

**SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT de PAUL, EVANSVILLE DISTRICT
JUNE 3, 2025, MEETING MINUTES**

6:01PM President Dan Miller called the meeting to order in Rager Hall of Sts. Mary & 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); Dr. Ashley Newell (Incoming Executive Director); Sr. Donna Herr (Food Pantry Manager); Mary Reed (Incoming Food Pantry Manager); Mike McKee (Thrift Store Advisory Board Chair); Maggie Garrison (Thrift Store Manager); Noah Werner (Director of Case Management). Absent: Bill Hussmann (Food Pantry Advisory Board Chair).

OPENING PRAYER: Sr. Doris led us in reciting the traditional SVdP opening prayer.

REFLECTION: In this Jubilee Year of Hope, Sr. Doris asked us to read, reflect and discuss what we find hopeful from the full text of Pope Leo XIV's first speech following his election. Each table read a paragraph of the speech aloud and then shared their thoughts with each other. We ended with a prayer for his ministry taken from 'Ten Messages of Hope from Pope Leo XIV: A Reflective Journey for the Vincentian Family'.

RULE 4.1.2: "The Society urges the Vincentians to consider undertaking a personal commitment for a particular period of time to work with Vincentians in other countries or to spread Conferences". Read by Dan.

MINUTES: The May 6, 2025, SVdP District Council meeting minutes were approved as written.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Melanie

Financial Statements - April 30, 2025

District Council

- General Donations are about \$19,000 ahead for the YTD
- Conference grants distributed through the end of April have totaled \$43,000, compared to \$36,000 at this point last year
- April's payroll was higher than usual due to having 5 weeks instead of just 4
- The District Council net loss for the year to date is \$159,000, which is up \$70,000 from last year, most of which can be attributed to the \$65,000 decrease in grants received

Food Pantry

- For the first six months of the year, cash donations are down \$43,000

- Food Purchases are almost 20% less than last year, and are down \$20,000 year-to-date
- April's operating expenses were about \$19,000 more than last April, but include a payment of \$22,400 for security upgrades which should be reimbursed from the DHS grant we were awarded
- That DHS expense also contributed to a net loss of \$7,800 for the month

Thrift Store

- April store sales were \$10,000 more than last April, making year-to-date sales \$10,000 less than last year
- April payroll was about \$12,000 more than last April, due to having 5 payrolls instead of 4, employee raises given in April (with backpay for part of March), and additional positions filled since last year
- Other expenses remain steady
- April net income was \$10,000, and year-to-date net income is \$50,000

Other Items:

- Endowment Distributions - We have just been notified of distributions that are available from endowments with the Catholic Foundation of which we are beneficiaries:
 - SVdP District Council Endowment - \$34,175.88 moved to Unrestricted
 - SVdP Crisis Fund - \$364.53 moved to Unrestricted
 - Robert T Tempel Endowment - \$1,298.81 Automatically disbursed
 - Joyce Harms Endowment - Food Pantry \$3,315.11 Automatically disbursed
 - Joyce Harms Endowment - Crisis Fund \$3,315.11 Automatically disbursed

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Joe

- Joe began by introducing Mary Reed, our new Food Pantry Manager, and Dr. Ashley Newell, our new Executive Director. He asked each to tell us a little bit about themselves.
 - Mary Reed said she is a single parent and a member of All Saints parish. She felt God had answered her prayers by leading her in steps toward this new position; first as an employee at the Thrift Store followed by a promotion to store Assistant Manager, and finally to applying for the Food Pantry Manager position. She is very grateful and said she too has experienced hunger and food insecurity in the past and can relate to those served at the Food Pantry.
 - Dr. Ashley Newell is a member of St. Benedict parish and is married with two children. Until the end of 2024 she had worked 8 years in the offices of our elected US House of Representatives Congressperson. Most recently she led Constituent Services in the office of Congressman Dr. Larry Buschon. She especially loved this position of being able to help anyone who contacted the Congressman's office for help...no matter race, creed, color or political affiliation. When Dr. Buschon retired she felt she had reached her career capacity in that role and returned to being a full-time homemaker. Before long she felt her excess energy needed more

direction. When she saw the opening in the church bulletin for the SVdP Food Pantry Manager, she applied and was interviewed. Her experience, however, made her better suited as a candidate for the Executive Director position and she was asked to consider it and was hired. Dr. Newell also felt God had led her to this new avenue for service to others and she was grateful.

- **Grant updates**
 - **DHS (Dept of Homeland Security) -** waiting on additional information to file report for reimbursements. We have 2 years in which to spend grant monies for security upgrades at the Food Pantry and Thrift Store
 - **CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) -** City Council meets Monday, June 23 to consider Mayor Terry's recommendations for CDBG funding. Noah will attend to answer any questions. Melanie will review our budget proposal with Noah prior to the meeting in preparation. In general, the recommendations from the mayor's office this year have been considerably lower than in past and we should feel good with our 15K mayoral recommendation vs our 20K request in comparison with other entities.
 - **Evansville Endowment Fund -** To be used for Capital Improvements. Our Letter of Intent will be filed by June 16. Noah and Melanie are working to get a quote from Happe Const. Co. on the cost of asbestos abatement at the Thrift Store for floor replacement.
 - **Sacred Heart Fund -** This is a private donor, and we were invited to apply for up to \$50K. Noah applied for a one-year grant of \$50,000. Joe received a call this morning that we were selected to receive the amount requested. The grant monies are to be used for rent and utilities by the Society. Joe has asked the Executive Committee to discuss and decide on the grant distribution with input from the Administrative Office.
 - **CenterPoint Foundation grant -** will be applied for when their grant cycle opens.
 - **Conference grants -** there has been a flurry of requests since the last meeting. All have been approved and distributed.
 - **SVdP Mideast Region Friends of the Poor Grants -** Joe reminded conferences not to forget to submit their requests (July 23-Aug 13) to National Council for up to 5K per conference to help with their cases.
- **Friends of the Poor Walk -** to be held Sept 27th. So far, we have \$13,950 from 25 sponsors. We are running just a little behind last year.
- **Inside conference packets is the Mideast Region Disaster Preparedness Newsletter** for sharing with the conference members.
- **Preparations for transitioning -** Joe is getting files in order, emails and written instructions. Meetings are being set up. Fortunately, Ashley will have Donna Hurm and Noah Werner to help with the finances (Donna) and other aspects (Noah) of the position as well as the great help and support of our president, Dan Miller.

- All conferences have been visited this spring.
- Quarterly Gathering – will be held June 21 at Holy Redeemer. To date we have 36 online registrations with more to add from the Coordinator's Office call-in list.
- The Fall Quarterly gathering belongs (alphabetically) to Holy Rosary. Because the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul falls on the 27th (day scheduled for FOP Walk) perhaps the gathering could be held Sunday, Sept 28.
- Ozanam Orientation - Date scheduled for Sat., Oct 25 at St. Benedict Woodward Center from 9am-3pm. We have had a very sizeable turnout of Vincentians for this training in the last five years; 60-70%, which is a high percentage than compared with other districts. This training is very important for formation as a Vincentian.
- Presidential terms - Presidential terms are 3 years and begin Oct 1. A president may serve 2 consecutive 3-year terms before a different President serves at least one 3-year term. If you replaced the previous President on a date other than Oct 1, the clock already started ticking and at Oct 1 you are starting your second year in the 3-year term. Conference Presidents completing six years on Sept 30, 2025, are Annunciation, Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd and St. Clement. Those completing their first 3-year term this year are St. Boniface, St. James, St. John Evangelist Daylight and St. John Baptist Newburgh. Now is the time to start working on getting your candidates lined up for your September election. Joe stressed it is important to cultivate and share leadership.
- Joe's cell phone and its assigned number belong to the District Council and will continue in the possession of the Executive Director. Please replace in your contacts/records Joe's name with Dr. Ashley Newell at the number assigned: 812-549-2789.
- Personal plans for the future with SVdP - Joe will become an active Vincentian in a conference soon. The recently formed conference at Rockport/Chrisney would service a geographic area in southern Spencer County that generally has neighbors in need. Joe may join the parish/conference there or St Francis Assisi in northern Spencer County with the 3 parishes in Dale, Mariah Hill and Santa Claus. Joe has also been contacted by Joe Strosnider, President of the Diocesan Society of SVdP, to serve as his Vice President with intent of succeeding him as President after 2 years. Joe would like to also work in 'Formation' via teaching and training Vincentians in Charity Tracker, Ozanam Orientation and the like.

THRIFT STORE REPORT - Mike and Maggie

- Per the Thrift Store Voucher and Volunteer Tracking Report (Rolling Previous 12 months) Mike noted:
 - April Volunteer hours are up (251) considerably in part due to students meeting end-of-school year volunteer commitments
 - Total served (adults and children) by clothing vouchers (277) were up in April
 - Total Number of Items sold were up (2156)
 - April Dollar amount Sold of \$6,259.70 was highest in the last 12 months - up 13.8% in the last 3 months.

- Furniture dollar amount sold was down for April (\$1843.34) in part due to less donations.
- Bedding sales by voucher (32) were just slightly lower from March and overall, very good
- A second truck driver has been hired. He is from Peru, speaks excellent Spanish and his English is coming along. His name is Lot.
- Maggie noted the need for small kitchen appliances for cooking (microwaves, toaster ovens, air fryers, etc.)
- Maggie distributed a 'Average Furniture/Misc. Price List'. It included popular Furniture Items; Kitchen Items; and Linens with prices or price ranges for each item. She noted higher value items could be priced higher than these averages. Also noted were items not allowed on furniture vouchers such as toys, beds, home decor, any type of clothing, etc. Listing all such items would be impossible.
- Maggie also made note that 'Lyft' is partnering with Indeed, Goodwill and United Way to provide free rides/transportation for those without means of transportation to get to job interviews. If hired, they also will provide up to 3 weeks of free rides to the new job. She gave handouts for the conference presidents to share and for Noah in his work. Maggie suggested this could also be added to the Resource page of our website.

FOOD PANTRY REPORT: Sr. Donna

- In May 2664 individuals were served (up 71 from previous month and up 3 from May 2024). We served 1214 households this May (up 60 from the previous month and 65 more than May 2024). Sister noted they have seen a lot of new families recently and, in fact, just last week had seen 10 in one day! There are people struggling and in need of food.
- Student volunteers, helping before the end of the school year, and grandchildren of volunteers have been a big help. They are good workers and are appreciated.
- The new flooring in the office area is now installed and looks good. It turned out the old flooring had to be taken up before the new floor could be installed properly.
- Mary Reed starts June 5th and will work with Sister for the month of June. Sister is happy to welcome her.
- In her 17 years of service as the Food Pantry Manager, Sister said it has been "an absolute joy to work in this ministry". She never felt like she was working a 'job'. The people she met ("over 100 have come into my life"), worked with and served mean the most to her. She also thanked the conferences for their assistance in food drives. Sister said she was leaving with a very grateful heart.

ON-GOING BUSINESS: Dan

- Resolution 2025.3 implementing a District Council Safeguarding Policy - Dan has reworked the policy to address issues raised at the May meeting and to make the policy's application more clear. All employees, Active Members, Associate Members and Volunteers (who volunteer in any significant way) aged 18 and older

must read and sign the Harassment Policy Acknowledgment Form. The District Council, Thrift Store and Food Pantry must maintain a file of these signed Harassment Policy Acknowledgment Forms. Conferences should forward their signed forms to the District Council for safekeeping. Eventually, electronic signatures will make this record keeping less cumbersome. Volunteer seminarians helping in parishes have already had similar training, and are, therefore, exempt from signing the form. In addition, all employees, Active Members, Associate Members and Volunteers aged 18 and older with access to our neighbor's data will be subject to a criminal background check pursuant to Zachary's Law (vehicle drivers for SVdP would also have their driving records checked for moving violations, etc.) and be mandated to complete Virtus Training on-line. This training can be intense and takes 3+ hours to complete. The cost for this is approximately \$4.50 per person if we use the program used by National SVdP. Every 3 years the training must be refreshed. Name and date of birth is needed to run the criminal background checks. If more personal information is needed the District Council will let the conferences know. Because of the time involved in gathering the names and dates of birth for all involved and in anticipation of possible 'glitches', it was suggested and generally agreed we allow 45-90 days after we vote to approve this Safeguarding Policy to implement it. Regarding Section X of the new policy, 'Partners and Vendors' was reworded to make clear Partners and Vendors are aware of our policy and may be required to share their similar policies. They may also be required to complete our training and/or sign our Harassment Acknowledgment Form. If there would be a violation of the policy, the District Council reserves the right to remove the perpetrator from our facilities and prohibit that person from working with the Society's neighbors in need.

- Phil Gamble made the motion to approve the Safeguarding Policy reworded as presented tonight and delay implementing the policy until Sept. 1. Julie Folz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- Treasurer's Training on-line - A PowerPoint with accompanying narration will soon be available on-line for future conference training. All the forms will be included in the PowerPoint. A Review Team needs to be set up at the District Council level and Dan would appreciate any suggestions for team members be forwarded to him.
- Introducing new Executive Director and Food Pantry Manager - See Director's Report above.
- Events: Quarterly Gathering June 21 - will be held at Holy Redeemer parish with Mass at 5pm followed by dinner and farewell to Joe Cook. Sr. Donna's reception June 29 will be held at the Food Pantry from 1-4 pm.

NEW BUSINESS: Dan

- At the next District Council meeting, July 1, the 2025-2026 budget will be presented for the first reading.

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

- **All but St. Matthew and Young Adult Conferences were in attendance.**
- **St. Boniface has 2 new members: Mike Sellers and Charlie Wichman.**
- **Melanie Seibert introduced St. Clement Conference President-Elect, Kim Rockhill.**

CLOSING PRAYER: In thanksgiving for new members and for a smooth transition in leadership roles, Sr. Doris led us in reciting the SVdP Vision Prayer followed by the 'Hail Mary'.

7:38PM President Dan Miller adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be July 1, 2025, at 6:00PM in St. Mary's parish Rager Hall.