

Parish Council Meeting February 18, 2009

Members Present: Father Ripperger, Joe Wuerth, Larry Schmelz, Eric Schockling, Karen Jordan, Stewart Toney, Chuck Hess, Cheryl Walther.

Representatives Present: Building & Grounds – Walter West; Youth – Leigh Ann Campbell.

Meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer.

Minutes from the January meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved as presented.

Report from the Music Ministry

None.

Report from Faith Formation

None. However, the Council discussed briefly the fact that the Lenten faith-sharing groups had started. Leigh Ann also explained that the Theology of the Body sessions for the youth had started, but noted that only one (1) parent came to the parents' meeting. Based on her experience, Leigh Ann emphasized the importance of communicating with parents in ways other than traditional mail.

The Council discussed again the need to identify new members for the Faith Formation Commission. Although the Commission by-laws prescribe that the Commission is to be filled through discernment by current members of the Commission, the Council recognized that that approach was not working. Larry, Eric and Leigh Ann agreed to form a subcommittee to try to fill the Commission. They agreed to report back at the March meeting.

Report from Finance

None. The Council briefly discussed the recommendation from the Internal Control Assessment to have at least one additional team counting weekly parish collections. Father agreed that the parish should consider training new counters.

Report from Building & Grounds

The Committee explained that 1) due to the heavy ice, some of the ice guards on the church roof will need to be replaced; 2) they obtained a very good price for repairing the tin roof on the barn; 3) the truck was checked and its steering corrected; 4) new blinds were ordered for the windows in the school building; and 5) one heat pump in the cafeteria "locked up" and will need a new compressor.

On February 14th, the men in the community spent the day gathering storm debris around town. It was also reported that the first Men's Lenten breakfast was held on February 28th, at St. Mary's.

The Committee has not yet been able to get more definitive information about the garden improvements being planned for the areas at the sides of the front of the church building.

Report from Youth

Leigh Ann explained that, as part of their fund raising efforts for the Mission Trip, the youth would

be selling doughnuts after the Masses for the next six (6) weeks. Sixteen youth have now signed-up for the trip. Leigh Ann also reported that six (6) youth from the parish will be participating in the “30 hours of famine” being held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help (125 from the deanery are participating, and the activity includes service work).

New Business

Eric showed the Council the new defibrillators purchased for the church and school building. He explained again how effective they can be, and demonstrated how they work. The Council discussed where they should be kept, and Walter agreed to have some appropriate cabinets built in which to store them. The Council noted that regular notices should be put in the bulletin, and agreed that on the evenings of the Parish Council meeting someone should check the batteries. Eric agreed to see whether someone in the parish with CPR training would be willing to have a training session.

A motion was made and approved to recommend replacement of the blackboards in classrooms 2 and 3 in the cafeteria.

The Council discussed and agreed that the parish should have an official policy of having the school open when the community experiences significant power outages. Walter agreed that it would be feasible to have the school open if the school had power, and agreed that overseeing such a policy easily fell within the scope of his responsibilities. A motion was made and approved to generally try to have the school building open and available as needed when surrounding areas are experiencing power outages and the school has power. It was noted that periodic notices in the bulletin would be helpful, including appropriate phone numbers that people could use to find out whether the school was open.

The Council also briefly discussed the Monday deadline for bulletin items. Because some people have expressed concern about the difficulty of getting items into the bulletin, the Council agreed that it might be appropriate to have a future discussion regarding the policy.

Father’s Comments

Father expressed his appreciation for the work of the Council. Father then explained that, because of his age and the fact that things are becoming beyond his ability, he had informed the Archbishop’s office that he was ready to step down from his position as pastor/administrator of St. Mary’s. He has been asked to stay on in his role until after this year’s ordinations. Father explained that he enjoys celebrating Mass, but that the parish deserves someone who is energetic and he wants to do what is right for the parish. He asked for our prayers and support.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Next Meeting March 18, 2009.