

**SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT de PAUL, EVANSVILLE DISTRICT COUNCIL, MEETING
MINUTES FOR MARCH 4, 2025**

6:01PM meeting was called to order by President Dan Miller in cafeteria of Holy Redeemer School.

IN ATTENDANCE: Executive Council Members Dan Miller (President), Jeff Kropfl (Vice President), Melanie Seibert (Treasurer), Rosemary Beckman (Secretary), Sr. Doris Clippard (Spiritual Advisor), Joe Cook (Executive Director), Maggie Garrison (Thrift Store Manager), Bill Hussmann (Food Pantry Advisory Chair), Noah Werner (Director of Case Management).

OPENING PRAYER: Sr. Doris led us in reciting the traditional St. Vincent de Paul opening prayer.

REFLECTION: Sr Doris

Jim Hayden read the Gospel of Luke 6:39-45. "Why look at the speck in your brother's eye when you miss the plank in your own?" Do not be a hypocrite.

Because many of us think we have more forgiveness to give than to receive, we find it difficult to truly forgive others. Resentment builds. We might be better off to think of what it costs others to forgive us rather than our cost to forgive. Vincentians strive to alleviate poverty and hunger. Yet those in need may hold resentment of our abundance in their hearts and, therefore, also need forgiveness. St. Vincent is quoted as saying "it is only because of our love that the poor will forgive us the bread we give to them".

Jim Hayden noted a new conference member grasped this very idea when she visited neighbors in need by observing their demeanor and downcast eyes. She knew we are there to let the neighbor know we are not there to judge. We ended the reflection by asking the Lord for the grace to see our planks, to forgive and to serve with love.

We also recited a prayer from National SVdP for Pope Francis' health and well being.

RULE 3.15: "The vitality of the Society's network of charity depends on the regular and rapid exchange of news and information. Such communication broadens the members' horizon and enhances the interest of members in the experiences and challenges of their brothers and sisters throughout the world. The Vincentian response to communication is a willingness to learn and a desire to help". Read by Dan. Dan also noted we will be adding to the meeting agenda under New Business discussion and vote on Resolution 2025.2.

MEETING MINUTES: With no additions or corrections noted for the previous month meeting minutes, Sr. Doris made motion to accept the Feb. 4, 2025 District Council Meeting Minutes as written and Debbie Neufelder seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Melanie

Financial Statements - January 31, 2025

District Council

- Donations are running ahead by about \$15,000 YTD
- Total expenses remain fairly steady
- Grant income is down \$50,000 for YTD

Food Pantry

- Donations are about \$37,000 down from last YTD, due to a slump in donations in October
- Cost of purchased food continues to trend downward due to increased items being provided through the Consortium, as well as food drives. We have spent \$8,800 less so far this year on food purchases
- Other operating expenses remain very steady

Thrift Store

- Sales are down about \$20,000 for the YTD, but are starting to trend higher. During January, 2025, they were only \$6,000 lower than the previous January in spite of having to be closed several days due to weather
- Expenses are running about \$20,000 ahead of last year, driven mainly by increased payroll, maintenance and supply costs

General Observations

It is my understanding that the DHS Security Grant that we were awarded is now in limbo due to the Executive Orders issued by the White House. Our grant was from the Indiana DHS, which was, in turn, funded from the federal DHS. No one has been able to assure us that this funding will be forthcoming. Fortunately, we have not yet expended any funds toward this project and are awaiting updated information.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Joe

Grant Reports -

- MMI (Mission Ministry Impact) - application has been submitted requesting \$80,000 for the Food Pantry and \$10,000 for Crisis Fund assistance. Joe received an email today requesting edits and a resubmission. We are now awaiting further direction from MMI to know what they needed updated.
- CDBG - DMD/HUD (City Development Block Grant - Dept. of Metropolitan Development/Housing and Urban Development) - presentation was made to Citizen's Advisory Committee in January. No further communication has been received from DMD. Typically, the next step is to make a presentation to City Council. Joe explained the grant process by telling us from the Citizen's Advisory

Committee the request goes to the Mayor who designates a grant dollar amount that is then sent to the City Council. Joe makes our presentation to the City Council and the City Council gives the final vote on the grant request. The annual CDBG grant helps pay Director of Case Management wages.

