

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT de PAUL, EVANSVILLE DISTRICT, MEETING MINUTES FOR DEC. 3, 2024

6:03 PM: President Dan Miller called the meeting to order in Rager Hall of Sts. Mary and John Parish

In Attendance: Executive Committee Members Dan Miller (President); Jeff Kropfl (Vice-President); Melanie Seibert (Treasurer); Rosemary Beckman (Secretary); Sr. Doris Clippard (Spiritual Advisor); Joe Cook (Executive Director); Mike McKee (Thrift Store Advisory Board Chair); Bill Hussmann (Food Pantry Advisory Board Chair); Maggie Garrison (Thrift Store Manager); Noah Werner (Director of Case Management).

OPENING PRAYER: Sr. Doris led us in reciting the traditional SVdP Opening Prayer.

REFLECTION: Centered around the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Advent (Luke 21:25-28, 34-36, the second coming of Christ), Sister Doris noted this season of Advent starts a new Liturgical Year and is a time filled with joyful anticipation, silence and wonder of Christmas. She noted how wonder is dependent upon silence and how Christmas Carols can give us spiritual insight using “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” as an example.

RULE 3:13 (Read by Dan): “Members of the Society are united in the same spirit of poverty and of sharing. They encourage one another to live a profound spiritual life and spirit of prayer. For this purpose, the role of the Spiritual Advisor is very important”.

MEETING MINUTES: Following no additions, corrections or discussion, Tom Bryan made the motion to accept the minutes as written and Mike Rogan seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous approval of the 11/5/24 District Council Meeting Minutes as written.

TREASURER'S REPORT: (Melanie)

Financial Statements as of October 31, 2024

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

- Oct. donations (General and FOP Walk combined) down 4K from last Oct.
- Payroll expense for month about \$4,400 higher than last year due to 5 payrolls instead of 4 in the month.
- Compared to last year, Conference grants this Oct. were 10K less, FOP Walk expenses were 4K less, and Web Maintenance was 3K less. Other expenses were not significantly changed.
- District Council net loss was 44K this Oct., compared to 53K for Oct. 2023

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

- Donations down about 37K/66% from last Oct.
- Monthly food purchases as well as other operating expenses were virtually even with last year.
- Oct. deficit is 14K compared to a surplus of 22K last year.

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

- Total Oct. sales about 7K more than Oct. '23.
- Oct. payroll up 11K over last Oct. due to 5 payrolls compared to 4 in previous Oct. and the addition of several employees including 2 full time employees. Other operating expenses were up about 1K mainly due to purchasing supplies.
- Net profit for this Oct. was 8K compared to almost 12K for previous Oct.

CenterPoint - Melanie noted Center Point now shows billing history on line along with the current bill. This is very helpful information for conferences.

Other Reminders:

Melanie noted all but 2 conferences submitted end-of-year reports complying with the 11/30 deadline. The 9/30/24 cash balances from 7 conferences are still needed as well as the list of 1K+ donor lists from 9 conferences.

Information for 'rental payments to landlords' is not needed until Jan. 2025 and will include calendar year 2024 (not the fiscal accounting year). However, with almost a hundred 1099s now being issued and needing to be submitted to the IRS by Jan. 31, 2025; Melanie would appreciate the timely help of the conferences in this matter. If not yet done, please respond to Donna Hurm's email request for updated officer listings. She will update the national directory listings for you.

Melanie mentioned a few instances when voucher requests being submitted online by conferences were not issued. She was not certain if the problem was due to software glitches or perhaps incomplete data entry. A confirmation should follow each online submission. Without the confirmation the voucher will not be issued causing problems for the person in need. Maggie noted the Thrift Store will call each neighbor from the store to let them know the voucher is issued and active for a certain time period. Conferences should be aware if the neighbor does not receive a call from the Thrift Store, the voucher request may not have gone through the online process.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: (Joe)

- Regarding Vouchers - Joe noted Donna Hurm will be emailing to conferences a 'Vouchers Requested vs. Vouchers Redeemed' report. He advised conferences

refer to the Members Section under the Resource page of the website for useful information on how vouchers work including a letter that can be given to a neighbor explaining the voucher process.

- **Tons of Toys** - to date 136 families/382 children are registered with registration open another 9 days. We are on pace to match or surpass 2023 figures of 192 families/506 children registered. The growth may not be tenable as donations in toys and funds are not as robust as in past. Volunteers are needed for 4pm-7pm shift on Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 16-17. Volunteers may register on line. Volunteers may be teenagers.
- **Grants** - Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) grant continues to be worked on to meet project milestone deadlines. A 30K 'Forward Together' grant has been applied for and we should know by end of 2024 if awarded. The City of Evansville distributes interest money from Cares Act funds for this grant.
- **Mideast Disaster Committee** - news letter provided in meeting packets for presidents to share with their conferences as an FYI.
- **All the District Council By-Laws** are now completed.
- **Conflict of Interest Statements** - if not signed please do so and turn in to Joe at end of meeting.
- **SVdP Vision conference comments** - 5 outstanding conferences. These should be submitted to Joe soon so Donna can submit all to National this month.
- **Microloan Update** - Roll out hopefully by Feb., 2025 with pending Banterra Bank agreement. Microloans provide opportunities to help those in need and implement systemic change by helping establishing credit and a banking relationship for our neighbors. Predatory lending keeps many of the needy saddled with almost unsurmountable debt.
- **OEA Report** - The Office of Emergency Assistance Summary Report is generated each month from old referral system for the conferences. It does not require much time/effort but does the report add any value to the work of the conferences? Is it duplication of data? Does it help support data driven decisions? Dan asked if this information could be obtained if needed were this report no longer generated. Dan also noted the figures in the report reflect the 'requested' amount and not the 'resolved' amount for the catagories (rent, utility, medical etc.) Joe said this information is available and can be taken from Chairity Tracker readily. Joe asks the conferences to discuss whether to continue this report and let him know.

STORE REPORT: (Mike McKee)

- Oct. volunteer hours are down and sporadic
- Clothing/Furniture/Bed Voucher Tracking shows figures for October are up in Number Served, Number of Items Sold as well as Dollar Value
- Overall we are seeing more foot traffic into the store and things are getting back to normal
- Mike noted these Detailed Reports (bar graphs) showing data over a period of time help us see patterns and plan for when (time of year) items are needed.

Maggie told us of several things they have done recently that are very successful:

- Partnering with Evans School - donating items in the 'overseas' trailer to the school.
- Pulling sales items every 2 weeks and making \$1.99 Mystery Boxes. These are wrapped and labeled (i.e. Baby Items Box, Pet Box etc.) and have been a big hit, selling over 200 to date.
- Christmas trees have been in demand
- Some items such as blankets that are received in bad condition have been put outside on property fence overnight and in morning they are gone.
- They are now able to make more from 'reject' inventory by selling bulk rate per pound.

FOOD PANTRY REPORT: (Bill Hussmann)

Bill noted he will be meeting with Sister Donna and Carolyn Harmon to better acquaint himself in his new role as head of the Food Pantry Advisory Board. On Dec 6 he and other Executive Committee members will be meeting with Sister Donna and Carolyn Harmon to learn from them the tasks, responsibilities involved in serving as Food Pantry Director for purposes of creating an advertisement for filling Sister's position. He also gave the following information provided by Sister Donna for Food Pantry Report-

- Stats for November: 2,636 persons in 1,114 different households were served. This is about 500 fewer persons/272 fewer households than in October
- Food Drives: There has been an outstanding response from 8 school/parishes (Holy Redeemer, St. Philip, St. Boniface, Corpus Christi, Resurrection, St. Wendel, St. John Daylight, Mater Dei High School) as well as numerous other groups and

individuals too. Storage space is a temporary challenge as it will not take long to use up the supply. Sister thanks all.

- The Office will be closed for the holidays starting Mon., Dec. 23 reopening Thursday, Jan. 2nd.
- Please let Sr. Donna know what to tell neighbors who call for requests the week before Christmas week when to expect a call or visit.

ON-GOING BUSINESS: (Dan)

- Approval of Resolution 24.1 revised of “Evansville District Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Policy and Procedure for Conference Operational Audit and Financial Review”. The Rules and related Questionnaire, Worksheets etc., for this Resolution were emailed to all the conferences for review prior to the meeting. Dan noted the revision mainly applied to a suggestion from Melanie to show reply lines where answers were necessary on forms.
- Dan noted there were 2 key elements to point out about this resolution: 1)The reviews begin in Feb., 2026 with training for conference Presidents/Treasurers starting in Feb., 2025. 2) Approximately every 4 years there will be Operational Audits/Financial Reviews of all conferences in order drawn by lottery. A District Financial Review team appointed by the District President will conduct these. One question pertained to whether a photo copy of a check will suffice for audit purposes on a bank report and Dan responded a photo copy of conference check with the statement will be OK.
- A Motion was made to accept Resolution 24.1 as revised and the motion was seconded. The motion carried by consensus.
- SVdP Vision Conference Sessions - This was covered in Executive Director's Report above.

NEW BUSINESS: (Dan)

- Search Committee formed for Director of Food Pantry - Dan noted after Bill and Exec. Committee meets with Sr. Donna and Carolyn on Fri., Dec 6, to hear what they feel are the essential elements of the position - a formal Search Committee will be formed to hire a new Food Pantry Director with a June 1, 2025 start date.
- Noah noted the need for help in January with the ‘Getting Ahead’ program.

ROLL CALL of Conferences, New Members, ill or deceased Vincentians, announcements:

- Conferences not present were Annunciation and Holy Redeemer.
- Sts. Peter & Paul has 2 new members - Bob Seib and Sara Field
- Reminder of Dec 7 Quarterly Gathering at Good Shepherd 4:30pm Mass followed by dinner and speaker

CLOSING PRAYER: Sr. Doris led us in reciting the SVdP Vision Prayer.

7:15PM - MEETING ADJOURNED

Next meeting is February 4, 2025 at 6pm in Rager Hall of Sts. Mary & John parish