Minutes of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

St. Ann Church, Bethany Beach

April 11, 2016

Meeting was called to order in Dulaney Hall at 7:04 PM by President Mike Farrar. Deacon Jack Freebery led us in prayer and meditation.

**Newcomers welcomed**: Delores Creel, Lisa Kushto and Pat Mallecky.

**Secretary’s Report**: Minutes were accepted. Jackie Boyd is retiring as Secretary. Marilyn Janus will take minutes for morning meetings.

**Treasurer’s Report**: Eileen Mulaney was absent. Mike Farrar reported that $3500 was received from the special SVDP envelope now provided with the regular contribution envelopes. The Easter Monday fundraiser at Armand’s brought in $411; they will repeat this every year. At the last meeting, it was decided that our conference needs $1,000 a week to cover phone and food pantry clients. Mike felt a yearly speech from the pulpit after Memorial Day was needed. John Traina felt we should detail both our expenses and the amount of food given away.

**For the next meeting**, Mike asked everyone to consider the specifics of this appeal, including the possibility of a matching campaign. Mary Ellen Gonski asked if we needed thank you notes for regular contributors. The consensus was no. Lenore Thommes asked if we had specific stationery for thank yous. Sue Clarke said we did from our early organizing days.

**President’s Report**: Mike asked what progress was being made on the logistics of getting payments to vendors on behalf of clients. Deacon Jack said that vendors want confirmation of payment that can be faxed or e-mailed. Mike said he had designed a hard copy for this purpose in the black binder. Dan DiLuzio recommended a softcopy in PDF form for the Website, which could be done from e-mail or phone. It was suggested that all requests should go through Mary Ellen, who already has the form. How do we simplify this for conference non-techies? Mike suggested keeping the hardcopy on file so it could be mailed. John Traina said he used his own e-mail.

**For the next** **meeting,** Mike asked John to spell out several ways we could deal with this issue, for the benefit of people who had missed meetings, etc. Jim Mullen asked if vendors would just take a check with no verification of signature. The consensus was they would. Mary Ellen said we are now a well-established organization and have relationships with vendors. Delores Creel thought one person should handle vendor payments. Mike pointed out that it was usually an emergency. John asked if a home visit was a must before making a payment. Mike said it was decided, at the last meeting, that a home visit is our MO, but that individual exceptions are allowed.

**Home Visit Team**: The HV Team distributed a form with suggestions for handling both phone calls and

Visits, which Tish Galu suggested should be no longer than 30 minutes. Tish stressed that if anyone is

uncomfortable making a Home Visit, she has people trained to help them. The team has invited Mike to accompany them at any time.

**For the next** **meeting,** Mike asked everyone present to read over the form, so it can be discussed and a typical scenario can be role played.

**Team Five Report:** No details, one check sent to aid a client who later got a job.

**Team Six Report:** Deacon Jack said his team gave out 20 bags of food at the Thursday Food Pantry and had 10 contacts from clients, with 7 home visits made. He stressed that Home Visits are burdensome, and he feels every team should follow up on their own Home Visits, even after their week is up, keeping all their own cases in a specific file until they are resolved, and putting a marker in the general file to indicate files previously worked on. Mike asked for the feeling of the conference - consensus was that this should be done. Joe Stiller asked how we could follow up after passing the SVDP phone on to the next team. Deacon Jack said he dialed \*67 +area code+number, which comes up “private caller.” John asked if Deacon Jack followed up with clients even after the Home Visit and disbursement of financial aid. Deacon Jack said he did, concerning general advice and future financial need. Mike asked Deacon Jack why where were not home visits for all ten clients; he wasn’t sure.

**For the next meeting**, Mike asked if that could be tracked down.

Mike asked Deacon Jack for details of Team Six phone calls that might help other teams for the future. Deacon Jack said they were all complicated and all were in need. But he wondered - given that so many conference members are Seniors, active in other organizations, and busy travelling or visiting family, so that there are always team members missing - whether we should put more emphasis on fund-raising and shift the social aspects of our work to Appropriate State Services Departments. Pyle Center is giving less to their clients because we are matching their funds; also, their own budget has been cut. Myra Stock asked if Pyle Center clients were our only referrals. Deacon Jack said no, so there is often duplication and overlap of services.

Mike said we could adopt Tom Fallon’s approach of acting in the moment, as emergency aid instead of long-term contact. John agreed and said, at some point, we had to let a case go. Madelyn Lazaro said when you make a Home Visit, you get involved with clients and want to do more, but she did feel we should make it clear, at some point, that this was one-time only help. Mike suggested we all perform our role, large or small, the best we can. John said we can help best by encouraging clients to contact agencies themselves. A lengthy discussion followed on the best way to help clients.

**New Business**: Sue Clark said Team Seven could use more members. Team Four held an Easter drawing on their Food Pantry Thursday, March 24. Micelia Rivera won a handmade quilt. Livly Olmedo Trusillo, Esther Gil and Maria I. Vargas each won bags filled with a variety of items, which they were asked to pick up the next Thursday at OLG. Per Lenore Thommes, everything was donated and at no cost to SVDP.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 AM**. Next meeting**: **April 25, at 7 PM, in Dulaney Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Janus