



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting –December 12, 2022

Elected Members Present: Julie Laurenzi, Christine Forbes, Michael McGovern, Tom Fobert, Rosa Gonzalez, Pam Vogt, Beth Schick and Peter Adams

Elected Members Absent: Hector Hernandez

Ex-officio Members Present: Fr. Sean Harlow, O. Carm., and Deacon Carl Locatelli

Ex-officio Members Absent: Deacon Michael McCabe

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Others Present: Gale Britto, Kate Gallaher-Carson and Anne Savastano

The meeting began with prayer at 6:46 p.m.

The minutes of the meeting of November 14, 2022, were accepted.

Ministry Reports were provided:

Administration & Stewardship

This report will be included in the Vicar's Report.

Education and Faith Formation

The Children's Mass on December 11 was beautiful, and almost 100 people attended Family Movie Night, which featured "The Grinch." The Nativity Story is scheduled for this Friday evening.

Christian Services

- There was a nice turnout for Thanksgiving baskets – about 68 were distributed plus a few extras through the office. It is anticipated that about 79 boxes will be given out for Christmas. They will be assembled Sunday and ready for pickup this Monday.
- We are preparing to resume repasts. When the time comes, and based on COVID/flu/RSV numbers, a discussion will be had regarding a comfortable number that the hall can accommodate.

- There are still a handful of Giving Tree angels that need to be claimed.

Social Activities

- The Senior Thanksgiving Dinner was a HUGE success – from the food to the camaraderie and all the volunteers. Team Dzurilla had ample staff, all happy to be back in the kitchen. And the professionally-attired Youth Ministry members did a wonderful job serving.
- January 7-8 marks the start of monthly Coffee Socials on the first weekend of the month. That weekend also has the added bonus of Fr. Zach, S.J, making a guest appearance on Sunday to talk about his Thrive for Life ministry.

Worship and Spiritual Life

- The Youth Ministry had planned a Christmas Caroling event, but there was a conflict with a Religious Education activity. Going forward, better coordination between the two is the goal.
- Another goal is a LEGO Build-Off family event, and the next Youth Ministry Prayer Service needs to get on the calendar.
- The upgraded livestreaming equipment has arrived. The new laptop is working, but the camera is bigger than expected and there are some tweaks needed. The bottom electrical outlet doesn't work, which should be checked out. (Previously, only the top outlet was needed.)
- Once the camera is up and running, the livestream volunteers will be trained, which begs the question: What about Saturdays? We would need more Saturday streamers to continue, and no one stepped forward at the Ministry Fair. Or should the decision be made to livestream only one Mass? The number of those watching from home on Sundays is in the teens, but only a handful on Saturdays. An interim solution could be to record on Sunday and keep that Mass posted for a few days. When the dust settles, a final determination could be made.

Art and Environment

Nothing to report.

Chairperson's Report - Julie Laurenzi

- Welcome to our new members! We are happy to have you, and we are looking forward to your service. And to Christine, Pam and Peter, our heartfelt gratitude. An elf will soon be appearing at your doors with a token of our appreciation.
- There were about 70 people in church for the Pine Bush Community Band concert.

Most of the audience was from the community, with about 25 from St. Paul's. It is a lot of work, but it does produce a lot of goodwill. It is not intended to be a religious experience, and music doesn't have to have "Jesus" in the lyrics to be uplifting. What was missed, though, was Youth Ministry members greeting at the doors and handing out programs. We should revisit that for the next concert.

- Going back to the Parish Meeting, there was a lot of momentum afterward: Gathering, discussions, volunteering. That needs to be highlighted after the New Year so as to continue the process. This could take several forms. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting.
- It has come to my attention recently that when someone passes, sometimes the parish does not know until it is in the bulletin, which is typically after the funeral. The Prayer Chain is a powerful tool as well as a good means of communication; however, not every parishioner who dies is put on the Prayer Chain. Obituaries are expensive and many families are no longer subscribing to the newspaper. We are small, but an aging parish. Can we improve communication when there is a death? Discussion ensued, but no decisions were made.

Vicar's Report – Fr. Sean

At the last meeting, we discussed the Financial Report that is to go to the parishioners. I had computer difficulties when trying to arrange a meeting with the Finance Council prior to the Parish Meeting, part of the synodal process. However, we are ready to proceed, and I am suggesting the Parish Meeting after the 10 o'clock Mass on January 15 to discuss accountability and introduce the increased giving campaign.

To cast a wide net, the Financial Report will be in the bulletin, on our website and sent via Flocknote.

Other Business

Fr. Sean proposed a future agenda item: Whether the Senior Luncheons should return. The coordinator, Pam Vogt, had contacted the volunteers twice – and received little interest. She doesn't envision it continuing. However, if someone else wants to take it over, she has the complete records – including recipes and a kitty of \$600. Again, this is a good item for the future.

The meeting closed at 7:28 p.m. with the Pope's prayer in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, January 9, 2023, at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti