

## **Parish Council Meeting**

**Dec. 7, 2021**

**7 p.m.**

- Opening Prayer: Sharon
- All Present (Zoom or Otherwise): Jackson Herrera, Matt Hayes, Rocky Marsh, Tim Nation, Geoff Ziegler, Charles Williams, Kate Erdel, Sharon Sperry, Jose Samperio, Chris Durnil, Noah DeMoss, Karla Hudecek, Fr. Varghese
- All Absent: Grace DeMoss, Karen Momper, Janine Bercovitz
- Approval of minutes:
  - Matt Hayes makes a motion to approve the minutes. Unanimously passed.
  
- Comments by pastor
  - Sharon will be resigning from presidency & council due to health issues; this will be her last meeting.
  - Father wants 1 or 2 members to review by-laws relating to filling these 2 positions, to #1 replace Cathy as VP and #2 replace Sharon as president (need an interim president).
  - Noted that Sharon was originally appointed to head Spiritual Growth.
  - Tim mentioned that Father had requested VP nominations, wondered if we should use same format post-meeting for nominations.
  - Father's thoughts on the council: every commission head represented in council, as well as appointed members and elected members. Desire is, of elected members, one to be president and another to be VP; secretary could be anyone. Wants the parish to be led by members elected by the parish.
  - Charles suggests a committee look at by-laws and come up with method of choosing president & VP.
    - 3 members volunteered: Charles, Jose, Rocky.
  
- Pillar Chair Reports
  - Rocky Marsh: Community Service
    - Race & Culture reached out re: STA hosting a seminar called Race & Voting, to invite other neighboring churches (Catholic & otherwise), headed by STA alum who currently works for AD (Angela Espada).
      - Want STA to host, Angela present. Rocky sent slides to council.
      - Rocky believes it is in line with STA mission to educate community on race, voting, and its impact on community at-large.
      - Only point of concern would be parishioner thoughts on parish hosting, due to sensitivity of topic.
      - Would also potentially spark interest in other STA events within community. Don't currently have a committee fair, but this event might help draw awareness to other STA committees.
      - Hope to hold event before May primary election, so in April 2022.
      - Would need council approval to proceed. Want to balance timing of approving event with understanding STA community's response to hosting this event.
    - Jose asked what this event would look like.
      - Rocky – 1 hour educational event.

- Father – topics in slides include zoning, legal obstacles. Only concern is whether STA would be accused of something political.
- Tim – also attended Race & Culture meeting, and wants council to approve, Father to be on board, and for the event to be sponsored by the parish, not just the committee.
  - Politically, especially if talking about gerrymandering, this is typically done by both parties. There are a lot of shenanigans around racism in voting, and this is not a partisan issue.
- Rocky – most of content is a Catholic perspective on our responsibilities as a community.
  - What are our duties and responsibilities in community through voting or acknowledging impacts of race on history?
  - Content doesn't speak to anything specifically partisan, but encourages voting to choose who reflects your value as Catholic.
  - “I think we've talked about more controversial things before as a parish.”
  - Could make recommendations on content if we think STA will be negatively affected.
- Father – in my life I've only voted 4 times, 3x in U.S. The one time in India, experienced ways of being discouraged/dissuaded from voting in different regions. Very familiar with problem discussed in these slides. Joe Smith brought something like this to Father recently.
- Matt – I think it's excellent, and this would allow parish in general to learn more about IN Catholic Conference as it allows Catholics to engage with policy process.
  - Matt moves to support RCC's initiative to host presentation, Charles seconds.
    - Sharon thinks we can assume the parish would approve to get it done quickly.
    - Rocky wanted to make sure there was time for questions.
  - Motion carries unanimously.
    - Food Pantry is carrying on, as is St. Vincent de Paul. Other committees are less in touch for now.
  - Tim Nation: Dialogue, Truth, and Faith
    - Sent minutes from last meeting:
      - Brandon Cosby from Flannery House spoke to middle school about his experiences with racism.
      - Implicit bias training recently: intergenerational parish attendance, as well as community neighbors.
      - Kaci & Kyle Haslett going to talk to middle-schoolers next week during school day about their experiences at STA and since graduation.
      - Retreat at January meeting to plan out 2022. Would love to get Jim Trippi involved (St. Thomas Talks) with Espada presentation.
    - Rocky asked if all school staff participated in implicit bias training.
      - Tim: staff went through training two years ago with Peace Learning Center, so not required currently.
      - Culturally Responsive Practices training to learn how to be culturally aware within classroom, learn about other cultures & bring these into your teaching.

- Pearlette & Tim took an hour to go through antiracism training with school staff in 2020.
    - Nancy V went through 2-day training with Child Advocates, trying to get staff through this training as well.
  - Sharon Sperry: Spiritual Growth
    - Nothing much has changed – still need greeters & someone to head that mission.
    - RCIA has 2 members currently. 12 in confirmation, 24 in first communion, just held reconciliation, Bible study about to wrap up Old Testament (Karla H updates).
    - Father would like Sharon to bring someone to take her place from Spiritual Growth Commission.
  - Geoff Ziegler: Stewardship
    - Ran communications in Friday e-newsletter & Sunday bulletins re: time/talent/treasure (Sept-Nov).
    - EOY pledge letter is ready, delayed due to Cheryl being out, but should go out end of week.
    - Need to wrap head around beginning of year Stewardship tasks.
    - Have info for Groundhog Day event, but unless a real incentive to hold event not likely going to take place.
- Old Business - Update on campus plan: Chris Durnil
  - Since last meeting, Chris has done some research on options for master plan.
    - Council had asked ballpark value for duplex. Chris asked his realtor (he just moved within the neighborhood) and got back \$350K-\$400K based on other duplexes in township area. This amount is just for the acquisition, before any interior changes to duplex, or any proposed changes to parish center/rectory.
    - Knowing this, reviewing values for additions to building, it is Chris' opinion that an addition to the existing building is the way to go.
      - Still need to do a lot of groundwork on getting a preliminary design, but using daycares, elementaries, and 2-3 story high schools as comps, and using RS Means (cost-per-square-foot software):
        - Average cost of \$200-\$260 per square foot for structure (depending on single/double story);
        - This is just a starting point, would be looking at total of \$600-\$750K addition, before considering furniture and furnishings.
      - There's an addition in master plan that calls for demo to parish center and adding onto school, which would be parish center/pre-K combo.
      - Could also expand into the currently fenced outdoor classroom area (which is all technically temporary at this time).
  - Chris asks that council forms ad hoc committee to start looking much more in detail, come up with more accurate costs, that can help develop a plan presentable to downtown so we can move forward with actionable steps towards fundraising. Also asks that a second committee be formed to start investigating fundraising steps.
    - Tim recap: buying duplex probably off table; would make sense to build, which could include demo; there is space next to gym as one possibility.
      - Separately, in discussing w/ Father, we don't really use parking lot behind church (apart from kids playing basketball).

- o Chris response: purchase not exactly off the table, since owners willing to sell – but based on cost of repurposing parish center space, plus moving priest out of current rectory, money would be best spent on new structure (also vs. repurposing existing space, with who knows what in the walls). Doesn't want to get into weeds of exact location of addition, although school not at all interested in eating into playground space.
  - At this point, we have the need to talk about funding the next steps. There are strict requirements around how archdiocese allows parishes to move forward with capital campaigns/fundraising.
  - Last fundraising campaign went well from archdiocese perspective, so Chris wanted to know whether \$70K feasibility study could be waived in this event, and they were open to that.
  - There are still needs that may arise from existing facility standpoint, so need to keep operational funds separate from master plan funds.
  - Chris is aware of support within the parish for getting something moving.
- o Sharon – conversations with Fred & Barb Glass – Rosemary Glass ceded \$50K to church that could be used in pre-K project – could call it “Rosemary Glass school,” Fred has also volunteered to do fundraising.
  - o Sharon recommended getting behind this offer immediately – among other projects, Fred Glass helped fundraise for Lucas Oil Stadium.
- o Jose asked that we need to figure out what we want.
  - o Chris – we have a lot of the need identified, how we respond to that need is where we have different ideas. A lot of these ideas come from a phased approach knowing that we might not have the capital campaign right away, but we need to take care of the pre-K space.
    - Looks like we should abandon plan A (Buy duplex) and look at a larger addition (plan B/C), now those are moving up the priority list, so what could we do within our geographical layout?
- o Charles asked if would we start raising money before we have the design.
  - Chris says, yes, to a point – last capital campaign there was a year of effort with big donors, got nearly \$300K in big donations before asking the general community to commit/pledge.
  - Fred's background should be an advantage for us and score points with archdiocese.
  - Simultaneously we can start refining what our blueprint looks like so it's ready when it's time to ask the general public.
  - Charles stated that in a project like this, we would typically want 70% of ask already committed in advance before making a public appeal.
- o Matt pointed out that it's critical that we make clear for the parish what it is that we want to do. We can't ask Fred to start raising money for something we don't know what we want to do. Need to clarify option B, so we can say we know what we need as a community, and that's what the AD will want to know: what it is, how much it will cost, what is the fundraising structure?
- o Matt asked if there are other people with similar skill sets within the parish who can work on clarifying this plan within the next couple of months.
  - o Chris has a couple of people in mind.

- Also important per Chris: when we figure out what the plan looks like, we commit to a systematic approach, because this process is going to last longer than the terms of the people in this meeting.
  - Previously, Chris had frustration because council has been talking about it for 3 years – but now, if we can get some alignment, he is feeling reinvigorated.
  - Get some options, get a schematic and a visualization, get a cost estimate.
  - Enough people have heard the need/desire from the school, and are starting to question why hasn't anything been done. Think this will be a welcome thing for the parish.
- o Kate mentioned that the school recently had open house with 6-7 families come with a preschooler but had to tell them there wasn't space (including the child of someone on school commission).
  - Opportunity to welcome more kids into program is there.
  - In talking to Nancy re: Fred – they are ready to get started, their money has been sitting and not been put to use. Knowing that, we should have a little bit of fire to move forward. The need is there, what are we waiting for?
- o Sharon proposed the need for a small group (3 max) to look at specific options for an addition and come back with a clear recommendation. Council would like to appoint Chris to head this committee. Chris accepts.
  - o As a part of process, prudent to figure out path of approvals, re: design group, fundraising group.
    - Building and grounds usually just runs activity for approval through finance committee, but this situation is different since it is capital items.
    - A process will help Fred too – what is the reporting mechanism, when are votes needed, how do we approve spending for miscellaneous (ie. \$5K) expenditures as part of the process.
  - o Kate asked what the by-laws suggest for this process.
    - Father responded that for capital improvements, we would need to get blessing from archdiocese, but that there are no specific STA by-laws.
    - Charles added that if the council approves the plan, we have latitude to take necessary actions.
    - Chris added that for the prior capital campaign, there were not reports made to the council every single meeting, but more like updates along the way.
- o Sharon asked how long Chris needs to come up with something to bring back to the council.
  - o Chris is not sure. He can say that construction market in area is hot, not sure if a designer is going to have interest in an addition to an existing school or get contractors to build it (since building completely new schools).
    - He needs to do some digging (including talking to Eric Atkins) to figure out who to talk to about construction/design.
  - o Sharon offered that if Chris can have something before February, can call January meeting if able to speak that soon.
    - Chris said he will not be ready by January.
  - o Rocky asked if a formal motion is needed.

- o Charles (wishing to act this evening) moved to form an ad hoc committee to investigate design. Rocky seconds, motion carries unanimously.
- o Father added that the master plan is available, the parish knows about it, and we should tell them there is a plan to implement.
  - Chris will come up with ideas as to how to present the next steps to the parish.
    - Chris pointed out that we haven't really celebrated success of prior master plan because covid hit at the end of implementation.
    - When we celebrate, we should then very quickly relay to parish what the next 5 years look like.
  - Father proposed a parish celebration on an upcoming weekend to bring these completed tasks to the parish, along with the (overdue) financial report.
    - Karla suggested scheduling these reports for the first weekend in February, when Father is back.
    - Sharon suggested also making these announcements in the online newsletter /bulletin.
- New Business: Video screen purchase by Finance Committee: Noah DeMoss
  - o Noah confirmed that the finance committee approved the expenditure, and that the screen has been installed.
  - o Geoff confirmed that the signed contract was fulfilled.
    - o Geoff also took training for content management for the screen.
      - Since then, Geoff established rough but specific "change board" in terms of how to approve or deny parish & school content.
      - The screen has been utilized the first two Sundays of Advent.
  - o Geoff finds the screen a value-add item; as more people understand what the screen can do, it will grow in its ability to communicate.
  - o Charles and Chris both like the screen.
    - o Chris asked about live-streaming.
      - Geoff said streaming was tested, limitation is that pulls directly from WiFi (not ethernet), so buffering is an issue that prevented it from showing. It is possible to run ethernet.
      - Noah to follow up on ethernet install with one or the other of the vendors.
    - o Sharon suggests including screen as part of financial report.
- Next meeting: February 8, 2022
- Ending Prayer: Fr.V