

ONGOING EDUCATION/FORMATION COMMITTEE (OEFC)

MINUTES – MEETING #47

Thursday, October 30, 2014
Chicago Province Center – Techny, Illinois

Present: Jim Bergin, Kathy Borresen, Jim Braband (Chair), George Gawlik, Dan Holman, Mark Weber

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. with a prayer led by Jim Braband.

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on March 18, 2014 were reviewed and will stand as issued.

1. OEFC 2014-17 APPOINTMENTS

Jim Braband expressed appreciation to the current committee members for their agreeing to serve another term on the committee and for their experience and knowledge. Their appointments were confirmed by the Provincial in a letter dated June 27, 2014.

2. ONGOING EDUCATION/FORMATION GRANT REPORT FY 2013-14

(Attachments: Analysis of grant applications by dollar amount for the fiscal year, list of various events for which FY 2013-14 grants were approved, overview of the Ongoing Education budgets from 1991 to 2014)

The committee reviewed the various reports. It was pointed out that per-application almost half the grants were for less than \$500 each; whereas, grants in the \$900 to \$1,500 range accounted for the majority of distributed funding. Also noted were the various events (43 different seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.), subscriptions, memberships, and purchases of relevant CDs, DVDs, etc. that the office had funded.

3. SVD #7 FINANCE SEMINAR

(Attachments: Summary of evaluations, expense report)

The seminar was held September 30 – October 2, 2014 at Techny Towers Conference and Retreat Center. Dariusz Garbaciak joined the meeting to discuss the following items as well as to discuss options for the next Saving Valuable Dollars seminar. It is being considered that a “beginners” session would be added to the program. It was also noted that the planning committee would like to take advantage of more SVD resources rather than those outside the Province. The date for the next seminar will most likely be in 2016 due to the heavy concentration of local and general assemblies taking place during FY 2014-15.

3.1 Evaluations: The evaluations (in summary form) were reviewed. Overall, the speaker evaluations were all laudable as were the evaluations of Techny Towers.

3.2 Expense Report: K. Borresen reported that the seminar came in under budget.

4. GRANTS FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES (COMMENTS)

A brief discussion was held regarding the validity of member(s) coming for an ongoing education event and then staying for 5-10 days for rest and/or other business, using an ongoing education grant to cover their travel expenses. It was pointed out that since a grant covers full travel, the expense can be significant for those traveling from outside the U.S. The committee felt that as long as the applicant fully participated in the event for which they had registered, their travel expenses could be funded.

5. REVIEW OF GRANT APPLICATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

(Attachment: Grant application procedure)

The committee reviewed the following two specific points of the grant policy:

5.1 Applying for a grant “at least four to six weeks in advance”

It was explained that there can be extenuating circumstances for applying for a grant on short notice (less than four weeks) and the Education Office Coordinator will either ask for a reasonable explanation or issue an admonishment (if appropriate). Only one grant has been denied in the last four years due to tardiness and that, indeed, was an application actually submitted after the event. The committee felt that this particular point of the policy was clear and did not need re-wording.

5.2 Clarify the "\$2,000 per year/per confrere" policy

It was proposed and agreed to that the current wording be changed from "\$2,000 per year/per confrere" to "\$2,000 per year/per applicant" to dispel the current notion that all confreres are automatically "given" \$2,000. Once a confrere applies for an ongoing education/formation grant, he is then limited to \$2,000 during that fiscal year for his ongoing education/formation. (The Education Office cannot budget \$2,000 for *every* confrere each fiscal year.) The new policy wording will be changed on all publications including the website.

6. ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENTS FY 2013-14

(Attachment: *Final Annual Accountability Statement Report*)

6.1 Final Report, Delinquency List

It was reported that the Annual Accountability Statement program for fiscal year 2013-14 closed on October 24, 2014 with a 98% compliance rate. Only three SVDs failed to comply despite being given numerous reminders and follow-ups.

6.2 Proposed AAS Policy/Protocol

The committee discussed a proposed change to the current protocol for Accountability Statements in that the July 31 deadline would be enforced; and, that members not submitting an AAS by the deadline would consequently not be eligible for an ongoing education/formation grant during the current fiscal year. This follows the same type of protocol that is used by the PAG/MEG Grant Committee in that if a PAG/MEG grant application is not received by the specified deadline, the application is automatically rejected.

7. RETREATS

The committee reviewed the policy/protocol dating back to 1991-1992 wherein retreats are not covered by ongoing education/formation grants and are covered by the Local Community/District. It was explained that we do provide some retreat resources in the online Resource Directory, but we do not list retreat offerings in the online Datebook Plus in order to avoid confusion over the policy and/or funding. The committee agreed that this policy should not be changed.

8. COMMUNITY-BASED ONGOING EDUCATION PROGRAM

(Attachment: *History & Policy regarding Community-Based Ongoing Education*)

8.1 History/Policy

The committee reviewed the history and final policy as issued in 2003.

8.2 Compliance/Results

It was pointed out that in the last several years the Techny, Bordentown and East Troy communities have complied with the policy although the exchange of information between the Finance Office, Budget Committee, and Education Office has not been done on a timely basis.

8.3 Recommendation for FY 2014-2015 forward

Based on the self-initiated compliance to date by the Techny, Bordentown and East Troy communities to this program, the committee proposed that the Education Office no longer needed to be involved in the program's implementation. Starting with this fiscal year (2014-15), the Education, Recruitment and Formation Secretariat will no longer be responsible for reviewing, approving, and/or notifying the Budget Committee of the three community's Ongoing Education Programs.

9. DATEBOOK PLUS (WEBPAGE) CENSORSHIP

An example of a Datebook Plus posting that had been challenged by a member as inappropriate was presented to the committee. A discussion ensued with regards to censorship and/or listing conference(s) that could be

deemed controversial due to the association's agenda or the conference's topics or speakers. It was pointed out that a philosophical/theological/spiritual/ethical examination of all events is not feasible nor in most cases possible. While common sense and known facts should rule the day on whether or not an event should be listed, the committee felt that a disclaimer on the Datebook Plus webpage should (and will) be posted stating (basically) that an event's listing does not constitute an endorsement by the Education Office, Province, or Society.

10. New Business:

11.1 Other

There was no new business to discuss.

11.2 Next meeting date

The next OEFC Meeting will take place on May 1, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Province Center.

The meeting concluded at 11:40 a.m.

Minutes recorded by: Kathy Borresen

Distributed: November 5, 2014

Posted on website: November 5, 2014

cc: T. Ascheman, SVD

Note: The attachments listed in these minutes were distributed to OEFC members only.