



## ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

### *Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – Sept, 10, 2018*

**Elected Members Present:** Deborah Harrison, Peter Adams, Ross Terranova, Lourdes Eyer, Pam Vogt, Christine Forbes, Kevin Green, Kevin Maher

**Elected Members Absent:**

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Fr. Sean Harlow, O.Carm., Deacon Carl Locatelli

**Recording Secretary:** Deborah Botti

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:**

**Parish Members Present:**

**The meeting began with prayer at 6:50 p.m.**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Aug. 7, 2018 were accepted.**

*The following updates were given:*

#### **Ministry Reports:**

##### Administration & Stewardship:

To allow for ample time to discuss the 2018 Parish Handbook and a few other items that were not on the agenda, it was tabled to the end, to be preceded by quick reports.

The first 100 \$25-raffle tickets have been sold, and the second 100-ticket raffle has begun. With the Parish Picnic on tap for the Sunday following this meeting, the timing is right to have the first \$500 drawing there – even though there will also be a 50/50 raffle.

Discussion ensued about how long tickets should be sold and whether they be sold every weekend or every other? Because it really only takes five or 10 minutes after Mass, it was decided they should continue to be sold every weekend after Mass until there is no longer any interest.

Discussion also ensued regarding a policy or procedure through which PC members – and possibly certain parishioners – could be given several tickets to sell outside of church. It was decided that:

All outside transactions have to pass through the hands  
of the Parish Council.

This allows the Parish Council to have control over who is responsible for what specific ticket numbers.

##### Education & Faith Formation:

The catechist meeting went well, as it typically does, and the catechists will be commissioned on Sunday, Sept. 16.

There will be two Confirmations this year, the first in November.

Praying the Mass, a series of four consecutive Fridays led by Fr. Sean, begins Sept. 21. Sign up will continue until the event; however, the first sign-up weekend alone resulted in 20 who planned to attend.

The Adult Faith Formation committee is also hosting the presentation of the film “Divine Mercy 101” after Mass on Sept. 30.

Additionally, AFF is planning its Day of Reflection on Oct. 20. Titled “Called to be Holy,” it will be led by Pat Davies.

Finally, Patty Brooks, the AFF coordinator, will be attending the FORMED training workshop at John S. Burke Catholic High School in Goshen along with two others, to satisfy one of the Archdiocese’s requirements to receive its FORMED educational platform free of charge because we do not have at least 75 users.

It was noted by one member that the FORMED registration was somewhat cumbersome and suggested that perhaps there might be an opportunity for Patty to mention this at the workshop.

#### Christian Services:

There was nothing to report.

#### Social Activities:

The weather is supposed to be sunny – finally! – on Sunday for the Parish Picnic. It was reported that more than 140 parishioners have purchased tickets, and it was recalled that the average turnout has been about 150.

#### Worship & Spiritual Life:

It was agreed that the blessing of the backpacks was beautiful. One member shared in particular how impressed a new family was with this tradition.

#### **Vicar's Report (Fr. Sean Harlow, O.Carm.)**

- The Renew & Rebuild payment of \$33,462.00 has not yet been sent in to the Archdiocese.
- Work began last Thursday, Sept. 6, to repair the parking lot. The cracks are being filled in and a 20-foot drainage ditch is being installed to encourage the water to flow away from the parking lot, which is believed to be the cause of the cracking. The parking lot will be assessed after it rains.
- Fr. Sean sought the opinions of Parish Council members regarding whether he needs to publicly address the recent sexual-abuse findings by a Pennsylvania grand jury. The consensus was yes, that St. Paul’s needs to continue to be proactive in helping parishioners stay focused on faith and prayer. The atmosphere here is considered progressive. For example, for years children have been required to be escorted to the restrooms by their parents during Mass, and the contact information to report suspicion of sexual abuse has regularly been posted in the bulletin. Still, because crimes have been covered up in the past, it’s important not to inadvertently give parishioners a sense that once again, it’s being brushed under the carpet. While the past can’t be changed, it’s critical for people to know that going forward, concrete steps are being taken so that the past can’t be repeated. Fr. Sean appreciated all the input, and the Parish Council thanked Fr. Sean for seeking its consult.

#### **Chairperson’s Report (Deborah Harrison)**

There was nothing to report

#### **Other business**

- The quarter-fold version of the revised Parish Handbook was sent to each Council member in advance of the meeting. With a few minor edits, it was deemed good to go. The Handbook will be distributed to all new parishioners, to parishioners who have been recently registered, will be available in the Church office and will be posted in PDF format on the St. Paul's website. The team effort was applauded.
- The removal of more-than-two-years-old Parish Council Rosters from the bulletin boards at the Church entrances prompted an update. The update shows four terms expiring at the end of 2019, four terms expiring at the end of 2020 and one vacancy. The system of voting three new members in each year thrown off well before the recent resignation as the seats of all three who resigned early would have been up this year. When the first two resigned seats were filled, they should have been done so for a shorter term to maintain the three-new-members-each-year pattern. Discussion ensued as to whether the Council should get back to three-three-three or is five seats one year, four the next fine? No decision was made.
- Fr. Sean found a list of 2016 Parish Activities, which was compared to 2018 activities thus far. Despite some changes in committees since then, there is still a lot going on. The AFF committee, in particular, has increased its offerings. But it was noted that social activities suffered the brunt of the loss, with the demise of breakfasts, coffee hours and the dinner-dance. It was suggested that some events, such as the dinner-dance, might do better if they were biennial, rather than annual. In any event, at the end of 2018, a month-by-month list of events will be prepared, distributed for review to Parish Council members to ensure nothing was inadvertently omitted, and then distributed to parishioners as a bulletin insert.
- There were two suggestions in the Suggestion Box that were addressed: The first was a New Year's Eve party. Fond memories were shared of the very popular New Year's Eves Past, but it's too late to even consider for 2018. There are concerns today that didn't exist 20 years ago, which would require careful consideration and investigation. The second suggestion was a request to return bells to the Mass. Lively discussion ensued about memories of bell-ringing but no decision was made.
- Before the next meeting, the Parish Survey will have been initiated. A bulletin insert will be prepared, followed by weekly blurbs to alert parishioners to the need for their participation.
- Written updates were due from all the ministry coordinators for the "just-in-case-somebody-suddenly-can't-do-what-they've-always-done" book. Only one Council member was prepared.
- Now that school has resumed, coordination can begin with Religious Ed regarding the bulletin board in Deacon John Hall that will actively reflect what's happening in the various ministries.

**The meeting closed at 8:00 p.m. with prayer.**

**Next meeting will be Monday, October 8, 2018, at 6:45 p.m..**

**Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti**