



## ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

### *Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – April 8, 2019*

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

**Elected Members Absent:** Kevin Green

**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 6:45 p.m.**

**Minutes of the Meeting of March 11, 2019, were accepted.**

*The following updates were given:*

### **Ministry Reports:**

#### Administration & Stewardship:

- Some Parish Council members have been approached regarding why photos of the Council members are no longer posted. It was agreed that this was a good idea, and there really is no compelling reason as to why photos shouldn't be prominently displayed so parishioners can put names and faces together. New photos will be taken after this meeting, or members can submit photos with which they're pleased.
- A sip-and-paint fundraiser was proposed. The Council discussed how popular they've become, how positively they're perceived and how perfect one might be for St. Paul's. No artistic skill is required. A couple of Council members have connections to sip-and-paint professionals, whom they'll contact. Details will be provided at the next meeting, when the best time to host such an event will be determined.
- The concept of a vendor fair was tossed about wherein vendors pay to have a table. They come into Deacon John Hall and set up, so there wouldn't be much work on our part – other than to get the word out.

#### Education & Faith Formation:

- Soup to Sustain the Soul was very successful. The participants enjoyed all the

different types of meatless soups, which preceded a Children's Stations of the Cross. It was noted how well the children read.

- About 80 percent of the families have already re-registered for Religious Education next year. That is a better response than in years past – despite the dropping of Monday evening classes, to which there have been no major objections.
- As part of the transition for eighth-graders to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation rather than in ninth grade, seventh-graders will be tested this year in their knowledge of church history.
- Discussion ensued regarding the overall change in population/demographics, a major contributing factor in the shrinking of our Religious Education program. Anecdotally, however, it was noted that the housing market appears to be opening up, and more kids have been spotted in “older” neighborhoods. This could indicate that the decline has stabilized and perhaps even offer some hope of future growth.
- Although the Adult Faith Formation Committee has not met since March 10 so as to be able to provide more details, at least 50 people attended the Lenten Retreat and more than \$200 was collected in the freewill offerings – almost covering the presenter's fee.
- Fifteen middle-schoolers participated in the March Friday Night Live! While the numbers were a little lower than hoped for, energy was high. They enjoyed the trivia games, as well as interacting with one another. The feedback from the parents has been positive, too, which is important, and the momentum is good. For the April Friday Night Live! this Friday, Chris Worthington will prepare some pasta at home and then bring hot plates to keep the pasta (including gluten free) and sauce options warm.
- Attracting high-school age kids to a youth group is more challenging, however. No one showed up to the Sunday afternoon meet-and-greet on April 7– and there's a photo documenting untouched pizza and empty chairs – not even the few who were contemplating to do so. It was discussed that seeds need to be planted with next fall's Confirmation class. They will be familiarized with Chris and the Youth Ministry with the goal that they'll seamlessly morph into a high-school-age group.

### Welcome:

Discussion ensued regarding the new Welcome Ministry. Is it its own category or part of another ministry? It is OK for its coordinator to also be the Parish Council liaison? It was decided that the Welcome Ministry would be independent and that the Constitution would be changed to reflect that there is no conflict with the dual roles.

About 25 people attended the inaugural April 7 Welcome Ministry meeting. Rather than ushers and greeters, these volunteers will be referred to as Welcome Ministers. But while the number of attendees was significant, Fr. Sean noted if not part of the old crew, the vast majority of those at the meeting were somehow affiliated with the old crew. There were no more than three or four new volunteers, which calls into question the future.

Still, duties such as greeting folks upon arrival – and it was noted that *everyone* on that list of Welcome Ministers has to start talking to people – handing out song sheets, orchestrating the Offertory, checking pews after Mass, etc., are in the process

of being tabulated. Those tabulations will also reflect assignments that take into consideration whether a Welcome Minister, for example, also serves as a Eucharistic Minister to ensure all posts are covered without conflict.

Christian Services:

A surprise luncheon is planned on April 24 to honor Helen Schwarting's more than 25 years of service. Christian Services members are preparing and bringing food. About 20 people are attending thus far, and the Parish Council is invited.

Social Activities:

Nothing to report.

Worship & Spiritual Life:

Nothing to report.

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

For his Eagle Scout project, Jacob Smith will be creating a cement walkway to the statue of Mary. He estimates it will take a month to complete.

**Chairperson's Report (Deborah Harrison)**

Nothing to report.

**Other business**

Attention turned again to the vacant lot framed by the church parking lot, which is ready to be filled in, compacted down, paved, whatever. It was also noted that the church's property extends three or four feet into the woods past the edge of the parking lot, and that the adjacent property and house might be for sale.

As additional parking spaces are not needed, the consensus is to pave that lot and find another spot on which to build or make an improvement.

But what should that be? An area to play basketball? A playground? A meditative garden? Stations of the Cross? Retreat center (if we had the money!)? What about insurance concerns? And who's our target audience?

The "homework" assignment for the Parish Council is for each member to not only come up with a proposal for the next meeting, but to do a little investigation into the probability of that idea as well. A committee might then be formed to take the research to the next level.

**The meeting closed at 7:28 p.m. with prayer.**

**Next meeting will be Monday, May 13, 2019, at 6:45 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti**