

Minutes of St. Jerome Parish Council Meeting September 12, 2011

IN ATTENDANCE:

Father Dave, Regina Flaherty, John Turchick, Alex Sgoutas, Dick Auwarter, Karen Christensen, Dan Loch, Dick Maiberger, Bill Mottolese, Beth Olson, Tom Rietano, Tom Wagner, Kathy Coyne, Father Joe.

Father Dave led the Council in Prayer.

Minutes of the June 13, 2011 meeting were reviewed and approved.

PASTOR'S AND SUCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Overview

Fr. Dave expressed concern and explained the past fiscal year's thirty three thousand dollar deficit, primarily from the reduced Busy Bodies revenue and a lower offertory total. A meeting of the Finance Committee is planned on September 20th during which it will be determined how best to proceed to address the shortfall and to cover the planned "expansion" costs that have yet to be determined. He indicated that an immediate "soft campaign" to increase the offertory income is most likely and that some cost cutting steps are already being implemented, including for example small reductions in his and Fr. Joe's compensation.

Our expenses exceed our offertory budget with the balance being covered by the raffle proceeds, that needs to be addressed. Our current savings should help get us through the time needed to get more information and to implement a plan to balance the budget and to support the planned expansion.

Karen offered to help the Finance Committee with communications regarding the desired increased offertory. Dan suggested that the communication must make the case clearly and be low key. Dick Maiberger and Dick Auwarter calculated and suggested that just a small additional weekly amount from 200 people could cover the shortfall.

Father Dave also mentioned that: - a Diocesan accountant would be coming in on October 24th - a new phone system was needed at an estimated cost of \$8,000 - Parish Festival ticket proceeds to date were \$725 but that most people wait until the last minute and a fair weather update before committing.

Liturgical Changes

Father Dave explained some of the changes (language, music, worship books etc.) and discussed the many steps being taken for everyone to be ready to implement the liturgical changes that are to be effective the first Sunday of Advent, on November 27th. Bill suggested that we consider explaining better the rationale behind the changes.

Day Care Center

Fr. Dave reported on the most recent situation with the Day Care Center and the continuing steps being taken to resolve the situation.

Oil Tanks and Septic System

Fr. Dave advised that a favorable test was conducted and completed on the oil tanks. No further action is necessary at this time. A Septic System review and next steps will be determined at a later date.

Reach

Fr. Dave commended and thanked Kathy Coyne for the huge amount of work and great job done to get Reach started earlier than usual this year.

Mens Retreat

Fr. Dave mentioned that the Men's Retreat will take place the weekend of October 21 to October 23, 2011 at Jogues Retreat in Cornwall, NY. Dick Auwarter brought up a need for music at such retreats. The Men's Ministry retreat planning group will take this under consideration.

Pancake Breakfast and Fish Fry

Numerous dates and conflicts for the Pancake Breakfast were discussed. Martin Luther King weekend in March 2012 or neighboring dates appear to be the best possibility. Regina will advise Bob DeSimone of the proposed timing and let him choose. Timing will also depend on the kitchen team's availability.

Bob has asked that we find a new leader for the fish fry. We should look into this later this year for a planned April 2011 event.

Buildings and Grounds

Fr. Dave reported that the architect was unable to make the August meetings and that the hurricane and John Davis' availability has delayed things further. A meeting is now planned for September 26 or 27 when the architect will provide some concrete ideas for further review and a capital campaign may be planned for 2012.

Dick Auwarter inquired if we had a ballpark cost. Upon Fr. Dave's five to six hundred thousand estimate, Dick expressed concern and that this may not be a good time to be doing this.

Pastoral Planning

Fr. Dave explained that our CONECT initiative was the main thrust of our Pastoral Planning at this time and he asked Dan to provide an overview and update. Dan gave a detailed review and explanation of the current status and the one on one meetings taking place and the planned group meetings and other CONECT related activities.

Dick Auwarter inquired regarding how to handle social issues that may not fly among all of the different parishes/communities and also how to address actionable concerns and how to get our groups to buy in to it and how to get more participants. His questions were all addressed. Tom Wagner well outlined how he understood that we could more directly handle and resolve our local issues with CONECT's assistance.

Regina asked if we were going to look at the Parish Survey results again and take any related action. Fr. Dave replied that CONECT addresses many of the actionable findings.

Dick Maiberger asked if we planned to repeat the Lenten "witness" talks and soup and bread evening gatherings. All agreed that it went very well and that it should be repeated this year.

Committee Communications, Succession, Record Keeping and Formation

As agreed at the prior meeting, Alex provided an outline with possible action steps, following his March 20, 2011 proposal, that is attached. Council members discussed and exchanged many ideas regarding how best to implement “Communication to our Parishioners” with a very short power point presentation on the Church screen at selected Masses. Tom and Beth will provide an example of a brief power point presentation that they have in mind at the next meeting. This and Succession, Record Keeping and Formation questions and ideas will also be addressed at the next meeting.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on October 17, 2011

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Sgoutas

Secretary

**Committee Structure - Suggested Initial Actions and Next Steps
For Discussion at September 12, 2011 St Jerome Parish Council meeting
And For follow up at October 17, 2011 Meeting**

A . Communications to our Parishioners

Introduce our major committees at selected masses or events /gatherings.

- Power point presentation at Masses
- Select what committees to feature
- Determine when – at what Masses
- Who will prepare power point presentation (Tom ?)
- Include call for new members/volunteers and web site information

Presentations at other selected parish events ?

B. Communications among and within our Committees and Sub-committees

Prepare and distribute a simple suggested guideline sheet with committee input.

C. Leadership and Succession

Prepare and distribute a guideline and procedure sheet with committee input .

Seek out and identify new leaders – during CONECT meetings, church events and in power point communications presentation.

How to identify and train back up leaders within each group – shadow somebody

D. Record Keeping

Need for readily available and accessible information on our committees and particularly how things work within each one. Minutes, Records, Reports in a central location possibly Parish Office and on our web site – a lot is already there.

E. New Committee “group” Formation

Would it help Father Dave to have written specific guidelines for the formation of any new group as proposed in the white paper ?