

## Parish Council Minutes

September 23, 2008

Present: Debbie Hintz, Pat Lehman, Barb Holt, Ed Schwanke, Les Hagensick, Carl Geenen, David Brunmeier, Ellie Okunseri, Renee' Steger

Absent: Mary Konshak, Curt Arneson, Ken Laczniak

**Opening Prayer:** Debbie led the opening prayer with Les' assistance.

**Approval of August Minutes:** Barb motioned to approve August's minutes and David seconded her motion.

**Report on Capital Campaign:** The campaign is underway and we have had a very positive response in the number of volunteers stepping forward to help out. The co-chairs attended a speaking seminar and felt that compared to some other parishes in Wave II, we seem to be ahead of other churches in the planning stages. Rob, our consultant, also feels that we are doing very well.

**School Study Report:** The Steering Committee met for the first time on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is a committee made up of pastors, principals and 3 parishioners for each parish. The meeting was positive; very different than last year. The individual doing the school building assessments has completed his report on Good Hope and has given us an initial report with nothing too major noted. He obtains bids from vendors so the whole group knows what kind of work might need to be done at each school building. We have not yet received the financial analysis. Katie Hoeller from the Archdiocese is doing that for us. The "retreat day" for Councils, School Committee and general parish membership will be held Saturday meeting (9/27) here at St. Catherine.

### **Parish Director's Report:**

- The weekend of October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> will be the annual parish Mass count for the archdiocese.
- School enrollment is down this year, at 129 from last year's count of 140. We have a difference in the number of Choice students; we budgeted for 78 but only have 72. Carl felt the school sign was late and that it should have said we are a Choice School. Debbie asked Carl to mention this to Curt because he is the school liaison and should take this to the school committee. It was felt that the signs should be out in yards by July. Dave mentioned that some people received a school brochure, but again, felt that receiving this in August was too late. Carl mentioned that when he visits the less fortunate in our neighborhoods he talks to them about our school. Many ask about busing and Carl learned that MPS buses will transport kids to our school. It was suggested that Carl talk to the School Committee and let them know what he has learned.

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- RE enrollment, K5 through 8th and high school students, is at 71 with 57 students coming from St. Catharine's parish community and 14 from St. Bernadette's. Classes started last week and are going well. St. Bernadette's Christian Formation Committee learned of their low enrollment numbers and were interested in getting more children enrolled. As far as the number of children who would be eligible to be enrolled from St. Catherine, we have a pretty good turnout.
- Debbie shared the concerns brought forward regarding handicapped parking. Six signs were purchased and are going up in the first six spots on the upper level. It was suggested that perhaps one space near the door should be a drop off/pick up only space.
- We will also have a new sign installed at the drive entrance to the upper level to direct people to the parish offices and handicapped parking.
- As far as the school study; Maureen purchased extensive demographics of the area which will be good for us to look at when planning for our future.
- Debbie asked us to review the year end report she prepared and to approve it before sending it out to the parish. The question of what do we have in our savings was asked; we have approximately \$372,000 in CDs. (Debbie meant to bring that info tonight, but will get it to us.) The archdiocese would like each parish to have six months of expenses in the bank but not many parishes have those kinds of reserves. Once again this year we will have to prepare special paperwork to submit a deficit budget as well as a plan to get us out of our deficit. All approved the handout as it is. Debbie shared that if each of the 655 parish families gave \$2 more per week, we would not have a deficit to worry about.

**Committee Reports:**

Prayer & Worship – We continued to work on the goals we set forth at last month's meeting; we spent time discussing each event in more detail. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Pat mentioned that she was told by the ushers not to distribute Eucharist at the back of church. We also discussed the possibility of people who may need communion who are not in the front of church; ushers should stand by these people so the upstairs distributors can serve them on their way back down. Renee' was asked to share this with the Prayer & Worship Committee at their next meeting.

Human Concerns - A grocery list was made for parishioners to remind them of food sharing Sunday. Carl reviewed the handout from last week's bulletin. Helen Witte gave a presentation to the group since October is Domestic Awareness month. St. Vincent de Paul's current budget is at or below \$2,000; when their monies dip below \$2000, the group no longer goes out into the community to deliver food, clothing or furniture. Only the pantry is kept open. 211 people were served at the last meal program; many children were present. October 13<sup>th</sup> is their next meeting.

School Committee – No report this month – Curt not present.

Finance – As of August, the deficit is approximately \$50,000. A Choice payment will be coming in soon. The budget will need to be readjusting to reflect the lower Choice enrollment. David feels that we need to keep a positive outlook on the parish and is excited about the upcoming Faith In Our Future campaign. Their next meeting is October 14th.

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Stewardship – The group met on September 22nd. They decided not to begin anything until January because of Faith in Our Future campaign. They are planning a monthly “stewardship corner” in the bulletin highlighting ministries in the parish. They discussed follow up calls to new members and to people who did not return their stewardship forms. The next stewardship commitment weekend is during Pentecost (5/31). They talked about highlighting different ministries during Sunday coffee and donut socials. The group is really in need of new members. Their next meeting is scheduled for October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Parish Life – The Rock and the Rabbi Fireside Theater outing had a few more attendees than planned, and based on the cost for bus transportation they made a profit. The profit was put into the Parish Life account. The Chili Supper is scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup> after 4:30 Mass. Anne Lutz is finalizing the entertainment. The Women’s Evening of Reflection is scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup> after the 4:30 mass. It will be a potluck dinner. Monica Meagher from SS. Peter and Paul will speak. Their next meeting is Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm.

**Review School Committee By-Laws:** Curt was not present so we were not able to review the by-laws. Debbie recommended that Pat talk to Linda Kuhn to make sure we have copies in hand for our next meeting.

**All Parish Meeting Format:** Question forms will be in the pews two weeks prior to the meeting. We should stress that the meeting will now be in the Granville room. It was decided that the room should be set up with rows of chairs in front of the podium rather than the round tables in room. Presenters should not read from their handouts. Topics will include a report of school study, an update of the Faith In Our Future campaign, and discussion of the new handicapped parking; how is it working?

It was decided that we should meet earlier than normal; we will meet at 6:15 in the parish offices and then we will move to the Granville Room at 7pm for the meeting.

**Closing Prayer:** Debbie led the closing prayer.