

**ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY, EVANSVILLE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**

**6:02PM President Dan Miller called the meeting to order in Rager Hall of Sts. Mary & John Parish.**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Executive Committee Members - President Dan Miller, Vice President Jeff Kropfl, Secretary Rosemary Beckman, Acting Treasurer Donna Hurm, Spiritual Advisor Sr Doris Clippard, Executive Director Dr. Ashley Newell, Food Pantry Manager Mary Reed, Thrift Store Manager Jennifer Gieselman, Director of Case Management and OEA Noah Werner.**

**Absent - Food Pantry Advisory Board Chair Bill Hussmann, Thrift Store Advisory Board Chair Mike McKee.**

**Guests - Steve Cooper of Evansville Emergency Food Pantry Consortium Inc. and DiAnne Forville of St Clement Conference.**

**OPENING PRAYER - Sr Doris lead us in reciting the traditional SVdP Opening Prayer.**

**REFLECTION - Sr Doris provided a piece entitled "Accompanied by Justice" relating the connection between charity and justice. The piece was read aloud and we were asked to discuss in small groups "What is my 'second coat'? To whom does it belong?" as preached by St John the Baptist. Sister noted Pope Leo XIII, who wrote a widely regarded encyclical on Catholic Social Justice, acknowledged Blessed Frederic Ozanam as a precursor of Catholic Social Doctrine in action. We recited the 'Hail Mary' in conclusion. Sister also asked all conferences to complete a form stating Conference name, President, Spiritual Advisor, e-mail and cell phone. Sister is hoping to establish a Spiritual Advisor Team for addressing various items (Lenten Retreat planning, networking, sharing resources and needs, etc.).**

**RULE 5.1: "Faithful to the clear intentions of Blessed Frederic Ozanam and his companions, the Society has a close relationship with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Respect of the members for the hierarchy provide the foundation for harmonious reciprocal cooperation." Read by Dan.**

**PRESENTATION OF THE EVANSVILLE FOOD PANTRY CONSORTIUM BY STEVE COOPER -**

- **A History of the Consortium was provided along with a list of the participating Food Pantries and date they joined. Mr. Cooper noted that over the years anywhere from 5 to 7 strategically located food pantries are providing food for 35,000 to 45,000 individuals annually.**
- **Current status information included**
  - **6 pantries are current members**
  - **44,000 individuals served annually**

- Tri- State Food Bank costs more than doubled over past 2 years
- Existing grants now cancelled
- Consortium owes almost \$80,000 to Tri State Food Bank
- In Aug. all 6 pantries with consortium accounts at Food Bank turned off to further purchases
- Funds from Toyota grant (\$10,000) have been received
- Other approved grants scheduled to be received late Sept or early Oct.
- The Consortium spends about \$25,000 a month to keep pantries stocked to serve hungry clients.
- Consortium needs about \$100,000 between now and end of year to close the gap
- Going forward the plan is to rely on individual donations instead of grants
- “People Feeding People Campaign” being started to solicit monthly donations from individuals. If 2000 persons would donate \$11 per month, the Consortium could operate in the black
- Various reports and charts with statistics were provided by Mr. Cooper
- Dan suggested the Consortium reapply for the federal grant denied earlier as he has seen online where the grant has been reauthorized. Mr. Cooper noted the Consortium is also applying for the mayor’s ‘Forward Together’ grant. Dan suggested the need for the Consortium to make a change in their ByLaws regarding their board and succession. Dan noted the SVdP District Council will address the Consortium request to help them out by paying their \$43,909.03 invoice later in this meeting.

**MINUTES:** The SVdP District Council August 5, 2025, meeting minutes were approved as written.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT: Donna**

#### **Financial Summary Comments 9/2/25**

##### **District Council**

- General Donations are about \$24,000 ahead for the YTD.
- The District Council net loss for the year to date is about \$165,000, which is about \$32,000 more than last year, most of which can be attributed to the \$60,000 decrease in grants received for one year only for the payroll grant for my position.

##### **Food Pantry**

- For the first nine months of the year, cash donations are down about \$30,000.
- Food Purchases continue to be about 23% less than last year and are down almost \$35,000 year-to-date.
- Food Pantry net loss YTD of about \$8,200 is around the same as last year's YTD net loss of about \$8,000.

### **Thrift Store**

- July store sales were about \$13,000 more than last July, making year-to-date sales about \$13,500 more than last year.
- July payroll was about \$10,000 less than last July, but year-to-date payroll is about \$43,000 more compared to last year YTD.
- Other July expenses were about \$8,000 less than last July.
- July net income was about \$1,500, compared to a net income of about \$10,000 July last year, and year-to-date net income is about \$75,000, compared to about \$118,000 year-to-date last year.

Donna asked if there were any questions on the Financial Summary Report and there were none.

Donna reviewed the Cash Balance Report as of July 31, 2025, for the Evansville District Council. This report lists all Bank Accounts (checking, savings, investments, Endowment Fund-Unrestricted) and provides their total account balances as well as how much of each account balance is allocated to the District Council, Food Pantry or Thrift Store.

Donna noted 3 CD accounts that will be coming due for renewal or cashing in late Sept: \$130,000 due Sept 26 for Food Pantry; \$200,000 due Sept 22 and \$125,000 due Sept 29 both for the Thrift Store.

Dan suggested we find out what the renewal interest rate would be for each CD account. He also noted we may need to keep 'liquid' the Food Pantry CD if we decide to pay the current Consortium invoice.

Donna also provided 2024-2025 Annual Report Guidelines for conference Treasurers and Presidents (emailing to each conference as well). In addition, Donna listed and explained items necessary for each conference to provide for the fiscal year- end reports and calendar year-end reports/tax filings.

Donna encouraged conferences to contact her should there be any questions or concerns regarding these necessary reports.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Ashley**

#### **Grants**

- Amcor/Berry: Denied due to asset review; we will revisit in the next cycle.
- IDHS Grant: Submission due September 15; Donna and Ashley are preparing the required checkpoint information. These funds will be used for the installation of security devices.
- CBDG Grant: Noah reported we are approved for 19K for 2026. We requested 20K.
- MMI Grant: First distribution of approx. \$22,000 is expected in October and will directly support the Food Pantry.
- Evansville Endowment Fund - Noah and Ashley have a site visit scheduled for Sept. 10. Funds would be used towards Capital Improvement projects at the Thrift Store.

## **Financials**

**A Food Pantry CD valued at \$130,000 will mature on September 26. Ashley recommends using these funds to pay down the \$43,909.03 Consortium invoice with the balance invested into grocery purchases to sustain operations.**

**To date, Ashley has submitted 18 requests for pantry funding; 15 remain under review.**

**Three denials offered insight into where we can better target future requests:**

- **WK Kellogg: Declined due to Board composition**
- **JM Smucker: Declined due to distribution hub proximity (just 20 miles out of range)**
- **Del Monte: Currently in bankruptcy proceedings**

**For the Thrift Store Ashley has placed 6 capital funding requests, all pending LOI approval.**

**In addition, the National Assembly has shared a cost-saving resource for credit card processing fees. Their model has cut fees by over 70% for peer organizations. Ashley recommends we engage this service for both the Thrift Store and our District Council donations to maximize every dollar given. A meeting has been scheduled with their CEO for Sept 9. We would only pay for their services if reductions are found and the cost is 35% of realized reductions over 36 months.**

**Next week Ashley will have a Zoom meeting with the National SVdP CFO, Kevin Prior, to review our portfolio and propose potential avenues for more aggressive growth to increase annual revenues.**

## **Food Pantry**

**Our newest operational challenge is egg supply. Tri-State Food Bank has lost its supplier and outreach to 5 alternative vendors confirmed that shell egg donations will not resume until 2026 due to avian influenza. Ashley is proactively exploring powdered and liquid alternatives to temporarily maintain nutrition standards for families and will bring it before the FP Committee at our upcoming meeting.**

**Ashley also began conversations with other SVdP conferences across the Mideast region to “twin” food donations. Some conferences are interested in receiving Thrift Store overstock in exchange for pantry staples, opening creative channels of support. On a positive note, Holy Redeemer's campaign stocked our shelves with several cases of our highest-need items - an excellent example of community partnership making an immediate impact. Thank You!**

## **Thrift Store**

**To prepare for needed improvements Jennifer and Ashley have secured competitive bids from multiple contractors (Popham Const., Midwest Const., Deig Brothers) in addition to the bid from Happe Const. Next week Noah and Ashley will meet with the Evansville Endowment Fund regarding expanded capital support. On Oct. 15 the SVdP Mideast Director of Philanthropy, Meg Ahlering, will tour our special works facilities and discuss**

a potential capital grant from National Assembly as well as other avenues of funding or twinning.

### **Friends of the Poor Walk**

We are on pace to meet our \$40,000 goal with \$38,250 already secured. St. Clement has pledged 3 volunteers to assist with setup/teardown, and we are still seeking 3 additional volunteers from each of the other conferences.

### **Hunger Bowl**

Fundraising for the Hunger Bowl began later than usual this year (July) but momentum is building. To date Ashley has reached out to 104 donors and our team has secured \$15,900 toward our \$40,000 goal.

Upcoming media appearances, including an interview with WIKY on Sept 8 and a potential second station spot, will help drive awareness and support.

