

SVDP DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES

April 2, 2024

Dan Miller, President, called the meeting to order at 6pm, Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at Sts. Mary & John parish in Rager Hall.

In attendance: Executive Board Members: Dan Miller, President; Jeff Kropfl, Vice President; Megan Charlton, Secretary; Melanie Seibert, Treasurer; Joe Cook, Executive Director; Noah Werner, Director of Case Management; Melissa Coleman, Thrift Store Manager; Mike McKee, Thrift Store Advisory Board Chair; Sr. Donna Herr, Food Pantry Manager.

Minutes. *The meeting minutes from the March 5, 2024 District Council meeting were approved unanimously by the District Council.*

Financials. The District Council Financial Summary from December 2023 to February 2024 was brought to the attention of the District Council.

District Council donations continue to fall behind last year.

District Council expenses are difficult to compare on a monthly and yearly basis due to expenses being accounted for during different timelines each year. Some examples, accounting fees for February 2023 included the audit bill, as the audit was completed in February. However, the audit for 2024 has not yet been completed, so we have not received the bill. Also, in 2023, the lenten retreat expenses were paid in March, but this year the lenten retreat expenses were paid in February. Furthermore, the 2023 Ton of Toys expenses from December are still being accounted for.

Food Pantry donations have started to increase again.

Food Pantry year-to-date food purchases are up about 36% when compared to last year.

Food Pantry operating expenses are up about 13% compared to the first 5 months of last year.

Food Pantry net income is down about 25% when compared to last year.

Thrift Store sales are stable when compared to last year.

Thrift Store expenses are down slightly when compared to last year.

Thrift Store net income for February was about \$2,000 more than last February, and year-to-date net income is about \$24,000 more when compared to last year.

The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously as reported by the District Council.

Financial Audit. Tim Otte is currently working on our District Council's annual financial audit. The plan is to present the completed financial audit at the May District Council meeting.

Sleep in Heavenly Peace. The Sleep in Heavenly Peace agency referrals are currently on a 2-month wait list, due to the current volume of bed referrals.

Friends of the Poor Walk. The annual Friends of the Poor Walk will be held on September 28th. The Executive Director's office has sent out the letters and sponsorship forms to former sponsored donors, 6 months ahead of the annual Friends of the Poor Walk. Parish bulletin advertisements are in the process of being created for new sponsors to donate to this year's Walk.

The Executive Director's office is continuing to work towards speaking to kids at parish schools about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in anticipation of the Friends of the Poor Walk.

Microloan. The Executive Director's office is continuing to work on creating a partnership between our District Council and 1st Federal Bank and Banterra Bank for our anticipated Microloan program.

The Microloan program would allow eligible clients to receive a low interest loan while also helping them build credit. The Executive Director's office will need to form a Microloan Committee to review eligible clients before they apply for the Microloan program. Vincentians wanting to volunteer for the Microloan Committee should contact Joe or Noah.

Real Estate Review. The Committee has received the feasibility study and proposal from Lamar Architecture and Design. This proposal has been revised and updated as the Committee has seen fit. The Committee has sent this final proposal to Happe Construction for a quote on construction pricing.

Quarterly Gathering. The next quarterly gathering will be held on Saturday, June 2nd by the Sts. Peter & Paul conference. The gathering will have mass at 10am at the Sts. Peter & Paul parish with a meal and speaker to follow in the parish school cafeteria.

Charity Tracker. The Executive Director's office has uploaded new documents/tools into the members section of the SVDP Evansville website. These documents/tools are for conferences to use for data tracking throughout the fiscal year for their annual conference report.

Getting Ahead. The second Getting Ahead cohort has 10 people participating in the program. Noah is asking conferences to consider providing a meal for one session of this Getting Ahead cohort. Conferences should consider cooking an easy meal or ordering food for delivery. If a conference would like to participate, please contact Noah. Conferences should continue to refer clients as they see fit, for future Getting Ahead cohorts.

Bridges Out of Poverty. There will be a Bridges Out of Poverty training course available in May.

Evansville West Side Nut Club. The Executive Director's office applied for a \$10,000 grant to the West Side Nut Club. This grant was not awarded to our SVDP District Council, however our SVDP Food Pantry was awarded \$2,000 from the West Side Nut Club.

Thrift Store. Mike McKee presented the Thrift Store Voucher and Volunteer Tracking handouts to the District Council. In March 2024, there were 338 volunteer hours, 180 people served through vouchers, and 40 people helped through bed vouchers.

The Thrift Store report was presented by Melissa Coleman. Thrift Store sales in March were down 5% when compared to March of last year. There has also been a 17% decrease in overall customer Store foot traffic. However, the average retailer is currently experiencing a 9% decrease in sales. The decrease in Thrift Store sales could be due to average overall shopping loss.

The new registers have been installed at the Thrift Store.

Food Pantry. The Food Pantry report was presented by Sr. Donna Herr. The March 2024 Assistance Summary Report was brought to the attention of the District Council. The Food Pantry served 940 households throughout the month of March.

The Food Pantry has been the recipient of several recent food drives and received donations from the St. James parish pancake breakfast.

The Haitian Center in Evansville has been working with Noah, Sr. Donna, and the Food Pantry to provide translation services to families needing food assistance. The Haitian Center may be able to provide one hour of Haitian translation service on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Food Pantry; these hours of available translation services would need to be communicated to the Haitian families in need.

The Coordinator's Office and Food Pantry will be closed on April 8th, the day of the eclipse.

Overall, the Coordinator's Office has been experiencing a decrease in assistance calls throughout all conferences.

Translation Services. Noah is continuing to work to get more translation services for our Vincentians. Many conferences have found creative ways to communicate with our Hispanic population. This need for translation services within our community seems to be increasing. Some conferences have Vincentians within their conference who are bilingual; other conferences are using Ireland Home Based Services as well as bilingual parishioners, family, friends, and neighbors.

Ozanam Orientation. The next Ozanam Orientation is scheduled for April 13th at the St. Benedict's Woodward Center. At this time, there are 20 Vincentians signed up for the Orientation.

Conference President Term. At this time, there are 2 conference presidents that are out of compliance with their presidential office term limit.

District Council Secretary. The District Council Secretary, Megan, will be stepping down from her position in June 2024. Conferences should consider members who could fill this position. The District Council Secretary position requires attending and recording minutes for all of the monthly District Council meetings, as well as the Executive Council meetings that are held every other month. Vincentians should contact Dan with District Council Secretary nominations.

Conference Bylaws. It was recently discovered that in 2020, when conferences renewed their conference bylaws, the incorrect bylaws were unknowingly adopted by the conferences. Conferences will need to review and renew the correct conference bylaws within the coming months.

Small Group Discussions. Amongst the conferences present during the meeting, small groups were formed for discussion. Each group contained several conference representatives and one group facilitator from the Executive Council. Each small group discussed the "traditional conference minimum requirements" handout, focusing on points #2,5,7,9,22, and 24. Each small group discussed these questions for about 20 minutes, while the group facilitator took notes. The purpose of this group discussion was for conferences to understand each other's processes and to help conferences work together towards our mission. There will continue to be small group discussions during District Council meetings.

Upcoming Gatherings. The next Ozanam Orientation will be held on Saturday, April 13th from 9am-3pm at the St. Benedict's Woodward Center.

The next quarterly gathering will be held on Sunday, June 2nd at the Sts. Peter & Paul parish with mass starting at 10am and a meal and speaker to follow.

The annual Friends of the Poor Walk will be held on September 28th.

Roll Call. Absent this month: Annunciation, Holy Redeemer, Resurrection, St. Benedict, Sts. Francis & Wendel, and St. James.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7th at 6pm at Sts. Mary & John parish in Rager Hall.