

ST. FRANCIS THRIFT SHOP COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 8, 2011

ATTENDEES: Eleanor Bell; Dave DeReamer; Joe Fortin; Mary Greene; Lou Mahoney; Christine Hadersbeck; Thom Hill; Bob Soltys; Francine Tobin; Paul DiBlasi (Absent: Dion Jenks)

Call to Order at 9:15 by Lou Mahoney, who opened meeting with a prayer.

Minutes for October: Approved as presented; no corrections.

Financial Status: In Dion Jenks absence, Lou distributed the Financial Statements with little discussion. From the Statements: Total October Sales were \$39,945 which were \$3,278 below plan for October and \$14,905 below plan for YTD. YTD sales were \$158,286. Total expenses were favorable by \$953 for October and \$1503 for YTD. Net Income unfavorable by \$2417 for October and unfavorable by \$13,582 YTD. As discussed, there has been a significant decrease in customers who, in the past, have bought our clothing.

Manager's Report: The Christmas Shop is up and running and doing very well. The sales are ahead of expectation. Christine reported that the Ministry Fair did well and we have 9 new volunteers signed up. Note: Dave DeReamer in his later report stated that we actually have 13 or 14 new volunteers who signed up. (See Dave's report)

There was a discussion about a parishioner who suggested we sell buttons with the legend "It's OK to say Merry Christmas". The parishioner would buy the buttons and would want to be reimbursed. It was decided that the Thrift Shop would not do this as it would be a more suitable endeavor for one of the school activities.

Marketing: Eleanor Bell & Thom Hill Eleanor advised that we have new rack cards for the shop; the TV Scroll is running; there are new ads scheduled. There will be bulletins for St. Francis; St. Gregory's; and Holy Family to reflect our Christmas Village.

Thom said there will be a new ad on November 11 featuring the Christmas Shop. He advised that the Shop will be closed on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and also on Thanksgiving Day. Thom stated that we spent a bit more for advertising than normal.

Building & Maintenance: Paul DiBlasi Paul advised that we have received revised estimates for the slop sink and the outside hose plumbing. The new estimates quote the two items separately (\$863.51 for the water line and outside hose bib; \$2879.78 for mop basin with drain with materials and labor). A question was raised about replacing the sink in the customers' bathroom with a sink that would double as a slop sink and the vanity sink. Paul said he would look into that suggestion.

Christine told the Council that we replaced the wheel on the rear security gate at Apple Appliance's end of the building. There was a further discussion about Apple's lease, which is up in April.

Finance: Joe Fortin advised that the In-Kind-Donations YTD are \$7680. We donate to Savannah Mission, Beach High School, Ridgeland Mission, Bluffton Self Help,

Goodwill, and our own CS&J. CS&J helps needy people in our Parish.

Joe stated that sales are trending in the right direction, although are behind last year. He feels the Christmas Shop should be a great help. Clothing sales are behind target, particularly in July and August since the donations have been down but lack of customers continues to be the principle reason.

Retail Sales & Merchandising: Dave DeReamer. Dave first said that the Volunteers' Appreciation Dinner was very well done and complimented Christine on her efforts. He also mentioned that Paul Doerr did a fine job of coordinating and keeping track of attendees and appreciated his work with the name tags. Dave suggested that Christine canvass volunteers for their opinions as to what they would like to have next year and give the feedback to the Council. He went on to say that we might consider other venues. He feels that the dinner is a 'big thank you' to volunteers.

Joe Fortin suggested we think about having the dinner in the Spring so that the 'snowbirds' can attend.

Dave stated that the Ministry Fair actually yielded 13 to 14 new volunteer sign-ups. He thanked Christine for her work on the Fair. Christine suggested that we spread apart the dates of the Fair (Fall) and the Volunteer Drive (Spring).

Dave continued with Merchandising, questioning when our truck is scheduled for furniture pickups. Apparently, when the truck drops off furniture to the shop, the back room is clogged. He feels that we should consider rescheduling the pickups. There was a question as to who is in charge of the back room areas. Christine advised that it is Joe Terry who should be in the back room.

Dave went on to say that while sales are down he hopes the trend is reversed. He feels that we should look at the various departments to see if any should be revamped. There should be an effort to maximize sales per square foot. Lou suggested that there should be a Sub-Committee consisting of Christine, Mary Greene, Joe Fortin and Dave DeReamer.

Mary Greene would like to see a concerted effort to make volunteers feel welcome in order to retain them. Christine and Mary will work with volunteers to stimulate cooperation and friendliness. Bob Soltys suggested a 'Buddy System' and Orientation.

Internet & Website: Bob Soltys gave a presentation on the differences between the Internet and the Website: he explained that the Internet is a retail outlet, e.g. Craigslist, Amazon, and Ebay. The Website is for marketing, exposure and visibility. He feels there are more opportunities for online sales.

Lou will arrange a meeting with Fr. Mike and Dion for Christine, Bob, and Lou to resolve handling online payments and Website accounts.

Old Business: Lou advised that we have an estimate of \$4800 to repair the front parking lot storm drain and to replace 88 feet of pipe. Lou asked Paul to get one more estimate. Francine made a motion to approve the \$4800 expenditure unless we get a lower bid. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Lou stated that we will hold off having the roof of the building cleaned until December to allow time for the Fall pine straw drop to essentially be completed.

New Business: There will be a Manager/Council Workshop probably before the scheduled meeting in December to improve the working relationships, including communications.

Lou will advise the Council Members of the date. We all agreed that a Tuesday morning will work best.

Closing Prayer.

Meeting adjourned, 10:35 am

Submitted respectfully,

Paul DiBlasi