St. Michael Parish Council Minutes

Monday, February 22, 2016

**Members Present:** Karen Basham, Leslye Biller, Jay Blair, Chris Bonbright, Helen Bryant, Stacy Davis, Charles Edelen, Bob Goodin, Kathy Goodin, Gary Grieshaber , Denise Hampton, Karen Karem, Angela Kimbel , Kevin Popp , Jim Smith, Mary Rose Stephenson, Lisa Wilhelmus

**Members Absent:** Brenda Rickert, Susan Robison, Mary Rose Stephenson, Fr. Dick Sullivan

**Minutes Secretary:** Teresa Watson

**Opening Prayer:** Stacy Davis

**Minutes:** Minutes from the December, 2015 meeting were approved as written.

**Old Business:**

Chris Bonbright reported on the response from the parish to the recent planning survey. This survey of three questions was distributed through a variety of mediums to all 3500 parishioners. Only 43 were completed and returned. Chris stressed that the answers received should not be considered representative of the entire parish because of the very low number. The three questions were:

* What do we do well? (Several noted the many opportunities for involvement.)
* What can we do better? (At least one noted “no one is involved”.)
* What one thing would you like to see the parish do over the next three years? (The hope was that the answers to this question could be taken to focus groups and then used to set objectives and goals for a three year strategic plan for the parish.)

Several members expressed disappointment and a level of frustration at the low participation in this survey in particular and in the response to volunteer opportunities within the parish in general. Out of that discussion, came the following suggestions:

* Offer exercises and/or training to involved parishioners on how to successfully invite others from their circle of friends and acquaintances to get involved.
* Announce to the parish the minimal return on the surveys, stress the need for this feedback and open up another opportunity to respond for limited period of time.
* Set a minimum requirement of involvement for all parishioners.
* Establish a method of tracking volunteer participation in order to provide oversight and accountability.
* Address the concern over the giving income for the parish (giving has remained the same over the last couple of years in spite of the addition of roughly two hundred new families) by creating and implementing a pro-active plan to change the perception of giving from something we have to do to something we want to do.

The decision was made to schedule a March Parish Council meeting with one agenda item: a strategic plan that focuses on Participation and Accountability. Bob Goodin will confer with Fr. Dick concerning a date, and will try to schedule it on a Monday in March.

Members were asked to send their ideas on a participation and accountability plan and tactics for implementing that plan - **in bullet point format** – to Jim Smith. He will organize and compile these suggestions for the March meeting.

Bob reported that new leadership for the Stewardship Committee has not yet been found.

**New Business:**

1. A question was raised about moving the Saturday evening mass to an earlier time. It was reported that a number of St. Michael families are attending earlier masses at neighboring parishes. The council voted (16 yes, 1 abstained) to present this suggestion to Fr. Dick. It was noted that an earlier mass is scheduled for the annual parish picnic and Taste of St. Michael Auction.

2. There was a discussion of the use of cell phones by students in after school care, specifically, the taking of pictures of students and teachers alike and posting them on sites such as Instagram. In two recent posts, it appeared a student was being bullied and a teacher was inappropriately yelling at a child. Since the students bring their own electronic devices, it is not possible for the school to monitor the wide variety of software each contains. The best solution to this problem is to have a one-to-one ratio on the electronics used in the school through school-issued computers. It was reported that the school is already moving in this direction: the infrastructure is almost complete, and teachers are working on integrating their instructions with computers. The last step is to decide how the computers will be paid for (fees charged per student?), and make the purchase.

**Committee Reports:**

1. Finance, Denise Hampton reporting: December is the largest month for donations. We are now seven months into the fiscal year (58% of budget), and year-to-date the budgeted income is down $93,000. Several areas are over budget in income so far: Formation, Athletics, and St. Vincent de Paul. The school also appears to be over budget, but that is due to prepays and fees that are charged at the beginning of the school year.

* The Building Fund received several small gifts at the end of 2015 that should help keep them at budget for the remainder of the fiscal year.
* A house that was donated to the parish was sold for $98,000. That donation was restricted to paying down our debt.
* Expenses are on target with the budget. Payroll makes up about 50% of the total expenses.
* A new business manager, Phil Green, has been hired.
* Rachel Miles has resigned from the Finance Committee, and Patti Wicke has joined.
* The Finance Committee has established an audit committee chaired by Bob Meadows.

2. Formation, Karen Karem reporting: Mary Ann Glaser, head of the RCIA program, has fallen and is in Nazareth Home for recuperation.

3. Worship, Mary Rose Stephenson reporting: The March 9th Stations of the Cross (6:30 p.m.) will be followed by talk by Fr. Flynn. This is the presentation that was snowed out several weeks ago. Mary Rose encouraged everyone involved in parish ministries to notify their coordinators if they will be available to help with extra liturgies and services. The RCIA program will need extra help also, since Mary Ann Glaser will miss all of their events leading up to Easter.

**Round Table:**

1. Question: is there plan to add gravel to the gravel lot? Answer: Probably not at this time. Work on the Urton Lane connector road is scheduled to start in late summer beginning with construction of a bridge over the railroad tracks.

2. Suggestion: To encourage more parishioners to return their Stewardship cards, Leslye suggested making a visual to place in the gathering space (and/or on every door) showing the #of Stewardship cards that have been returned and the number still out.

**Closing Prayer:** Denise Hampton