### **Closing**

Despite external challenges - from shifting grant criteria to industry-wide supply chain disruptions, our District is demonstrating resilience and creativity. We are actively engaging new funding opportunities, pursuing partnerships and leveraging every available resource to meet community needs. These efforts show that even in a difficult year we are not standing still. We are moving forward with strength.

### **STORE REPORT: Jennifer**

- The Thrift Store Voucher and Volunteer Tracking Report showed an increase in July over the previous month in all categories: volunteer hours 180.5; total served by clothing vouchers 215; number of items sold 1644; dollar value of item sales \$5,558.62; and furniture sold dollar value \$2,253.49. Families served by bedding vouchers also increased in July to 33 over June total of 24.
- A full-time cashier has been hired.
- The trucks are going out each morning and afternoon picking up more donations.
- Senior Day, the first Wed. of the month, has been very successful.
- A military discount (with ID) is now offered every day.
- The popular College Student discount will continue indefinitely
- More available space to store bedding now allows for beds to be shipped to the neighbor directly from the store (not the company).
- A telephone conference with Ivy Tech helped Jennifer to learn their student worker program and system for tracking hours worked. Student employees will not serve as drivers but can accompany the delivery trucks to assist in picking up of donations.

- In October an Employee Appreciation Dinner is being planned and will be held outside the store premises.
- Quotes from construction companies are being obtained to make the store restrooms ADA compliant.
- The Thrift Store is running smoothly by a great team with positive attitudes.

#### **FOOD PANTRY REPORT: Mary**

- 2619 individuals and 1169 households were served in the month of August. The figures were down about 50 from previous month.
- Mary gave a big 'Thank You' to Holy Redeemer parish for their recent very generous donation to the pantry for needed items.
- 4 new volunteers now help on Tuesdays - the busiest day of the week for the pantry.
- Mary requests volunteers for organizing inventory anticipated from upcoming Thanksgiving food drives.
- Ruler Foods is delivering on Wednesdays. Milk has been difficult to keep in stock and Mary may need to double deliveries of milk.
- The pantry stock is being built back up and is currently looking good.

#### **ON-GOING BUSINESS: Dan**

- **Resolution 2025.5: the 2025-2026 Budget:** The 2025-26 Budget was read and reviewed at the August meeting. With no questions or objections put forward, Tom Bryan made the motion to approve the Budget for the Fiscal Year Oct 1, 2025, to Sept 30, 2026, for the District Council, Food Panty and Thrift Store. Julie Folz seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor of Resolution 2025.5.
- **Assistance to the Food Pantry Consortium -** The Consortium has invoiced us \$43,909.03 for food we received after the Consortium's funds ran out. They have asked us to help them out by paying this invoice. Ashley had suggested we use a portion of the \$130,000 CD maturing later this month to pay this invoice. Dan noted we have these funds for "rainy days" and after the invoice is paid the remainder of the CD could be earmarked for purchasing groceries for the pantry. Dan also noted Bill Hussmann had called an emergency meeting and the consensus of the Food Pantry Advisory Board members was to pay the Consortium invoice. Jennifer Schmitz made the motion to pay the Consortium \$43,909.03 invoice and Deb Neufelder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- **Crisis Fund Management -** Dan noted another plan may need to be made if no conference(s) are willing to take this up. For now, he tabled the issue with intent to discuss options at the next Executive Committee meeting.
- **Friends of the Poor Walk -** to be held Sept 27 at 9am at the State Hospital grounds. Bill Hussmann has emailed the need for more sponsors, volunteers and greater

marketing to get the word out (church bulletin inserts, yard signs etc.). Donations of diapers (Preemies to size 6) are appreciated for the Pantry.

**NEW BUSINESS: Dan**

- News from the National Assembly - Several from the District Council and conferences attended the National Assembly Aug. 26-31 in Louisville KY. Dan asked for comments from attendees. All comments reflected a positive and informative experience.
- Quarterly Gathering Commissioning Ceremony - Oct 12 at Holy Rosary 9am Mass breakfast and speaker will follow. Commissioning Ceremony will also take place following the breakfast with details to be worked out.

**ROLL CALL of CONFERENCES, New Members, ill and deceased Vincentians, announcements**

- Conferences not in attendance were All Saints, Holy Redeemer, St. Benedict and Sts. Francis and Wendel.
- Annunciation has a new member, Frank Conkling.

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Sr. Doris led us in reciting the SVdP Vision Prayer in thanksgiving for new member, Frank, and new volunteers, also for the return of Mike Rogan after hip issues.

**7:39PM MEETING ADJOURNED.** Next meeting is Oct 7, 2025, 6pm at St. Mary's Rager Hall.