

**MINUTES - Final**  
**Voice of the Faithful, Inc.**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting August 20, 2013**

**Board Members Present:** Mark Mullaney (office), Ron DuBois (office); Mary Pat Fox (phone); Mary Freeman (phone); Ed Greenan (phone); Phil Megna (phone); Margaret Roylance (office); Anne Southwood (phone); and Patricia Gomez (phone). Larry Mulligan (phone) joined late.

**Executive Director:** Donna Doucette (office)

**Development Coordinator:** Jayne O'Donnell (phone)

President Mark Mullaney called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM

**Opening Prayer:** Mark Mullaney led the group in prayer for insight, humility, and guidance in decision-making for the good of all.

**1. Consent:** The minutes from the July 23, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved (9-0-0).

**2. Finances:** Reporting on the financial statements for July 2013, Treasurer Anne Southwood noted the current Liquidity level stands at 1.5, problematic. Anne recommends exploring ways to spread out receipt of revenue over the entire fiscal year.

Donna Doucette discussed a way to manage the chronic summer cycle of low revenue. Successful major fundraising during the fall of each year could be put into an endowment fund and provide a buffer for summer expenses. Monthly donations, if increased, could cover monthly expenses.

**3. Development Committee:** Development Coordinator Jayne O'Donnell reported on a planned fund-raising event for Friday, October 25, 2013. The speaker will be Paul Lakeland of Fairfield University, who will address the promise, hopes and concerns for the tenure of our new Pope.

Mark Mullaney presented a proposal to assemble next spring at an educational VOTF meeting. The Hartford Convention Center is available Saturday April 5, 2014, at low cost. A keynote, themed presentation would be followed by a panel discussion of the theme. Box lunch would precede breakout sessions on specific topics, such as: role of women in the church, celibacy and married priests, and financial accountability in parishes and dioceses. Action items and resources would be provided. The focused goals of these sessions are to educate, train and empower attendees to become advocates in their own parishes.

Board members discussed topics including focused outcomes of the event, speaker/panelist honorariums, financial and programmatic concerns, as well as potential fund-raising activities during the event.

Mary Freeman called for a vote on the following Resolution, which was seconded by MaryPat Fox: **To approve moving forward with plans for an Assembly on April 5, 2014, in Hartford CT, based on the financials given this evening, the Board's acceptance of an interest-free loan in March 2014 if needed, and contingent upon reformulation of the theme and agenda. The resolution was unanimously approved: 10-0-0.**

**4. Status of VOTF Initiatives:** Mary Freeman reported the various stages of goal completion:

1. Protection of Children: 2013 goals have been completed. Efforts will gear up in February of 2014 in preparation for April Child Abuse Prevention month.
2. Bishop Selection: a final cover letter is expected shortly to accompany the revised study paper, which offers a model of lay involvement. Both will be sent to the Pope and heads of various USCCB groups.
3. Clericalism; Celibacy (2 documents); Married Priests. Three papers have been completed and are listed on our website, as well as suggestions on how the documents can be used. Next step is to promote these resource documents and how to engage folks to discussions.
4. Women in the Church: *Women Deacons: Past, Present, and Future* is the topic for two pilot book discussion groups, who will provide feedback using this book as an educational tool. Based on their feedback, a study guide / template will be compiled and made available for others to use within their parishes / groups. One of the authors of the book, Phyllis Zagano, will be speaking at Boston College C-21 on to Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> on this topic. Members of these pilot groups plan to attend that event.
5. Spiritual Life & Growth: report pending.
6. Youth in the Church: plans are being considered to reformat the Winchester VOTF group template for more general use by other parishes and groups.
7. Finance: Margaret Roylance reported that diocesan website data gathering is almost completed. Once identified, the data will be analyzed. Collaboration with the group reviewing Canon Law and diocesan finance councils continues. The addition of new members will broaden the scope of their work.

Next steps that are focused on action will be prepared along with resources and education tools to be made available at the April 2014 Assembly.

**5. Executive Director's Report:**

Donna highlighted VOTF response to a Montana pastor and his parish finance council on the misappropriation of parish funds by a previous pastor. Resources and education were provided on how to communicate with the local bishops and parishioners.

**6. Other:** VOTF will promote a trip to Rome in late April 2014 with Fr. Walter Cuenin during the expected dates for canonization of two previous Popes.

**7: Closing Prayer:** Mark led us in the Glory Be to the Father.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Patricia T. Gomez  
Board Member and Secretary