



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – May 19, 2020

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

Elected Members Absent:

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

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Others Present: Liz Locatelli, Maxine Martin and Jessica Carpino

The meeting began with prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes of the Virtual Conference of April 29, 2020, were accepted.

The Council was reminded that the Minutes from March 10 were not mentioned during the virtual conference in April. Because of the time lapse, it was agreed they would be approved via email after the meeting to allow members another opportunity to review them.

The church has been closed since mid-March because of the coronavirus pandemic, so the typical agenda format was not applicable. The focus instead was discussion of the Reopening Subcommittee's two-pronged approach:

Our Parish Community in Action:

- The Book Club, Bible Study and Sunday Scripture Study will resume the first week of June with virtual meetings.
- The Youth Ministry has been meeting on Thursday evenings, and it's going well.
- A movie night with reflection was suggested.
- A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the possibility of a drive-through of the parking lot to help parishioners feel connected again. June 14, Corpus Christi Sunday was suggested. With the assistance of the security team and Town of Crawford Police, cars could process, perhaps first stopping off to donate non-perishable food for the food pantry. The cars would then drive by the front of the church, where the occupants could wave at Fr. Sean and the deacons. Children could make signs, and it was suggested that it would be wonderful if the event could be live-streamed on Facebook. The logistics will be researched and findings reported.

- Martha Santos will spearhead partnering children who need some tutoring to get through this school year with parishioner volunteers. There are about 50 parishioners who are also teachers – as well as many others who might have a skill to share even if they are not professional educators.
- The possibility of a Topic Talk was mentioned. Some are reluctant or unable to commit to a long-term study or club but might be interested in a one-evening discussion of a particular social issue, article, prayer, event, etc.
- Perhaps a virtual Children’s Liturgy gathering could be arranged. One of the catechists could read a story, or maybe some of the older Youth Ministry participants would be interested in sharing with the younger children. The children could potentially write a simple letter about the liturgy to one of the retired priests at St. Albert’s. Father Sean thought of at least four priests who would welcome a letter and be able to write a response.
- Dovetailing on the pen pal concept, there was discussion about whether there is a window of opportunity now to help kids feel more purposeful by reaching out to someone else – in particular, an elderly person living alone who isn’t even able to receive a visit from a Eucharistic Minister to the Homebound at this point. Partnering a Religious Education student with a senior would not in any way be mandatory or for service hours. Rather, the pen-pal opportunity will be presented via email to the students, and those that respond positively will be connected with a senior. An ice-breaker question could be “Have you ever lived through anything like this before.” And this could easily evolve into a family project.
- Confirmation has been scheduled for October 2. It is hoped that the candidates can convene in August to complete the program as a community. If not, it will have to be done online.
- The October Catechetical Forum has already been canceled, and a Religious Education update is expected during a May 27 Zoom meeting.

Physical Preparation of Building Reopening:

- While the reopening timeline is not yet definitive, what is certain is that we will need a supply of PPE, including masks and hand-sanitizers, and cleaning supplies. We will also need to prepare for social distancing, and address certain aspects of the Mass – such as the choir because singing sprays more germs than talking, and distribution of Communion.
- ICS, or Institutional Commodity Services, is connected with the Archdiocese and contracts for all the items on our list. While some items might be more expensive, we could be in a better position purchasing through them because ICS is familiar with the Archdiocese’s needs. And if there is a problem that necessitates a complaint, that complaint is regarded more seriously because the weight of the Archdiocese is behind it.
- Indoor and outdoor maintenance, including vacuuming and lawn mowing, has continued through these months. Because the virus lives longest on stainless steel –

and then only a couple of days – there probably isn't a reason to have the church professionally deep cleaned. Rather, the concern really kicks in once we are open.

- Once we are open, who will be wiping down the pews, door handles, bathrooms, etc. between Masses? How much time will that take? How will that impact Mass schedules? How will social distancing be incorporated? Will a Mass have to be added? Or will Communion services led by the deacons fill the void?
- How many people will be allowed in? And how will that be determined? By sign up or some other means? However, a number of people will probably be leery about going back into church, so crowds might not be an issue at first.
- The kitchen should be off limits and locked – especially given all its stainless steel.
- Should we supply masks or should people bring their own? In the wealthy Boca Raton church, for example, folks are being asked to bring their hand sanitizer. And even if we order PPE tomorrow, it probably won't arrive until July.
- There is a lot of unknown surrounding reopening and not everything can be anticipated. Flexibility will be key in resolving issues as they arise.

The meeting closed at 7:45 p.m. with prayer.

Next Zoom meeting will probably be scheduled sometime the first week in June to address the proposed June 14 procession.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti