

# **Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

## **St. Mary Parish; Pella, IA**

**Tuesday, April 10, 2012**

Attending: Fr. Jeff Belger, Carol Laughlin, Gene Schmitz, Mary Lapthorn, Dave Langenfeld, Ken Frommelt, Jenny Anderson, Robin Nossaman, Donna DeJoode, Kenny Nedder, Patty Dole, Debbie Kissinger, Sharon Weiler, Peggy Moriarity, Rhonda Versluys

Not Attending: Danielle Bortscheller, Diana Peffers, Karen Janssen, Fr. Ron Hodges, Deacon Don Efinger, Jon Miller

- I. Opening Prayer/ Reflection
- II. Approval of February, 2012 Parish Council meeting minutes - Approved as read (1<sup>st</sup>- Ken, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Debbie)
- III. Solicitation of general/specific parishioner concerns
  - a. The timeliness and effectiveness of the newsletter have been questioned. The cost of printing and mailing the newsletter was estimated at .40-.50 apiece and approximately 320 are mailed each month. There was discussion as to whether the newsletter would get out faster if it was emailed to parishioners or just available online. Father Jeff reported that it's a struggle to get everyone, himself included, to get newsletter submissions in by the deadline. The parish staff had discussed the possibility of going to a bi-monthly frequency. It was agreed that the newsletter can be a useful tool to communicate what's going on in the parish and a way to keep in touch with people who don't regularly attend Mass.
  - b. The effectiveness of mailing monthly tithing envelope packets was also questioned. No one was sure of the cost involved. Many envelopes go unused since parishioners may either use the automatic payment feature or only make donations monthly instead of every week. Father Jeff will pursue this with the Finance Council.
  - c. A parishioner questioned why St. Mary's didn't have its Holy Week service schedule included in the Catholic Messenger. This was because nothing was submitted for printing.
- IV. Parish Youth Council Report
  - a. No youth representatives were present. Carol reported that the Soles 4 Souls project will begin as soon as the collection boxes arrive. Plans are in the works for the summer lock-in and a mission trip to McLaughlin, SD. The mission trip will last one week (including two days for making the 12-hour trip out and back) and will be held at Standing Rock which is a Lakota Indian reservation. Participants will focus on maintenance work for the church, conducting a Bible School, performing community service and learning about the Indian culture. The goal is to keep the cost under \$100. Suggestions were made on ways the parish can support the trip by baking food to take along or collecting items needed. Adult and youth participation is strongly encouraged.
  - b. Donna reported that the first youth fellowship activity is scheduled for April 25. This group will be known as "Saints" (Saints Inspiring Teens) and it is open to all middle school and high school students. A final planning meeting is scheduled for April 11 to determine how to make the youth aware of this new event.
- V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
  - a. Parish Directory
    - i. Sharon reported that more than 180 parish families will be included in the new parish directory. Michelle Gritters from Digital Galleria Designs is putting together a draft of the photo pages and Becky Cobb is working on the name and address section. Photos from parishioners are being solicited for inclusion in the directory.
  - b. Elections

- i. A slate of eight qualified candidates has been compiled and Ken shared a draft of the ballot with the council. An information sheet for the candidates will be included in bulletins the weekend of April 21-22. This information will also be available through the weekly email announcement.
    - ii. There will not be absentee ballots but parishioners can contact an election committee member to vote early if they cannot vote during the election weekend (April 28-29).
    - iii. Announcements will be made explaining who is eligible to vote.
    - iv. Due to Diana Peffers early resignation, five council members will be elected. Each parishioner will vote for four candidates and the five candidates with the most votes will be offered positions on the parish council.
  - c. Personnel
    - i. Father Jeff shared with us the form to be used for parish staff evaluations. There are parts to be completed by the staff member and the pastor. As appropriate, input will be solicited from peers and parishioners for performance reviews. The review process will primarily be the responsibility of the pastor with support from the personnel board.
    - ii. Appreciation was expressed to Father Jeff and the personnel board for all the work that has been done in developing the Employee Performance Appraisal process.
  - d. Social Action Commission Grant Application
    - i. Deb shared the grant application with the council and explained the background of the grant funds. The Finance Council had decided in July, 2011 that 3% of the parish income should be distributed to social justice causes. This money will be distributed to grant applicants that represent non-profit organizations that "echo the beliefs and values of the church." The goal is to divide the funds among local, national and international causes in keeping with the diocesan stewardship guidelines. Some enhancements were suggested to the application form. There will be two grant application deadlines each year and the first one will be June 15, 2012. Grant application guidelines are being developed. Grant recipients will be decided upon by the Social Action Commission, the Finance Council and the pastor. Follow-up reports will be requested.
  - e. Parish Council Rolling Calendar
    - i. Non-recurring events through the end of August were reviewed. Some additions and corrections were noted.
  - f. Bingo Update
    - i. Peggy Moriarity provided an update on how the weekly Bingo sessions are going. Two blackout jackpots have been awarded and the current jackpot is back up to \$500. The start-up loan has been paid back and attendance is steady at about 35-40 people each week. The students have been a big help with concessions and Chuck Van Tyl has kept that running smoothly. The average weekly profit is around \$200 with the highest weekly profit having been \$1,000.

## VI. New Business

- a. Fall Festival
  - i. Rhonda Versluys presented information about the Fall Festival proposed for September 29. The Church Life Commission has discussed this event the past couple of years and wants to pursue it for this fall. An extensive list of possible activities was presented including food stands, a trail run/walk, Bingo, crafts, a petting zoo and a pumpkin chunkin' contest. The council agreed that it sounded like a good idea and each commission is urged to find a way to actively support in the planning and execution of this event.
- b. Aaron De Joode Eagle Scout Project

- i. Donna requested that anyone having extra perennials would donate them to Aaron's Eagle Scout project on the church grounds. The deadline for completion is June 1.

VII. Closing prayer

VIII. Adjournment (9:15 PM)

IX. Next Meeting – Tuesday, May 8 at 7 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Weiler