

St. Mary Parish Council Meeting Minutes
November 11, 2008
7:00 p.m.

Opening Prayer and Reflection: John Gill – “I Asked” - a prayer found on a Veterans’ website (Prayer assignment for December: Mary Belmore)

Presided by: Fr. Raymond Goodwin

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

Absent: Mary Belmore, Rolande Parent

Ministries: Helen Rehberg (Stewardship), John Renzoni (Religious Ed)

October minutes: Approved with two corrections – correct the spelling of Mary Szymczak’s last name, remove Keith Coveney from Present attendees.

Received Correspondence, etc. – John distributed the Parish Council Membership Contact Information to attendees for review and update.

Chairperson Comments – John Gill

- Photos and biographies for website – Two bios are pending. Pictures of the new Council members were sent to Karen to post on the website.
- Date reminders:
 - Cluster meeting for all parishes at St. James, Nov 16 at 2 p.m.
 - December 9th Parish Council meeting - Meet with Deacon Tony Surozenski
 - Hospitality for the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service - Tuesday, November 25th.
Members are to set-up, host the reception after the service, and clean-up after the services. Baked goods are needed for 50 - 100 guests. John will put a notice in the bulletin asking for bakers in addition to the Parish Council members who volunteered to bake. Small centerpieces would also be a welcome touch. John will coordinate via e-mail.
 - Christmas Fair - November 15th from 9 - 2 p.m.

New Action items

- Music - Loud music at last Sunday’s (11/9) 7:30 a.m. Mass was reported. Parishioners are asking for music that is quieter and more meditative for Communion and during the Sacrament of the Sick prayers. Per Fr. Ray, the acoustics amplify the sound which makes volume more difficult to control, but he did speak to the Music Director after last Sunday’s Mass. The 7:30 Mass has been identified as the “quiet” Mass and the 4 p.m. has the adult choir. John will also relay the comments from the Council to the Ed L.
- Web site address in the Parish Bulletin - Deacon Nick will add the parish web site address to a more prominent area near the street address.

Ministry Updates:

- Religious Education – John Renzoni

- Everything is set the Pot Luck Supper on November 21st
 - Members will be attending the Cluster Forum on November 16th
 - Children in Grades 3-8 are actively participating in a 10 a.m. Mass. Grade 8 was the first. Many lessons were learned, but it went well and the children enjoyed participating. Deb Chouinard made a list of To Do's for use by the next Grades.
 - The Father/Daughter dance for grades 1-8 went very well despite a lack of early interest. Three women came forward at the last minute to decorate. In the end, there were 55 fathers plus their daughters (some had more than one) who attended. The DJ did an excellent job.
 - A positive response was received by the Religious Ed Board Members who lead the Rosary on October 11th during the Month of the Rosary.
 - Epiphany Pageant - responses for participants are just starting to come in.
 - Families will be asked to provide e-mail addresses to facilitate communications and to save cost of postage.
- Stewardship – Helen Rehberg
 - The blessing of animals on October 5th was a wonderful event, with many participants staying to socialize
 - The Stewardship Committee has a goal to define their presence to the parish community, particularly in the area of tithing. The tithing request process is not clear and requests are not going into the Tithing Suggestion box in the gathering space. They are being handed to the staff in the office and should not be. Two got lost recently.
 - Refugee Apostolate partnership - Deacon Walter Doyle and his wife Kathy started the ministry on Chandler St. almost 30 years ago. They are looking for a more active partnership with our parish. Helen now contacts them on a monthly basis to discuss their changing needs. Stewardship will be holding a new hat, scarf and mitten drive in December.
 - Members are reading one chapter of the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship each month. Helen commented that they have learned that even though the world changes, the need for stewardship remains constant.
- Finance – Deacon Nick
 - Reports for the diocese were completed in September
 - Members of the Finance Committee will do presentations at masses the weekend of November 23rd.
 - There was an \$18,000 decrease in income since last year. We had a decrease in the "tax" to the diocese because of the decreased income, a decrease in pension costs, and other decreases due to budget controls. This left a \$7,800 deficit. Savings were used to pay bills.
 - If things do not change, there will be a \$38,000 deficit next year. Salary and benefits account for about half of the budget with health insurance increases responsible for much of the increased costs.
 - We are meeting our obligation to pay for brickwork.
 - We did not join a consortium for heating oil which, considering the current drop in prices, was a good thing.
 - We do not have a cushion, but we are staying on top of things.

- Cluster – Fr. Ray
 - The a cluster meeting for all parishes will be at St. James November 16th. Parish Council members should be sure to be there and ask questions. Lay involvement makes it happen. Liz Marcil will be there listening as a representative from the Diocese. Ed Murphy will moderate. The message to send is that the parishes will be merged, not closed.

Council discussions:

- Achievement Award – Keith Coveney continued with his recommendations and observations to complete the presentation Mary began at last meeting.
 - Publish the notice in the bulletin in January with a specific deadline.
 - Have someone process the applications as they are received and hold until the deadline arrives. Recommended deadline is the end of March, beginning of April.
 - Use a gatekeeper to review the applications for completeness, including removing unnecessary information, such as transcripts. This is not an academic award and grades are not considered and should not be seen by members of the panel.
 - Use the number of applicants to determine the number of panel members to rank applications for discussion purposes to determine winner.
 - Follow a four question format for interviewing process.
 - Winner will be decided by discussion and vote by the panel members.
 - Announce selection to the parish and award fund for the second semester.
 - The award will be given to a parish graduating Senior who has shown growth and development through parish life.
 - Panel members will be recruited from within the ministries.
 - Need to determine how funds will be raised and who will re-write the questions.
- Deacon Nick's successor
 - Members continued to prepare for Deacon Tony's meeting with the Council on December 9th by discussing the role of the Deacon.
 - Deacon Nick reminded members that we will be seeking a 12 hour a week deacon for Liturgical Ministry only, not an Associate Pastor. Deacon Nick explained the transition some of his non-liturgical duties to parishioners, including the move to a payroll service. Deacon described the St. Vincent de Paul ministry of face-to-face visits to families who need to have food delivered. Visitors pray with the family and help identify what other services are needed. Two parishioners have agreed to work together to fill this need.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 9th, 7:00 p.m. **Opening Prayer:** Mary Belmore

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice Mead, Parish Council Secretary