

Parish Council Minutes 12/10//2024

Voting Members	Present/Absent	Non Voting Members	Present/Absent
Stacy Celli	P	Julie Brown	P
Tiann Colwell	A	Terri Calvert	P
Mike Esselstein	P	Ethan Gion	A
Jerry Fitzgerald	A	Mary Skiles	P
Terry Fox	P		
Father Konka	P		
Nick Marez	A		
David Nash	P		
Casey Seymour	P		
Brooke Talkington	P		
Shelley Thomas	P		

Additional representatives attending: Larry Gion, Finance Committee

Meeting called to order 6:31 pm

Fr. Konka opening prayer

Approval of Minutes from November meeting: Request for any corrections/additions was made. Shelly Thomas moved approval, Terry Fox seconded motion, minutes approved by unanimous vote.

Old Business:

Mike Esselstein

Service contract with Big Mack signed and will cover all three buildings, church, parish office, rectory.

New Business

Fr. Konka

- a. The liturgy committee had decided to alter the Mass schedule for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Masses were at 7:00 am, 12 noon and 5:30 pm rather than the normal 7:00 pm on Monday 12/9. The move is an experiment to gauge whether this would increase numbers in the seats, in particular the evening Mass! Father reported that it did not appear to have improved attendance but rather may have harmed. We will do this one more time at the next opportunity but if the results are similar the Mass will be moved back to 7:00pm.
- b. A similar change will occur for the New Years Masses. New Year's Eve Mass will be at 4:00 rather than 5:30. Same goal is in mind, to see if the attendance of this Mass will be larger.
- c. Christmas Masses will be the same as usual: 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm on the 24th and 9:00 am on Christmas Day.
- d. Parish penance service will be Sunday 12/15 at 3:30 at St. Agnes and 6:00 at Christ the King.
- e. Fr. will be on vacation January 12th to February 13th. In his absence Fr. Neal Nollette will be in charge. Fr. Neal will be in residence during the entire time Fr. Konka will be gone. He will officiate all proceedings including Catholic Schools Week. Fr. Neal will be covering CSW and the Bishop will be here for his annual visit during Catholic Schools Week.

- f. Mike Esselstein inquired about the change in times for daily Mass. Fr. had been approached about the possibility by some parents of St. Agnes school children about moving Mass time from 7:00 am to 8:15 am which is when the school Mass takes place on Wednesday. Fr. polled the attendees of the 7:00 service on a couple of occasions about the move and only one person mentioned they could not make the change. Fr. announced the change at Sunday Masses prior to the change as well as including the info in the bulletin. As of tonight's meeting after a couple weeks of implementation attendance is up on the average for each of the Masses on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

#### Mike Esselstein

- a. Mike reported that a water leak was discovered in the church office after our last meeting. Water was turned off and Snells Services was called. They discovered a leak in the water softener's bypass valve. Replacing the valve would be approximately \$1500. Mike instructed Snells to make a "hard fix" essentially bypassing the water softener. The office still has water but not via the softener. Discussion ensued and it was determined that at this time with the house unoccupied except for Theresa and Father during business hours and minimal water being used we should wait to replace the softener unit. It will ultimately be dealt with in the event that the house becomes occupied with a permanent resident. Shelly Thomas moved to delay fixing the softener, Terry Fox provided the second. Vote passed unanimously. This effectively ends, for the time being, our need for Culligan to come to provide service..

#### Terri Calvert Parish Representative

- a. Terri reported that gift wrapping for the toys for tots program will begin on Tuesday the 17th through Thursday the 19th. Kids from St. Agnes as well as Religious Ed students will help with the process. The religious ed. students will wrap on Wednesday night. Knights will bring a number of family bundles to work on. Wrapping at the Knights Hall will still also take place on Wednesday night.
- b. On December 1st the Usher/Greeter meeting was held. Father reported that Terri provided a great safety presentation. Mike summarized what was covered. Terri presented information about the numbering of the doors of the church, similar to what was done at the school. In addition, Terri provided maps detailing the location of fire extinguishers, AED units as well as the location of "Stop the Bleed" and Narcan kits. Moving into the future the ushers will be at the main doors at the start of Mass to help with anyone coming late and monitoring attendance. A radio will be picked up by the head usher of each Mass. The radio is directly linked to the 911 dispatch center. This will provide much quicker access to emergency responders should the need arise.
- c. Robinson Electric was contacted about replacing burnt out bulbs in the church, in particular the center lights of the Nave. Wes Robinson was going to provide an estimate. The biggest issue is that the newer LED bulbs give off a different kind of light. It was suggested that Tom Mongtague could be contacted to do the replacement rather than Robinson Electric to minimize costs. It was later determined that only three bulbs are actually needing to be replaced in the center lights of the Nave, simply moving bulbs around at this time might be the easiest solution.
- d. The calendar in the "My Parish" app has been updated and now has all meetings, and Mass intentions.
- e. Preparations underway for the Jubilee. Pope Francis will open the Holy Door at St. Peters in Rome on Christmas Eve. Bishop Hanefeldt will open the "holy door" at the Cathedral in Grand Island on December 29th.
- f. So far lots has been done and the dates for the celebration at St. Agnes will be January 4th and 5th. Panels of fabric that look like one of the "Holy Doors" have been made and blessed by the Pope during the trip to Rome made by Mike and Terri Calvert. This year's theme is "Pilgrims of Hope", focusing on

prayer. Terri has been providing lots of information about the upcoming Jubilee which has appeared in the weekly bulletins with more to come.

- g. There appears to be another leak in the gathering space. Terri has attempted multiple times to contact Fisher Roofing but as of meeting time has had no luck. A question about warranties was raised.

#### Julie Brown School Representative

- a. Julie reported that the estimated damage to the sign in front of school totalled \$9500, after \$2500 applied to the deductible, there will be approximately \$7000 from the claim that will be put forward for a new sign. Julie reported that \$31,500 was raised for the sign during the paddle auction at the Premiere on November 22nd. Plans are moving forward. The new sign will work off the original cross of the original sign. Julie also mentioned that upgrades to the sprinkler system will need to be made so that the new sign is not “watered”. Sprinklers will need to be replaced and redirected to avoid unnecessary exposure to the hard water.
- b. Julie followed up on her report last month regarding the failure of the School Choice legislation to pass. Nebraska is now one of three states in the union without school choice legislation. There are currently 11 students receiving school choice scholarships from the original \$16,000 disbursement. A majority are first and second graders. Some will get a second disbursement. Julie has been working with the families to decide on a course of action for the funds. Julie was notified that \$26,000 in tax credits will be available in the spring.
- c. Julie reported that she has met with Isabel Moreno from the school foundation regarding the formation of a group to tackle the creation of a strategic plan. Isabel is in the process of identifying “stakeholders” that would be able to participate and believes that the school, parish and local priests should all be part of this process. A meeting of all involved will be March 29th. There will be meetings for each of three subgroups prior to this but at this time members of the subgroups have not been determined and the dates of the meetings have also not yet been determined.
- d. Julie reported that Digital Marketing has been contacted about updating the school website. It will be part of a continuing effort to market the school. It is hoped that it will help members of local parishes, in particular Our Lady of Guadalupe and Christ the King, to realize that enrollment in St. Agnes is not limited to St. Agnes parishioners!!! So far we have 18 new kids signed up for fall!!!! Great job Julie!!!

#### Larry Gion Financial Committee Representative

- a. Larry got back to the committee about the question of how much had been paid to Big Mack for services rendered without a contract for the last two years. Larry reported that records show payments of nearly \$7000 dollars have been paid. These costs, of course, include labor as well as parts and maintenance. Our contract will be for \$3000 a year for the same services, therefore, significant savings.
- b. Larry reported that the current budget is determined by budgeting \$10,000 per week or \$520,000 per year, same as the fiscal year 23-24. Therefore, through November we budgeted for \$210,000 to be raised. Through November \$165,274 has been raised, a 21% shortfall. However, anonymous donors have donated \$75,000 as designated gifts bringing the total raised to \$240,274 ending November with a \$30,274/ 14% surplus. A HUGE thanks to the individual donors who gave the designated gifts!!!
- c. The 2024 financial report is being finalized and will be ready by the first week of January.
- d. Larry also reported about the insurance settlement on a claim made after the big storm in August of 2023 that caused significant damage to the school, parish offices and church. The check for the settlement arrived in October the following is the breakdown of payments for damages:
  - i. School \$2,109
  - ii. Parish offices \$2,367

iii. Church \$2,173

These funds will be used primarily for repair of gutters and shingles for the parish office and church and screens for the school.

Mary Skiles

- a. Mary reported on the "Outreach Project" Nearly all of the calls have been made. Lots of feedback has been gathered and will be shared soon. However, Mary reported that a high number, about 40% of the folks on the original list could not be contacted due to outdated contact information. Address and phone number information that has been gathered will be given to Theresa so she can update parish records. It is believed that we do not have nearly the families that are used to determine our goals for the Diosecan Appeal. This information will likely prompt adjustments into the future. Mary will present comments gathered during the process at our next meeting and we will decide how best to move forward at that time.
- b. It was suggested that a next step could be to cross reference the folks who could not be contacted with the membership lists of our organizations, i.e. Knights of Columbus, Altar Society, etc. to see if some gaps can be filled.

Fr. Konka conducted the closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned 7:51 pm.

Next meeting Tuesday January 14th at 6:30

Respectfully submitted by David Nash, Council Secretary

Addendum 12/31/2024

Council Chair Mike Esselstein emailed the group with a request from Julie Brown. The school's custodian/maintenance man has left his employment and it is necessary to hire a new one. Julie has identified a new person to hire. The school is prepared to offer the new person \$17 per hour, however, Julie is hoping to offer the new person \$20 per hour and asked if the church could contribute the additional \$3 per hour. This represents roughly 15% of the persons salary and in return the church would get six hours of employment from the new person to help with any maintenance issues that might arise at the church which may then offset the need to call an outside entity. So, at \$3 per hour X 40 hours X 52 weeks that equates to \$6240 per year from the church. Since we are already half way through this fiscal year that would be a little over \$3000 for the current year. Larry Gion was consulted and believes that this can be handled with no problem and will then budget the \$6240 for the next fiscal year.

Mike asked for input and a vote.

Brooke Talkington made an official motion to approve the expense, Casey Seymour seconded the motion.

The following members voted to approve the motion: Stacy Celli, Tiann Colwell, Mike Esselstein, Terry Fox, David Nash, Casey Seymour, Brooke Talkington, Shelley Thomas. Abstaining were Jerry Fitzgerald, Father Konka and Nick Marez. The motion carried!