- Sacred Heart Fund Grant - this \$25,000 grant is split between St. Clement, St. Boniface, Sts. Mary and John, Annunciation and All Saints conferences and is applied to Hispanic Ministry for housing and utilities assistance. Joe needs the report from All Saints and final report from Sts. Mary and John to finish up the grant report.
- CenterPoint Energy Grant - \$10,000 grant split between Holy Rosary, St. Boniface, Annunciation and Sts. Mary and John. Joe is waiting on reports from Annunciation, Sts. Mary and John and St. Boniface.

Treasurer Training Updates - Joe emailed dates for conference Presidents/Treasurers Training for Annual Operational Audits and Financial Reviews. All 19 conferences are to participate. The training session should last about an hour and the conference participants may attend together or separately. There is no RSVP form but Dan would appreciate an email letting him know which session(s) the conference President/Treasurers intend to attend. The 3 scheduled dates are:

**Tues. March 11 @ 6pm at Sts. Mary&John
Rager Hall**

**Thurs. March 13 @ 3pm at Delaware
Center Conference Room**

**Tues. March 18 @ noon at Delaware
Center Conference Room**

Spring Quarterly Gathering - Lenten Retreat is Sat., March 15, at Seton Residence. Registration can be made on-line or by calling Coordinator's office. The registration deadline is Ash Wed., March 5. Vincentians, their spouses and family members may attend. We are fortunate to have Tim Williams, Senior Director of Formation and Leadership Development at National Council to be our presenter. When asked if the presentation is recorded, Joe responded at this time there is no capability to video the event for later viewing by those unable to attend, but he will work on this. Please pass the word and encourage attendance.

Summer Quarterly Gathering - Holy Redeemer will host the gathering on Sat., June 21 with Mass at 5pm CDT (Solemnity of Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ - Corpus Christi). More details will follow. Joe will attend in his last public appearance as Executive Director.

Getting Ahead Program - there has been a good response to the meal request with conferences covering meals well in to May. March 19 is the start date for next cohort classes. Noah has sent an email to the conferences with details. Going through this training of 16 weeks will make participants better Vincentians by broadening one's Vincentian approach and compassion. They are held on Wednesdays with meal at 5:30pm followed by the class from 6 - 8:30pm.

Eviction Prevention - Aurora has received more funding (\$35,000) for two homeless prevention programs. There are different parameters depending on the program but in order to qualify for aid from either program the applicant must have received an eviction notice. Many who do apply will fit the profile for this program. EVSC is also sending cases to Aurora for assistance from these programs. The funding helps for a certain number of months making it potentially very helpful. Noah will send an email with additional information.

Food Pantry Director - the search is underway. See Food Pantry Report below.

National Directory Updates - Joe encourages conferences to continue the process of updating their membership rosters on the SVdP National Members' website. It is a simple process. This is the same website where the annual reports are compiled and submitted. Julie Buedel noted if a member is deleted they may not receive further SVdP mailings and information they may still wish to receive. Joe said deleted members would be moved to Archives. Dan made the suggestion the member not be deleted but rather changed from Active to Inactive member to continue receiving correspondence.

THRIFT STORE REPORT: Maggie

- The store can always use extra volunteer help as volunteer hours have recently decreased.
- The bed inventory is dwindling allowing for more storage space. Neighbors needing a bed now have the option to have the bed delivered directly to their residence. Maggie places the order online requesting delivery to either the Thrift Store for pick up by the neighbor or directly to the neighbor's address. Authorization for direct delivery to the neighbor's address would be necessary and Maggie suggested this authorization could be indicated on the voucher in the notes section or by revising the voucher to feature a place to check mark Direct Delivery to neighbor. Joe agreed the vouchers could be revised to accommodate this change.
- Furniture donations (and sales) have increased significantly the last 2 months. Donations have been received from estate/storage unit clean outs as well as home clean outs.

FOOD PANTRY REPORT: Bill

- In February 1,915 persons in 877 different households were served. This is a decrease of 248 fewer persons in 133 fewer households (10%) than Feb 2024 but

in keeping with Feb/March typically being slower months. Some people in real need of food have come to the pantry before the end of the regulatory '1 visit per 30 days' period. In these cases we have put some things together - not a full order - to hold them over. They are also given a list of Independent Pantries and Hot Meal Programs.

- We have gotten several new volunteers recently - one in the office and several in the pantry.
- Good Shepherd Parish and St. James School have had very good food drives for the pantry recently.
- Winkler's Wholesale from Dale, IN had a food trade show in Evansville recently and the pantry was invited to pick up the food after the event, which amounted to a whole van-load of great items.
- Tri-State Food Bank has had a longer list of available foods which has been a real help to us. What we get from Tri-State FB is paid for by the Consortium (6 pantries making up the Emergency Food Pantry System of Evansville).
- New office area flooring is needed. This improvement request will be submitted for approval.
- Our ad is now out for hiring a Food Pantry Director. So far we have received 3 responses. March 15 is the application deadline date, however, the date could be extended.
- There will be a reception for Sister Donna in late June or early July on a weekend.
- When asked if the Food Pantry delivers food, Bill responded it does not under normal circumstances.

ON-GOING BUSINESS: Dan

- Should the District Council continue to participate in Tons of Toys? After considerable discussion both pro and con, it was determined that conference presidents should ask their members if any one person or group would like to volunteer to coordinate the Tons of Toys program for 2025 and report back at next meeting, April 1. Joe will send an email to the conferences detailing the tasks involved. WIKY radio will be notified in April if the District Council will not be able to continue partnering with them for this program.

NEW BUSINESS: Dan

- Updating member databases: whose role is it? Currently, Donna Hurm has updated the National SVdP membership databases if the conferences have not done so. Dan would like to see the individual conferences be responsible, if possible, for entering into the national databases new members and any changes of status for conference members (i.e. changes from Active to In-active membership, deceased members). Going forward, if conferences are not able to maintain their database records, the District Council Secretary or President will enter the information into the national database for the conference.
- Resolution 2025-1: How to account for the Friends of Poor distributions on the annual report. This resolution serves to codify the District Council accounting of

FOP distributions on the annual report to follow the way stated in the SVdP Manual. The conferences will report FOP Walk disbursements as Fundraising Income on their annual reports and the District Council on its annual report will subtract the designated disbursements to the conferences from the total revenue raised from the Friends of the Poor Walk. Joan Lutz made the motion to adopt Resolution 2025-1 and Melanie Seibert seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

- Resolution 2025-2: Authorizing Micro-Loan Program with Banterra Bank. The resolution states the Board of Directors of the Evansville District Council of SVdP authorizes the Evansville District Council to enter into an agreement with Banterra Bank to service Micro-Loans to neighbors in need referred to the bank by the Society of SVdP. Additionally, the District Council authorizes the payment of \$50,000 in U.S. Currency as collateral for the Micro-Loans Banterra Bank will make to neighbors in need; and that the District Council authorizes its Treasurer and/or its Executive Director and/or its President to make the previously mentioned payment and execute an agreement with Banterra Bank in furtherance of the Micro-Loan Program. Mike Rogan made the motion to adopt Resolution 2025.2 and Julie Folz seconded the motion. In discussion, Dan reiterated the \$50,000 serves only as collateral for the Micro-Loan program and would be held in an interest bearing account. The only way we would lose the money would be if a neighbor does not repay the loan. We would wish to stay informed by the bank when loan payments are not met so we can help keep a good credit rating for those receiving the loans. The vote was unanimous in favor of adopting Resolution 2025-2.
- Noah noted “Homeless Connect” is being held Thursday, April 3, from 8:30am - 2:30pm at the Old National Events Plaza. Noah could use volunteers to enter intake information into Charity Tracker. He described this event as a “one-stop shop” for those needing help.

ROLL CALL of CONFERENCES, NEW MEMBERS, ILL AND DECEASED VINCENTIANS, ANNOUNCEMENTS: Conferences not present were Holy Rosary, Sts. Francis and Wendel and Sts. Mary and John. St. Benedict has two new members - Carol Evans and Suzanne Seibert.

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

7:38PM MEETING ADJOURNED. Next meeting is April 1, 2025 at 6pm in St. Mary's Parish Rager Hall