

Mt. Irenaeus  
Board Meeting  
February 4, 2023

Minutes




Present:	Paul Aroune	Excused:	Jeff Gingerich
	Rob Buckla		Greg Licamele
	Kathy Colucci		
	Matrecia James		
	Diane Kuzia Hills		
	Jackie Lanzillo		
	Terri Marrie		
	Mike New		
	Otto Rothermel		
	Sarino Tropeano		
	Kate Trosch		
	Mike Fenn		
	Mary Giardini		
	Kevin Kriso, ofm		
	Michelle Marcellin		
	Lou McCormick, ofm		
	Karen Pulaski		
	Dan Riley, ofm		

Meeting opened with prayer, readings, reflections and discussion.

Reports:

Mike Fenn gave a brief update on talks with Kevin Mullen, ofm (Provincial Minister for Holy Name Province) pertaining to our strategic initiatives. The meeting went very well and he is very open to hearing from us and keeping communication open.

Fr. Dan gave an update on his book. Paraclete Press had Fr. Dan record an audio book. It will be available soon. It was asked if we keep in contact with the persons who are buying the book and coming to the book readings:

-  When someone signs up for an event they are added to the database.
-  Looking for more places to have events that do not charge a fee.
-  Matrecia James offered free space at any time in the School of Business. She would like to do a series there and have Fr. Dan talk about Franciscan values.

**Reaching out to the world and the US Franciscan leadership:**

- ✚ Br. Kevin and Fr. Dan have been asked to go to Assisi with a Franciscan Friar group. It is the same month as the Mountain Pilgrimage. Our ties to international Franciscans is growing.
- ✚ Interprovincial retreat committees have been set up and Kevin is the representative for Holy Name Province. They are discussing how the retreats can be more contemplative and experiential. The Retreat Team came to the Mountain in October 2022 and the participants were blown away with the experience at the Mountain.
- ✚ In 2024, Kevin is leading a retreat on the Franciscan Rule 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He is also leading one on Franciscan Lectio. We are being recognized by the Retreat Committee and it is putting us on people's radar. Our friars are committed to going to all of these retreats for a couple of years. Because of all this, the Mountain is pretty well known now. Fr. Kevin Mullen highlighted this and it sounds like we are in the future planning of the Provincial. Fr. Mullen's energy and the way he engaged us is showing that we are part of the movement and going to have a place in the US6. It was also noted that Mike Fenn is keeping relationships with the Franciscan friars and we are in good shape around the movement, compared to other places around the world.
- ✚ Mike Fenn spoke about the recent trip to Chicago. Some of the events:
  - Saturday morning Rob Buckla hosted a gathering in his home. Fr. Dan used readings from his book for the gathering and had a wonderfully prayerful, welcoming event.
  - Had morning brunch with 7 young friars that are in formation in Chicago. It was a wonderful fraternity for 90 minutes. The younger friars are interested in living ministry out of the Mountain in several ways.
  - Fr. Mullen was told about this exciting news.
- ✚ A community in Buffalo is looking to set up a contemplative fraternity with a couple of young friars and they think we would be wonderful partners. FR. Dan was asked to be a mentor to one of those friars who will be in Buffalo.
- ✚ Karen Pulaski spoke about the Chicago event. She felt the energy and movement. People spoke to Karen about being a lay person at the Mountain. They said they enjoy hearing a woman's voice in the newsletter. Many of these people were not connected to SBU.
- ✚ Mike Fenn spoke more about the ties being made with Br. Kevin, Fr. Mullen and the Province.
  - Fr. Mullen is enthusiastic and said a mixed, diverse community is the future and the way to revitalize the movement.
  - Fr. Dan pointed out that we are a resident community and not subsets of sexes.
  - Kevin is the unsung hero here – he is doing so much of the work.
  - Fr. Mullen was exuberant at the meeting.
  - Fr. Mullen loved that we are connected to Jeff Gingerich and our Board is committed to hiring a Ministry Coordinator. He also liked the idea of the Cottage for Social Discourse. Dan thanked the Board for their support of the Cottage. The core group for the cottage is now looking at mission statements and budget, etc. They are bringing in experts in April to work on further planning. Fr. Mullen thinks that this is where SBU is going to grow – he sees SBU wanting to embrace this project. Fr. Mullen said the University needs to embrace these big ideas and ideals.
  - Fr. Mullen asked us to be the voice across the country for contemplation.
- ✚ Fr. Dan, Mike Fenn and Br. Kevin are meeting weekly as a management team. They are attempting to organize the many ideas coming to them and set up people to help manage the projects.

**Karen Pulaski and Terri Marrie speak about the Initiation and Education Branch:**

- ✚ The Branch has grown, it now includes Kathy Colucci and Br. Jimmy Kernan.
- ✚ They have (and are) done a lot of research to find a resource that captures the Franciscan heritage and beliefs. They want something that is not too complex and does not include a great deal of reading so that people do not feel overwhelmed. It needs to be flexible enough for someone with no experience with religion and also to someone with a deep history.
- ✚ They have chosen the “Build with Living Stones” (revised copy) book as a resource to engage people.
- ✚ They are setting up “pods” of 5 people each, doing same chapters, different days of the week.
- ✚ They will tap into particular podcasts or retreats, etc. to bring people into other experiences, not just reading books.
- ✚ We need to look at who is in the room and see what is going well and then model off of that movement.

Two summer weekends have been set for the yearly Council for Spirit and Life gatherings. They are July 7-9 and July 28-30. These weekends are open to the Board, Young Alumni group and the Sojourners group. People are welcome to come for all or just part of the weekend. These weekends are a rich time of sharing, prayer and are a true benefit. Everyone on the Board is encouraged to participate.

#### **Electronic Media Branch:**

- ✚ Currently we do not have Conveners for this Branch. We need this Branch because there are so many resources and we need a way to move easily from one to another.
- ✚ Kathleen Moffet wants to be part of it and bring other people in with her. She is one of the go-to people in the Franciscan world. It is a very big deal that she agreed to be involved. She is getting ready to move and asked us to pick up some resources from her.

Karen Pulaski is helping to lead an “adult women’s overnight” on February 11-12. Last summer there were 10 women who participated. This year there were many more interested. We received over 40 names and accepted 20 women, because of space. This is a whole new group of people we are reaching.

Fr. Dan pointed out that this is part of our Master Plan, to go out to others. Having this Master Plan keeps things right in front of us and does not let it fall off our table.

#### **Committees Reports:** (See reports submitted before meeting.)

Advancement Committee (Jackie Lanzillo) -

- ✚ We were notified by a donor of a significant amount coming to the Mountain through the Hurley Legacy Society when the person passes.
- ✚ Dick Tantillo (works at Hamilton University in Advancement) has agreed to help us in the search for an Advancement Director. He feels like we have enough to start engaging friends.
- ✚ Rob Buckla knows Dick Tantillo and shared that it is nice to have a person with eyes wide open and with 40 years of experience. He has a desire to learn more about the Mountain and wants to engage us and walk with us. Fr. Dan also knows Dick and agrees with Rob. Fr. Dan stated

that Dick is an exceptional person and he understands what Fr. Dan is talking about and how it could also benefit SBU.

#### Buildings and Grounds Committee (Sarino Tropeano) -

- ✚ Solar project – we are not seeing the savings we anticipated yet. The bills are difficult to match up, but the committee is looking at them and getting the credit straightened out.
- ✚ Added a roof to the back door of House of Peace.
- ✚ Doing work on the barn.
- ✚ Finishing up work on St. Joes.
- ✚ Looking at updating the cottages because they are dated.
- ✚ Br. Joe should be commended for the upkeep of everything. We are in a really good place because the property has been lovingly maintained. We are updating things that are old, not replacing things that are broken.
- ✚ B&G will have a 2 day retreat in March. At that time they will walk the ground to take inventory and look at the condition of each building. They will put a spreadsheet together and see what needs to be done and when.

#### Land Update (Mike Fenn) –

- ✚ Habermehl property – Dan Habermehl feels the offer is fair, but notes his family is reluctant to sell. Dan H. would still like to still timber on the land. He is not saying no to the Mountain, but he not ready to go through with the sale. He might be willing to sign a first right of refusal agreement for a \$1-2K incentive. Mike Fenn will assemble the committee again to talk it over. Habermehl is in for the long game, we have time. Habermehl is also worried taxes will go up – Mike said we could figure out the premium and pay that amount.

**Motion by Terri Marrie - To empower Mike Fenn and the Land Committee to get first right of refusal and make the incentive to Dan Habermehl. Otto Rothermel amends the motion to go up to \$2,500 for incentive. Sarino Tropeano 2nds the motion. All in favor.**

- ✚ Mike Fenn shared the map of Laureen Clark's property. Laureen said she got our letter asking neighbors to contact us if they were interested in selling. She has:
  - Cottage with 2 bedrooms, nice kitchen, very good shape.
  - Mobile home – 2002 singlewide.
  - 10 acres of property in very good shape.
  - The property is move in ready.
  - There is an abundance of options on how we could use the property.
    - Premeilewski's are across the road, maybe we can do a swap for their property.
  - Appraisal is \$160,000.
  - She has a golf cart and a utility vehicle – we'd like that get those also.
  - From November to May she lives down south. She would like to live in the trailer for 2 years and she would rent it from us.
  - Both places have independent power and septic sources.
  - She will mow and take care of property when she is there.

- She would take care of any minor repairs to the trailer. If there are major repairs, that would be our responsibility.

Discussion/questions:

- + Would we allow her to live there for two years?
- + We would want to purchase this right away and use it right away. It needs to be available for this summer for the weekends. We want to bring people to the land to learn about us and our way of life. This will immediately open up options on our strategic initiatives.
- + If she is living there we would have to wait 2 years to swap with the Premielewski's.
- + Can we negotiate this term with her?
- + Guarantee a year with a re-up.
- + She only wants 2 summers.

**Motion by Sarino Tropeano - Mike Fenn is to enter into negotiations to purchase Lauren Clark's property that is adjacent to our property for up to \$175,000. This amount will include land, buildings, equipment, furnishings, etc. He will also enter into additional negotiations for Lauren to live there for up to 2 years after purchasing the property with her paying us rent. Terri Marrie seconds the motion. All in favor.**

Finances (Katie Trosch and Mike Fenn) –

Katie took us through the statement of activities:

- + We have quite a bit of cash and will be starting an account in our investment portfolio, within that we will purchase CDs that will earn interest. This is to protect our cash.
- + We are a very healthy organization.
- + Question by Rob Buckla – Are we comfortable with the investment advisor?
  - Our advisor works with Holy Name Province and Merrill Lynch. He has worked with the man (from Holy Name Province and Merrill Lynch) has worked with Tom Conway and Les Quick, his reputation and skill set are good.
  - Marty Shields is on the Finance Committee now and gives us great representation.
  - There is very close oversight with Holy Name Province and Less Quick.
  - Our investments are congruent with our mission.
  - From a longer term standpoint, we are ahead of the market.
  - Question by Fr. Dan – will we continue with this firm after the US-6 is finalized? Br. Kevin believes they will. They have a great deal of confidence in this firm.

Nominations committee (Terri Marrie) –

Had a January meeting that was very productive. Next meeting is February 8, 2023.

Have had discussions about extending the terms of our Board members because of being “inactive” during COVID. Our Board is currently low in numbers.

Discussion/questions:

- ✚ Should we have terms begin with September meetings and end with April meetings?
- ✚ What if we need to make a decision during the summer months?
- ✚ We need to increase our work on collaborating and helping new people.
- ✚ We need to attend to the fiscal and legal aspects of the Board, but then also the transitioning.
- ✚ Just because you are off the Board does not mean you are off the Committees.
- ✚ We need to honor people – if they need time away, that’s fine. If they want to stay, that’s great. We need to talk with everyone.
- ✚ If we are doing our job well, people coming in will have the information and experience with the Mountain. We start formation well before they are considered for the Board. It is ongoing formation.
- ✚ On the Nominating Committee they spoke about the person being on a Committee for at least a year before going on the Board.
- ✚ The summer would be a great time for some spiritual formation too.
- ✚ Can the Nominating Committee put together a defined calendar for on-boarding and off-boarding of members? Take into account summer months.

**Motion by Sarino Tropeano - Change the dates of Board terms to begin on June 1 and terminate on May 31 for a 3-year term. Rob Buckla seconds the motion. All in favor.**

**Motion by Sarino Tropeano – Dianne Kuzia Hills, Greg Licamele and Terri Marrie’s terms will extend until May 31, 2024. Jackie Lanzillo seconds the motion. All in favor.**

Personnel committee (Mike New) –

- ✚ Mike New thanks the Committee members for the initial screenings done on candidates for two of our positions being sought: Associate Director and Ministry Coordinators.
- ✚ Ministry Coordinator, had 3 candidates, down to 2 excellent candidates. One of the 2 withdrew to stay in her current position. The candidate will visit and stay for 2 full days.
- ✚ Associate Director, had 2 candidates – 1 withdrew. We want to continue to look for people. Still vetting the 1 candidate. We want to proceed with caution with that one person. He will still visit, but we are not sure if he is a good fit.

Meeting adjourned.

### Future Board meetings:

April 21-22, 2023

September 15-16, 2023

November 10-11, 2023

February 2-3, 2024      Zoom

April 26-27, 2024

