which was due to increased maintenance expenses.

YTD deficit is \$17,400 compared to a surplus of \$77,000 last year.

*******Thrift Store*******

Year-to-date sales are down about 9% or \$55,000 for the year.

Annual payroll and other operating expenses are virtually even with last year.

YTD profit for the year was \$96,500, down \$43,000 or 31% from the previous year.

Reminders: Annual Reports must be completed by 11/30/24. Contact Melanie with any questions.

Save time by planning to compile the additional information that will be needed for our tax return at the same time as you do your annual report. Two items from each conference are needed:

Bank Balance as of 9/30/24 (Conferences that have reported: 7). List of single donations of \$1,000 or more including the name/address of donor as well as an approximate date (10/1/23 - 9/30/24) (Conferences that have reported: 4).

Information for rental payments to landlords is not needed until January 2025 and will include the calendar year 2024 instead of the fiscal (accounting) year.

Please periodically review your membership lists in the National Directory to make any changes or updates that are needed.

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Joe**

Grants: Nothing to update on grants. Still tracking 2 grants for Food Pantry and Thrift Store (\$150,000 each) to upgrade security systems.

Tons of Toys: In the conference packets is a document that will be emailed to registrants from last year to inform them that TOT registration is now open and other FAQ points. Electronic registration is preferred and can be easily done under the Member section of our website. For those uncomfortable with this method a paper registration form can be used. Registration begins at 8am Nov. 6 through Dec. 12. Those contacting the Coordinator's Office can also register via the paper form, but conferences reserve the right for a home visit. Paper registration forms (along with a commonly asked questions/explanation page) are provided for conferences to use on home visits and telephone calls if not submitted electronically. Date of birth for each child instead of child's age (for parent/guardian as well) and an email address is needed on the paper registration form for Charity Tracker purposes. Online donation portal for TOT is also now open through Dec. 18. There are Sign-up Sheets with 3-hour time slots for volunteers to help with this effort. A question was asked whether there were other ways to help for those unable to do so during the TOT time frame. Joe mentioned several other ways to help such as sorting donations, collecting toys from donors and volunteer shopping.

End Of Year (EOY) Reports: The EOY reporting forms are now open on the national website (<https://svdpmembers.com>) Joe has gotten through about half of

conferences to provide EOY numbers. Email issues prevented running reports. Let Joe know if you have not received your EOY numbers from him. In this new fiscal year, Joe encourages using the process uploaded on website under Members Section Charity Tracker of Resources page. Under Charity Tracker view and implement the process demonstrated in “Entering Assistance Periodically Tutorial Video”. It will show how to track much necessary data. A companion piece to this video is an instructional PDF “How to Record Visits, Mileage, Time, In-Kind Goods and Vouchers”. In the same section are PDFs of worksheets for individual Vincentians to track these items and a “tally” sheet for tabulating individual Vincentian's assistance records. These aids will greatly assist the conferences in keeping accurate records for annual report, keep assistance tab on Charity Tracker cleaner and reduce number of records to delete after three years. Three examples involving Vouchers, Follow Ups and partnering with another agency/conference to pay a neighbor's bill were reviewed. Re: Vouchers: Because approximately 50% of vouchers issued are not redeemed, we should update the status to ‘Pending Payment/Approval’. After the voucher is redeemed and at the time conferences are billed, Donna Hurm will enter the dollar amount and change status to “Approved”. Re: Follow-Ups: Whatever the Follow-Up message relays should be taken care of/noted in the original referral (example- phone number change) and not in the Follow-Up referral. Make the appropriate change/action on original referral and then delete the Follow-Up referral. Partnering for Paying Neighbor's bill: When a bill is paid by more than one conference/agency only record the amount contributed by your conference.

Bridges Out of Poverty and Getting Ahead Cohort: Joe and Noah are now both certified trainers of “Bridges Out of Poverty” program. They can now offer one-hour overviews or half/full day training sessions. The overview is just a sampling that will hopefully lead to training sessions. They will be scheduling a couple of overview sessions in hopes they will lead to training.

Prayer Cards and Brochures: Regent will be producing about 2500 brochures from the Clouds brochure on the national website. It is very good. Also, Prayer Cards from the National Council website will be available at the next District Council meeting for conferences to furnish neighbors they visit.

Email system: Is a disappointment and will be switched to a different platform soon. Any @svdpevansville.org emails you wish to keep please move to avoid losing them.

“Getting Ahead” Program and Micro-loans: Noah thanked the conferences that helped by providing lunches for participants in the program sessions. Noah noted how the program has helped him grow closer to God and in understanding the needy. He made himself available 24/7 and developed strong relationships with those involved in the program. He emphasized the power of strong relationships

in helping create systemic change. If conferences wish to get involved, they are welcome to observe how the program works. Two banks, First Federal and now Banterra, are involved in the Microloan program. Banterra would help with emergency loans such as car/home repairs, rent deposits. Benefits of this program include participants improving their credit rating, establishing a relationship with a bank/banker along with the ability to pay back loans on a more generous timetable at low interest rates among other things.

- **STORE REPORT:** Mike noted business is starting to look more positive and it appears things have picked up in Oct. There has been a slowdown in bedding sales. Road construction is finishing up and Walnut St is open from the Thrift Store all the way to Route 41. There is currently a trailer parked on the store property used to store merchandise that doesn't sell but could be sent for use overseas. Maggie stated sales volume is up and the store is selling about 30% more items than last year even though money coming in is less than last year. Mike provided a 'Thrift Store Voucher and Volunteer Tracking' report for previous 12 months (Fiscal Year '23-'24) and a 'Vouchers Redeemed vs. Referred' report for '23-'24 FY. Mike praised the good work of Maggie in turning the Thrift Store around and encouraged all to visit it to see for ourselves. Joe also thanked Maggie for her resourcefulness in restoring order to the store. He is very happy with both of our Special Works, the Food Pantry and the Thrift Store.
- **PANTRY REPORT:** Sr. Donna said Oct. was a busy month. 3,129 persons in 1,386 different households were served which is 656 more persons and 285 more households than previous month. The Pantry has been buying lots of food and Sister is looking forward to Thanksgiving food drives. She is very aware FP monthly expenses have been exceeding monthly income. At a time in the past when donations and the money market/savings account were very healthy the Office/Pantry Board made the decision to offer more food, personal hygiene and cleaning items to those who come. Donors wanted their money used to serve those who visit the Food Pantry and not be hoarded. However, if the money market funds are low along with fewer donations, perhaps the Board might revisit the earlier decision of offering more items. Sister noted the loss of a wonderful volunteer with the death of Vincentian Dan Masterson.
- **ON-GOING BUSINESS:** Dan discussed the following -

Chairman of the Food Pantry Advisory Committee position is still open.

SVdP Vision Conference Sessions - Approximately a third to half of the conferences have held their sessions. All conferences should try to complete these sessions by the end of November.

Revised Financial Review Policy - the first proposal in August is now revised by the Financial Policy Review Committee. Changes to the policy will commence in Feb. 2026. Starting in Feb. of 2025 we will have Financial Accountability Training (possibly online) for all Conference Treasurers and Presidents that they be made aware and better prepared for changes effective in 2026. There will be links on our website, and training manuals/Conference Treasurer's Manuals provided for all Conferences. An outline of this new policy/procedure accompanied by appendices (questionnaire, record keeping checklists, worksheets) was distributed to all. Starting in Feb. 2026 and every February thereafter every conference will conduct an operational audit and a financial review of the previous calendar year. We will vote in December to enact this Policy and Procedure for Annual Operational Audits and Financial Reviews of the Conferences within our District.

- **NEW BUSINESS - Tons of Toys Tasks - this was covered by Joe in his Executive Director's Report.**
- **ROLL CALL OF CONFERENCES, NEW MEMBERS, ILL OR DECEASED VINCENTIANS, ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Conferences not in attendance were Annunciation, Holy Redeemer, Sts. Francis & Wendel and St. Matthew. Prayers were requested for Vincentians Diane McKinney and Jim Harpenau of St. Clement Parish and Randy Bauer and Clara Meadors of Resurrection Parish...all recovering from recent surgeries; and deceased Vincentian Dan Masterson.

The next District Council meeting is December 3, 2024, 6pm at St. Mary's Rager Hall.

- **CLOSING PRAYER:** Sr. Doris led us in reciting the SVdP Vision Prayer
- **7:26pm MEETING ADJOURNED**