

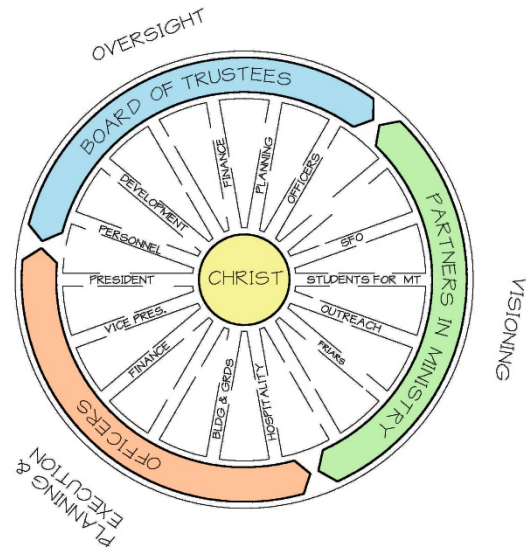
Mt. Irenaeus
Board Meeting
February 3, 2024
Minutes

Present: Paul Aroune
Rob Buckla
Kathy Colucci
Jimmy Kernan
Dianne Kuzia-Hills
Jeff Gingerich
Jackie Lanzillo
Greg Licamele
Terri Marrie
Mike New
Otto Rothermel
Mike Sullivan
Sarino Tropeano

Mike Fenn
Mary Giardini
Martha Kopcienski
Joe Kotula, ofm
Kevin Kriso, ofm
Lou McCormick, ofm
Michelle Marcellin
Natalie Pronio
Karen Pulaski

Excused: Tom Conway, ofm
Kathy Dougherty, ofm
Matrecia James
Kate Trosch

Began with prayer.



Mike Fenn reviewed the current leadership model wagon wheel for the Mountain (above). Those present were asked to break into smaller groups and discuss the following questions:

- ✚ What is my understanding of this document?
- ✚ How can this document be improved?
- ✚ How can it be useful to us in the future?

Mike also goes over Venn diagram (see materials given out before the meeting) he has constructed to show the work between the Mountain and Holy Peace Friary. The groups will also discuss this document during the sessions. This diagram is to help establish the roles between the two leadership groups.

Paul Aroune, Terri Marrie, Greg Licamele and Dianne Kuzia Hills were asked to lead the breakout groups.

Comments from the group discussions:

- ✚ The wheel has been a part of our lives for many years and it needs to be updated.
- ✚ When the wheel was created, we did not have an Executive Director; we also need to designate the layperson component and companions.
- ✚ All roles need to be updated.
- ✚ Roles of the Officers needs to be cleaned up.
- ✚ Advancement needs to be defined more clearly.
- ✚ Need to add the roles of the office team. (It was suggested that the friars and staff should be part of the Officers responsibilities.) When this chart was made, Michelle was the only employee, so there is a lot to add.
- ✚ Need to label more clearly, add more spokes because we have more people involved.
- ✚ Do the labels need to be updated: "Partners in Ministry," "Officers," etc.
- ✚ The circle needs to be reconstructed to include everyone now involved.
- ✚ "Core community" is a term we may want to use. Would include religious as well as laypersons. This would be describing the ministry that happens at the Mountain (friars, Karen). Perhaps

“Operational Team” would describe the office staff and those who work on campus for the Mountain (Mike, Michelle, Mary, Natalie).

- + Friars do not want to be in the “operations” work for the Mountain.
- + Discussion on the power of the Board and how the mission can drift even with good intentions.
- + Need definitions of each spoke – who is responsible for the execution? There is some overlap because at times multiple people help with each responsibility.
- + The friars have the initial vision of our life and work. Is there enough trust in the Board to take the vision into the future?
 - o The Board would make sure there is no drift away from the mission.
 - o Jeff Gingerich gave an example: The Province and most Catholic institutions are concerned that as we go into a time where more lay leadership is needed, there may be a drift from the message.
 - o Not that we ARE drifting right now, but we need to be conscious of that possibility.
 - o Are we a mission with a structure or the opposite? Everything must come back to our mission.
 - o We are a mission, but living in a world that has rules. All non-profits have this issue.
- + Most important: Christ is the center.

Discussion on “intentional community” and what it means:

- + Is a lay intentional community considered drifting from our mission?
- + What does intentional community mean? Do we need a uniform definition?
- + When Karen came to us, she was asked why she wanted to live here. She was looking for integration of faith in her life. She felt a “calling” to be here.
- + There are other people like Mike and Mary Freeman Kelly – who do not live here, but are integrating into our Gospel manner of life. Should that be more important than where they physically live? Do they want to integrate being Franciscan into their lives?
- + Intentional community is part and parcel with the Mountain, but they are their own distinct entity. It is important to remember that we have a goal of building up our lay intentional community.
- + Including this in the Venn diagram will vision it for our future.
- + Without friars here who will give the Franciscan training to others?
- + We have been talking about models of leadership – who is in charge? Are the friars in charge? Are the lay people in charge?
- + The Mountain does not tell the friars how to be a friar – the intentional community would be guided into the community and as it grows, the intentional community would be vetting new people and have their own screening for people. They would be informed by both the other circles, but they would be making their own model.

Had a discussion on friaries, friars, what future friars might be looking for if they join the Mountain:

- + Other places have physical friaries, Holy Peace Friary does not.
- + Other friaries have places that are private, at the Mountain they do not – except their private rooms. We intentionally integrate.
- + We do not have a physical friary, but you do have things that are specifically, appropriately, essentially, friar based; Chapter meetings, Keuka Lake retreats, Italy pilgrimages.

- ✚ Topic of drifting: We become so busy that we do not have time to pray with each other or eat with each other. That is part of being a Franciscan community. That is when drift will happen. We make time for this at the Mountain.
- ✚ The demeanor of our friars are very welcoming and open – is it what other friars want? Is that attractive to them? Is it an anomaly?
 - Depends on the friar. Might appeal to some while others want to be separated from their ministry more, space from their ministry when needed.
 - The Mountain friars are heavily collaborated with employees.
 - Different models work well for different places. Ours is not a model other friars are used to and that might make it challenging to transition into our life or might not be attractive.
 - Some find our life hard, some yearn for it.
 - If friars come here and have “work” for the Mountain, who do they report to, the Mountain or the Province? Who evaluates them?
- ✚ The friar population is dwindling, how do we grow if we are only looking to have friars join us. We need lay persons also.
- ✚ We have different degrees of integration; friars, laypersons. If we have a friar who wants to live at the Mountain, but work on campus, do we have a place for him here?

Venn diagram thoughts:

- ✚ What about the Province? How would they interact with the Mountain? Do we add a circle for “governance” and how it connects?
- ✚ Is there any part of Holy Peace Friary that is not part of the Province? Probably not.
- ✚ Do we show our service to SBU on this diagram?
- ✚ Some do not know the work of the friars, should the circles be overlapped that much?
 - The overlap is the mission that is worked together.
- ✚ Circles need to be defined before we add any more.
- ✚ There are members (current and future) of the core community that are not members of the Province.

Paul Aroune thanked everyone for their input on the diagrams. He proposed that we need a subcommittee, perhaps led by Bob Daugherty or another professional to guide us in updating these charts. Would like to have it done by the next Board meeting. Suggested having Mike Fenn, Kevin Kriso, Dan Riley and Karen Pulaski on the subcommittee.

Need to determine what this document will be used for and by whom. If this is a tool for us, how will it be used? We have new leadership in June; they should be included in this also. Kathy Colucci thought this was a good idea and would like to be included. Questions:

- What are the rules and responsibilities?
- Who is accountable, who needs to be informed?
- Who will make the final decision?
- Who are we organizationally and where are we going?

If we are going to recreate the wheel then we need to name the parts we have today, use correct terms from the by-laws, and state what is missing.

The subcommittee will consist of Mike Fenn, Karen Pulaski, Kevin Kriso, Kathy Colucci and Greg Licamele will help with the final chart. If anyone else is interested, contact Kathy Colucci.

The action: Continuation of defining committee roles and responsibilities.

Committee Reports:

Mike Fenn spoke to Chris Premelewski about the land across the road from the main house:

We were close to an agreement a few years ago and then there was an issue with who had the title and the Mountain backed off. All parties are willing to come to the table again and have discussions. The owners of the land across the street are interested in the 50 acres across from the Taylor house. Mike spoke to them about the Clark property, but made no promises. Besides cash, they would like to swap some land so they can stay in the area. The Land Committee is part of these negotiations also. Chris Premelewski asked if we could all talk in about 6 months when he is not so busy.




Discussion about the future structures at the Mountain:

Where would we house persons in an intentional community? Would we want the Clark property for that to happen? Would we build a structure across the road if we get that property? What about the cottage for civil discourse? Mike suggested hiring someone to look at these possibilities before we enter into discussions with Chris and the other owners of the land.


Fr. Dan has also mentioned having the recording studio somewhere besides La Paz. Where would be place that structure?

Br. Kevin suggested getting a large map of our compound, mark where the current structures are and possible sites of future buildings.

Discussion on the land, buildings and future buildings:

-  The two biggest ideas are for the Cottage of Civil Discourse and a place for lay ministers to live. Both of these ideas are in their infancy.
-  The Clark property already has two structures on it that are fit for living.
-  A structure across the road would be more ideal so new people were not isolated from the main property.

From this discussion, it was also asked and discussed how to get the word out to persons who might be interested in our way of life. Karen talked about our connection with the Franciscan Federation:

-  We have joined the Franciscan Federation and a subgroup asked Karen and Mike to come members. This group is creating a hub for a resource center where people who are interested in working in intentional communities can see what is available. Within this center, a person can put in the parameters they are looking for and it will let them know what communities are available to them.

- ✚ Other ways we have attempted to get the word out is brochures in the Ministry Center on campus and in the main house at the Mountain; we have information on our website and have made videos that have been advertised. We still need a definite marketing plan for advertising.
- ✚ We are also members of the Catholic Volunteer Network, which is another place we advertise.

Discussion on the need for a master plan:

- ✚ How many projects can we do at once? How many balls can we juggle?
- ✚ Do we need an outside person to construct a master plan for the Cottage and other projects?
- ✚ It is great that we have acquired more land, but with that, it means more work to keep it managed.
- ✚ A master plan could tell us how best to use the current property/buildings and clarify the need for future structures/land.
- ✚ Should we focus on the intentional community now and stay with our strategic plan earlier created by the Board and community?
- ✚ We need to focus on: worship space entrance; digital ministry; intentional community; living in community.
- ✚ Land, space and money.
- ✚ At this point need to look at how we use what we already have – land and space and how to use it.
- ✚ We have tried to do a master plan internally and could not get past the first meeting; key people could not commit. We need a facilitator to give us “homework” and keep us on track.
- ✚ Concerns were expressed about how much land we have and how much we actually need. It takes a lot of time and work to keep the property up and buildings to code.
- ✚ Perhaps a facilitator could help with how we reach concordance on the use of our space and assets. How can decisions be made and who makes them?

Would like to form a committee to take these issues forward and have a report at the next Board meeting. The committee will consist of Mike Fenn, Kevin Kriso, Sarino Tropeano, Mike Sullivan and Kathy Colucci. The committee will come back with suggestions on what projects we should definitely take forward and what to put on hold.

Mike Sullivan will also work with Br. Joe to come back with a plan and a draft map of our current campus and where new structures could be placed, if we choose to build them. Br. Joe told the Board that there are current maps that can be used to begin; some were generated by Grant Scott and also Kyle Sterling, a few years ago, made maps of where all the buildings are at the Mountain, to be used for emergency plans. Those maps will be made available to the committee.

It was suggested that Paul will give an update to Dan Riley about these decisions made in the meeting.

One aspect to be discussed when the committee comes back to Board is funding the projects brought forth.

Jackie Lanzillo gave the Advancement report:

- ✚ Jackie discussed Giving Tuesday. The new trend is to choose a unique day for your individual charity. Discussed picking June 28th (Feast of St. Irenaeus).
- ✚ The Mountain's 40th anniversary is coming up – how can we leverage?
 - Friends have said they would host mini-parties in different cities.
 - Kevin stated that they are not comfortable having a big affair at the Mountain anymore, too stressful. Perhaps could have one at Bona's or in Buffalo?
- ✚ On target with the Mt. Fund goal of \$330K. Thanks to Mary Giardini for her hard work. We have had great videos and sharing of information to drive Advancement.

Sarino Tropeano updated on Buildings and Grounds:

- ✚ Some of the hermitages are going to be updated.
- ✚ All the hermitages will have running water and electric.

Otto Rothermel spoke about the Legal Council:

- ✚ This group is being reestablished.
- ✚ Matt Delforte is coming onto the group.
- ✚ Looking at the agreements, we have with different entities (e.g. St. Bonaventure, SBU Friary, and Province).
- ✚ Looking at renegotiating the SBU/Mountain agreement.
- ✚ Jeff Gingerich talked about the meetings of "The Branches" of SBU, the Mountain, SBU Friary, Allegany Sisters:
 - Have had several good meetings consisting of Fr. Stephen Mimnaugh, Dan Hungerford, Mike Fenn, Kevin Kriso and Jeff.
 - Mike Fenn gave a PowerPoint presentation of the value of the Mountain and the different ways we serve the SBU students.
 - Have been talking about the agreement dated 2008 – it is out of date, many things have changed. It is not being followed.
 - The agreement states that the University will contribute \$125K/year to the Mountain. In the last several years the Mountain has received between \$80-\$90K – Jeff is not comfortable with this development.
 - The agreement will be dissolved and a new one constructed.
 - Kathy Colucci will join this group and together they will draft a new agreement to present to the SBU Board and include Our Lady of Guadalupe Province.
 - Jeff is being cautious, he is keenly aware that he has responsibilities to SBU and the Mountain both.
 - By the next Mountain Board meeting, there will be a lot to report. Jeff's goal is to have it all settled by the new fiscal year, June 1.


Mike Fenn gave the Financial report:

- ✚ We do not have audited financials. Our accountant, Ed Bysiek, does a review, not an audit.
- ✚ We do not have debt so liabilities are low.
- ✚ Lorraine Clark is paying rent, but it was out of the payment-deferred revenue.
- ✚ Our investments are with Merrill Lynch on recommendations by Holy Name Province.

Terri Marrie reported on the Nominating Committee:

 Completed an e-vote on the new slate of Officers. Beginning June 1 the new Officers are:

- Chair – Kathy Colucci,
- Vice Chair – Kate Trosch,
- Secretary – Tom Conway, ofm
- Treasurer – Sarino Tropeano.

 Paul Aroune has decided to pause on the rest of his term on the Board. Everyone thanked Paul for his service to the Board.

Meeting adjourned.

The Board went into Executive Session.

Future Board meetings:

April 26-27, 2024

September 20-21, 2024

November 8-9, 2024

February 7-8, 2025 (Zoom)

April 25-26, 2025