



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – April 12, 2021

Elected Members Present: Christine Forbes, Deborah Harrison, Patricia Davies, Ross Terranova, Kevin Green, Peter Adams and Rosa Gonzalez

Elected Members Absent: Kevin Green and Pam Vogt

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

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Others Present: Liz Locatelli and Maxine Martin

The meeting began with prayer at 6:49 p.m.

Minutes of the meeting of March 8 were accepted.

Reopening Committee Updates

- This past Sunday, there were 45 people in the hall – including several families with children. Given that number, the projector was moved closer to the wall onto which Mass is projected, resulting in a smaller picture. Tables left out alongside the wall that separates the kitchen had to be moved to accommodate extra chairs. Tables should be put away for the weekend.
- The upgraded filtration system does not impact how people can sit in church until the six-foot social-distancing mandate is lifted.
- Similarly, there is no official answer at this point as to whether vaccinated parishioners who are not part of the same family can be seated next to one another – or how that could even be safely implemented.
- Discussion ensued about returning to three Masses, with two again on Sunday.
 - It was noted that attendance Saturday evening is still typically light. Last weekend, only 44 people came to Mass at that time.
 - With summer approaching, is this the best time to add a Mass? Attendance often drops after Confirmation, and people might be very anxious to vacation again after

the restrictions of 2020. Would it be better to wait until September to make that assessment?

- There will be a need for more ushers and greeters - as well as Eucharistic ministers and lectors – to add the third Mass.
 - Once the change is made, there can't be a return to two Masses.
 - In anticipation of three Masses, Fr. Sean will send out a Flocknote seeking volunteers. The question will be revisited after responses are received.
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- Discussion then ensued about the return to singing at Mass. The CDC's March 23 update introduced Phase 3 guidelines. Included is a provision for choirs to sing as long as members are six feet apart and wear either a three-layer fabric mask or a surgical mask. Congregants who sing must also follow the same mask requirements, which could be difficult to enforce. Some parishioners can be heard singing now even without a "leader."
 - Because of the concerns with regard to sharing the Music Issue between the Masses, songsheets would have to be printed so the volunteers could hand them out, pick them up and dispose of them.
 - And because of the concern about how far droplets can be projected while singing, this decision awaits further research and discussion by all Parish Council members.
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- Reopening Committee members were excused at 7:11 p.m.

Administration & Stewardship

The new lawn-maintenance company has begun weekly mowings. Bushes have been trimmed and mulched. The lawn was thatched, so it is greener than normal. Last year, it was just Julio and a push mower, and the grounds sadly reflected not having the proper equipment.

Julio will paint the white fence by the entrance, and some additional hardy bushes acquired from Manza Family Farms will be planted in front of that fence by our lawn company in continuation of the commitment to give St. Paul's a more welcoming appearance.

Education & Faith Formation

Re-registration for Religious Education will take place in July, although it isn't certain yet whether it will be outside as it was last year, or inside. It is hoped by then that there will be some clear CDC direction regarding on-site education. At the very least, if the social-distancing mandates don't change, the Sacrament classes – First Eucharist and Confirmation – will be held in person as they were this year.

There was nothing to report on behalf of Adult Faith Formation.

Christian Services

The Prayer Blanket Ministry will be meeting again soon to replenish the boxes.

Social Activities

Nothing to report.

Worship & Spiritual Life

The Youth Ministry is anxious to get outside and see each other without a computer screen. They are looking into cleaning Route 17K again. Hard hats and vests are stored in the shed. Parental permission will be required – and the kids will be instructed to leave road kill alone.

Art and Environment

Reaction was favorable to the Easter decorations. However, because of new employment commitments, that volunteer will not be able to be as involved as he was this year. The search for a new coordinator will begin this summer.

Chairperson's Report

Arrangements will be made for sympathy flowers to be sent from the Parish Council to member Pam Vogt, who tragically lost her son to COVID-19.

Vicar's Report

Nothing to report.

Other Business

Discussion ensued about a comment made by a parishioner, who felt that hate crimes against Asian Americans were not being taken as seriously as others. This parishioner noted that there had been no mention the increase in these attacks in the weekly Social Justice column in the bulletin. Members of the Discernment Committee who are also Parish Council members were very concerned about this perceived slight. However, they had not yet come across any articles addressing this issue from a Catholic perspective. As soon as they do, they will be included.

The meeting closed at 7:32 p.m. with prayer.

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, May 10, at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti