

Joint Finance & Pastoral Council's Meeting

Thursday, January 18, 2024

APPROVED Minutes

Attendance:

Father Robert, Deacon Gary Vanness, Terri Romitti, Ted Zabel, Roger Stanley, Carl Peterson, Jennifer Otto, Larry Westenberg, Randy Conrad, Brian Higgins, Craig Schommer, Will VanRossum, Jim Linskins and Abby Linwood

Opening Prayer – Father Robert at 5:30 pm

Approval of Agenda – Motion to approve 1) Brian Higgins 2) Ted Zabel; unanimous

St. Nicholas Principal, Abby Linwood reported a tuition increase of about \$300/student for the upcoming 2024/2025 school year. It is a 6% increase, which puts us in about the middle range of tuition for area Catholic schools. Would like to see our Script program be pushed to help offset the tuition cost. Looking to possibly have a minimum amount to be met per family. The reason for the increase in tuition is the increase of salaries, insurance and materials. Options to help with tuition costs is to increase student numbers, explore more/different fundraising options or cut costs. We currently have 137 students enrolled. There has not been a tuition increase for at least the past 2 years. St. Nicholas does offer tuition assistance from Two Eagles Foundation of about \$20-25k. Families have to apply individually for assistance. There is a qualification formula through our FACTS program. Need to look at our veteran teachers looking to retire within the next 5-7 years. We currently are in need of a 4th and 7th grade teacher. Would like to look at a signing retention bonus. The teachers' pay between new teachers and tenure teachers is not significant. The school also has School Choice as an option for families. There are 56 seats available in the Freedom School District School Choice Program. There are currently 36 School Choice spots taken at St. Nicholas.

Approval of Finance Council 11/16/23 Minutes: Motion to approve 1) Brian Higgins 2) Larry Westenberg; unanimous

Approval of Pastoral Council 11/16/23 Minutes- Motion to approve 1) Terri Romitti 2) Ted Zabel; unanimous

Discuss Mass Times – a few people have inquired about holding a Sunday evening mass. Father will try an evening mass 1x/mo to see how many people utilize it. Would like to send out a survey to see what mass time would be best option; 5:00, 5:30, 6:00, 7? Mass currently would be held the 2nd Sunday evening of the month.

Finance Council Report:

- 1) The school budget is about 45K beyond our normal shortfall. The parish contributed about \$611k last year and about \$620k this year. The overall church budget has some unexpected expenses including QuickBooks adjustments and roof repair. The discussion on salaries is normally held in March/April. Would like to move that to November to include with the other expenses.
- 2) The One by One campaign is moving forward with the boiler system with a letter to the Bishop for approval. We will be using \$150k from our St. Francis Xavier account and \$250k from the campaign to cover boiler expenses. We currently have \$138k in our One by One campaign account. All balances should be in account within 4 years.

Pastoral Council Report:

- 1) An email was sent around Christmas to see where we are at with our parish numbers. Did not get a lot of response. Please continue to look at parishioner list to update.
- 2) Scheduler Pro- Roger has used this program at his previous parish. Worked very well to keep church information in one place for scheduling; servers, ushers, lectors, committees, etc. Each committee member must register to be entered into the program to use it. Finance needs to agree to purchase before ordering. There is a one-time license fee of \$700 and roughly \$300-\$500/year depending on the group size. Father thinks this has worked well in the past at other parishes.
- 3) Pastoral council members to look for someone to step in to volunteer. Terri helped with Bingo with new people volunteering to help. There were 108 people who attended. Bingo committee leads are Michelle Huss, Tonya

Schmidt and Karen Krejcie. Ryan Peterson would be a good member on Buildings and Ground, Pastoral, Finance. Keep reaching out for more committee members including new parishioners. We had previously had nomination slips for Finance and Pastoral Council members.

Finance Fundraising Committee – Will VanRossum and Craig Schommer were asked to be heads of this council. They would be assisting to ensure the financials are accounted for. This group would help maintain current fundraising and look for new ideas to implement if we need to alter what fundraisers are currently offered. This committee would include a lead from each major fundraising group (Winterfest, Golf Outing, Country Fest, and Pizza Making), the finance council, a parish and a school representative. Would like to see each group have a procedure written out for whomever takes over after the chair steps down. Other fundraising ideas to consider are a cash raffle, calendar raffle and meat raffle. The yearly fundraising budget goal is \$275k.

Parade Committee – Due to the parade coordination, we would like to enforce a committee that can focus on this every year. Would like NE high schoolers to consider taking this committee. They could have the class prior to the parade to work on the float and ensure it is ready for the night of the parade.

Pastoral Council Committee Reports:

1) **School Advisory – Jen Otto** Had discussed the increase of tuition and how to keep our middle school open in years to come. Need to hire teachers instead of long-term subs. It was suggested to send postcards out to the new subdivision behind the fire department. As there are a lot of new families back there. Have a welcome packet for families to know what is available at our school. Possibly have tuition assistance to help middle school students to stay?

2) **Discipleship- Roger Stanley** The discipleship team has been doing wonderful offering ladies night, youth nights, middle school breakfasts, middle school evenings and much more. They will be offering a book study of “33 Days to Eucharistic Glory” on Tuesdays either 10:30 am or 6:45 pm beginning February 21st. Our confirmands were confirmed yesterday evening, Wednesday, January 17th! Congratulations. They will also be holding the church search and 1st Reconciliation for our 2nd grade class.

3) **Worship- Carl Peterson** There will be a candle blessing on February 2nd, Blessing of the throats the weekend of February 3rd and 4th after all masses. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 14th. Ron Hardy will again be offering Stations and Soup during Lent.

4) **Hospitality- Ted Zabel** Social Sunday after mass has had good attendance. Cindy Pynenberg is trying to get new faces to stay and join after masses. Will be helping with the Stations and Soup during Lent.

5) **Buildings and Grounds – Randy Conrad** The boiler and controls have been ordered and will be put in by two different companies this summer. This should help save money because it is more energy efficient and can be programmed online. Will be running next fall. If you have anything downstairs please clean it out to create a work area for the boilers to be put in.

Pastors Report: Keep engaging families to come to church! Father likes to meet with each baptismal family to get to know them better and their intent for the sacraments. Our Children’s Liturgy of the Word needs leads so we can once again offer this during mass. Deacon Gary is visiting the sick!

Next Pastoral Council Meeting will be Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 6:30 pm

Closing prayer

Motion to Adjourn 1) Craig Schommer 2) Randy Conrad; Unanimous

Submitted by: Jennifer Otto