

St. Mary Parish Council Meeting
Minutes
September 9, 2008
7:00 pm

Opening Prayer and Reflection: John Gill - Stewardship Prayer (Next month – Janice Mead)

Presided by: Fr. Raymond Goodwin

Present: John Gill, Mary Belmore, Janice Mead, Keith Coveney, Tom Tellier, Jo Dascanio, Mary Szymczak, Rolande Parent, Janice Mead, Deacon Nick CaraDonna, Sister Yvonne Millman

Absent: Rebecca Edwards

Ministries: Bill Szymczak (Stewardship)

Contact sheet sent around, members asked to verify and update information. List will be distributed at next meeting. Stewardship ministry representatives (Helen R, Bob B. and Bill S.) will rotate attendance at this meeting.

June minutes: Approved

Chairperson Comments – John Gill

- No new correspondence to share
- John provided a recap of 2007-2008 accomplishments, highlighting the Safe Environment Letter, By-law revision, and the first year of the Parish Council Achievement Award

New Action items

- Web-site revised – members were asked to check it out
 - Meeting minutes will be posted in PDF format on the website once approved
 - Bulletins are posted about 1 week after they are printed. Members discussed possibility of posting it sooner, to encourage more parishioners to use the website.
 - Deacon Nick presented the idea of having an e-mail for submitting tithing requests. Would need to be secure as requests may contain confidential information.
 - Recommendation – Add St. Mary's web site to the bulletin under the mailing address. It is currently referred to only as an e-mail address.
 - Deacon Nick asked new members to provide their biographies. He will take pictures and update the Parish Council information.

Ministry Updates:

- Religious Education

- Sr. updated the council on the openings for catechists, aides, and substitutes. Aides are used in each classroom because Safe Environment requires two adults in the room. Aides assist with projects.
- 210 students currently enrolled in grades 1-8; 18 in 9th; 18 in 10th; 23 in 11th; 12 from St. Philips
- Cluster goal is to have 1 program in 3 sites. Grades 1-8 are already using the same program, but HS differs.
- Sept 21st is Catechetical Sunday – officers of the Religious Board will be installed; confirmation candidates will be working on the Grafton Community Farm in the afternoon.
- The 1st CCD board meeting will be Sept 23rd
- Sept 28th - Start of HS classes. Rite of Welcoming and pot luck brunch for the Confirmation candidates.
- There is a need for an assistant who knows sign language for a deaf student who has deaf parents.
- Stewardship – Bill Szymczak
 - Two members have left the committee; three new members will be joining. Terms are staggered. Stewardship representatives will share the responsibility of attending Parish Council meetings
 - October 5 will be the blessing of animals.
 - Tithing: The account has been balanced. There is a need to create awareness among the parishioners as not as fewer requests are being received. Publishing success stories that show where funds have helped was discussed. Stories would have to be written as not to identify the recipient.
 - Welcome brochures for new parishioners – The representative will report back on the status at the next meeting.
- Finance – Deacon Nick
 - Oil barrels will be put out on 9/21. Last year the oil bill was approximately \$10,000 and is anticipated to be \$20,000 this year. A decision was made to drop out of oil purchasing consortiums as a blind commitment is required. St. Mary's will play it by ear and can join the Catholic Consortium at any time.
 - Last of the savings was needed to close the books as we were running 9-10K short
 - There is a drop in contributions in June, July, and August. St. Mary's needs \$6500/week
 - The financial report will be out in October.
 - Deacon Nick is looking into working with a bank to set up a debit plan where St. Mary's is authorized by parishioners to withdraw money from an account for regular collections. St. Patrick's in Whitinsville currently uses UNIBANK. There is software available that would be of no cost to use. Parishioners can currently use on-line banking to have payments sent to St. Mary's automatically, but few parishioners have shown interest.

- Cluster – Fr. Ray
 - There will be a general meeting in October at St. Mary's to catch everyone up on progress made in Finance and Religious Ed. There will be a cluster meeting for all parishes at St. James in Nov. Parish Council Members were encouraged to attend.

Council discussion:

- Opening Prayer Assignments – John explained the Opening Prayer. Each member drew a month from a hat for their assignment.
- Deacon Nick Reassignment status –
 - Fr. Ray met with the Bishop to make him aware of the status and to discuss planning needs.
 - The Parish Council needs to make recommendations on how to prepare others on staff or parishioners to take over the Deacon's Pastoral Associate duties (budget, financial reports, payroll, etc.). Deacon feels much of it can be accomplished through on the job training.
 - Need to plan for a meeting with Deacon Tony Surozenski, who makes recommendations to the bishop for assignment of Deacons, which is scheduled for Dec 9. What do we see as the role of the Deacon? Need to discuss and plan at the next two meetings.
- Cluster meeting for all parishes at St. James, November 16 – see Cluster update above.
- Achievement Award – Plan for 2009
 - Initial intent of award was Youth-doing-for-Youth and that the funds for the award would be raised by the HS students. Christmas Fair proceeds will not be used for the '09 Award.
 - John asked Mary and Keith to document their recommendations for a timetable and interview process.
 - Keep focused on the reason for the award (parish/stewardship involvement, not academic).
 - Relook at form as students sent transcripts even though they were not requested.
 - Announce in January, publish in bulletin.
 - Would like to see 2 \$500 awards next year. Car washes can be very successful fundraisers.
- Parish Nurse
 - Fr. Ray spoke to the parish nurse in Westborough. The parish nurse would be part of a caring mission, a person of prayer and a Eucharistic minister who would visit parishioners who have chronic and terminal illnesses, hospice patients. The nurse would be primarily spiritual, not give clinical care, but may identify and initiate coordination of medical services. Anna Maria College, Indiana University and others offer credentialing programs for Parish Nurses. Initially this would be an 8 hour/week position, but could grow as time goes on.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 14, 7:00 p.m. **Opening Prayer:** Janice Mead

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice Mead, Parish Council Secretary