



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – Aug. 7, 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 6:40 p.m.

Minutes of the Meeting of July 10, 2018 were accepted.

The following updates were given:

Ministry Reports:

Administration & Stewardship:

After learning that the Town of Crawford Park was available on Sept. 16, and in order for the bulletin to correctly announce this annual event, the Council unanimously agreed via email that it will simply be called the Parish Picnic.

To allow for ample time to discuss the Parish Survey and updated 2018 Parish Handbook, those items were tabled to the end.

Education & Faith:

An email was received from the Archdiocese regarding its FORMED platform, which offers a wealth of Catholic content and myriad resources for young and old alike, including sacrament preparation, books and movies. In order to renew the subscription at no charge to St. Paul's and its parishioners, a parish must have 75 or more users. If not, between two and five volunteers or parish leaders will need to attend a training workshop and the parish must also pledge to run a parish-wide study using FORMED content. We will attempt to ascertain, beginning with our bookkeeper, whether we have met the baseline of 75 users.

Christian Services:

There was nothing to report.

Social Activities:

Other than the Parish Picnic, there was nothing new.

Worship & Spiritual Life:

There was nothing to report.

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

- The raffle fundraiser – a \$500 drawing for every 100 tickets sold at \$25 apiece – was approved. To address Fr. Sean's concern about the commitment to sell tickets, a schedule was prepared. There will be two volunteers after each Mass in Deacon John Hall, beginning the weekend of Aug. 18-19. Tickets will also be available during church office hours. Ticket sales will continue on this regular basis until the Parish Picnic, at which time the first drawing(s) will be held. Tickets will continue to be sold as long as there's interest. Also, there was some discussion as to whether Parish Council members and staff should be precluded from participating. Fr. Sean saw no reason to place any limitations on ticket sales.
- The church was contacted again by Linda Adams of Marlin Art Auctions. Along with a \$250 sign-on bonus, she indicates that a professional artist, John Stanisci, who illustrated for Marvel and DC Comics, can also attend the auction. Some of his autographed comic books are included in the sale. Because this could spark interest, particularly among younger parishioners, the Council asked to be provided with the information for discussion at a later date.
- Recipes continue to drift in for the cookbook fundraiser, although there isn't enough interest yet to charge full steam ahead. Submissions will continue to be solicited during the course of the next few weeks.

Chairperson's Report (Deborah Harrison)

There was nothing to report

Other business

- It was acknowledged that the update and revision of the Parish Handbook was quite an achievement. It is still being tweaked. Deacon Carl suggested a list of the priests who have served St. Paul's over the years be included in the history, and Fr. Sean would like the finished product in a booklet format, using office technology that didn't exist in 2006. Once that is completed, it will be distributed for final review before being given to new parishioners as they register. A PDF version will be available on the parish website for all parishioners to see.
- Another thought for the vacant lot was inspired by a Council member's recent trip: A prayer garden centered on plantings in the shape of a cross.
- Fr. Sean is working with two boys on a potential Eagle Scout project: enlarging the seating and adding walkways to Our Lady's statue.
- "Donation pavers" should be kept in mind for projects involving walkways. People tend to be quite responsive when offered the opportunity to purchase a brick or paver that commemorates a deceased loved one.
- Because of health issues, Helen Schwarting has asked Pam Vogt to consider taking over coordinating the senior luncheons and repasts. There are two liaisons to each ministry so there would be no conflict if Pam were to coordinate an event on which a Council member would subsequently report.

Other business – Parish Survey

A second revised survey will be distributed via email, which takes into account the enormously constructive suggestions received.

With the final document, there is no issue regarding number of pages if the survey is taken

electronically; however, the printed version should be no more than four pages. Most importantly, the survey has to be readable by those doing the transcription. Volunteers will be needed to input the data to Survey Monkey, which, although not totally without charge, only begins to get costly when there are more than 1,000 responses.

Maxine Martin, the bookkeeper, provided a parishioner analysis:

- There are 683 families registered
- There are about 470 active, contributing families
- About 100 families contribute electronically
- There were 440 envelope boxes distributed for 2018; 370 are being used
- Approximately 70 envelope boxes were not picked up in 2018

Discussion ensued about approaching those 70 (to whom letters were sent in February) to complete the survey, as well as any other known non-participating parishioners, as their responses would be particularly enlightening. It is also hoped the survey will encourage interest and excitement among active parishioners so that they want to get more involved with St. Paul's.

The survey goals again are:

- To increase the number of active Catholics in the parish, particularly young adults
- To increase the level of participation. A countable number of people are involved in everything; others, not so much. This is something with which many organizations wrestle. Why? Is there a perception that there are cliques? Time constraints? Apathy?
- To provide inspiration to children
- To encourage young and old alike to reject low social behavior and intolerance

To generate interest prior to the Oct. 7 release of the survey, there should be a bulletin insert, as well as announcements. Additionally, perhaps people could speak at Mass as to what the parish has done for them, i.e., the prayer chain, or receiving a prayer blanket, or serving in a particular ministry. It then becomes less scary for parishioners to answer questions when they hear what is already being done and understand the intent of the survey is to only make improvements.

Actionable steps will then be taken based on responses.

Open item – Resigning Mid-Term

A unique situation occurred this year because of a mid-term resignation: There was only one spot to fill, and the question was raised as to whether it was worth all the work to hold an election for just one vacancy. The options would be to revisit a previous runner up, hold an election or keep the position open until the next election, which would mean almost half the Council would be new. Council members serve a three-year term, renewable once, with three members rotated out each year.

It was unanimously decided that this be added to the Constitution:

If a position becomes vacant midterm, the Parish Council has the authority to appoint a person to fill the remainder of the term.

In the future, during the election process, candidates will be asked if they would be willing to accept the alternate position.

With this vacancy, the previous runners-up will be contacted. If no one steps up, the position will remain vacant.

It was gleefully noted that every open item on the Council agenda has been addressed.

The meeting closed at 7:50 p.m. with prayer.

Next meeting will be Monday, September 10, 2018, at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti