

## St. Gianna Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 28, 2019

The meeting was held at St. Brigid's McMahon Hall.

Parish Council representatives in attendance: Betty Ferreira, Mickey Hunt, Norma Spadola, Donna Wolcott, Mary Berstene, Glen Baldi, Barbara Judycki.

Also in attendance were approximately 20 members of the parish as part of the Open Forum.

Fr. Devine called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and opened with a prayer- Psalm 49 (2<sup>nd</sup> part).

There was a review of the minutes from the March 12 meeting by all Parish Council members. Mary Berstene asked if the method of distribution of the minutes online worked as she only received 2 responses back from Council members. It seems that not everyone was comfortable with this process and were not able to make the necessary edits or provide approval.

Glen commented that feedback from parishioners was that the open forum should be 30 minutes not 15 in order to address all questions. Discussion ensued. It was noted that questions could be submitted in advance of the Council meeting and added to the agenda. Feedback from the open forum strongly supported the need for 30 minutes but it was also noted that the Parish Council only had 90 minutes total at the meetings to conduct business.

A motion was made by Barbara Judycki to accept the minutes as distributed. Mary Berstene seconded the motion. Minutes accepted as submitted.

### OPEN FORUM

There was further discussion regarding the timeliness of the distribution of the minutes as part of the Open Forum. Ed Czaplak asked for re-consideration of 30 minutes being allocated to the Open Forum and suggested that the unapproved minutes be circulated.

Fr. Devine noted that any parishioner can approach him or a Council member with any questions between meetings. The parishioners present wanted access to the minutes to submit their comments prior to Council approval. Whether the minutes should be submitted online, and unapproved, first was discussed and Fr. Devine said that he would take this under advisement. For now, meeting minutes will be sent to Karla.

Ann Bach raised a question regarding the apparent conflict in timing of activities between those of the Vietnamese and the normally scheduled activities of St. Mark's.

She cited the example of the 8:30 AM Vietnamese mass that now prevented the choir practice at 9:00 AM, which has been a standing commitment. Fr. Devine noted that Greg Flowers was not blindsided by this decision. The question was raised about moving the Vietnamese mass to 8:00 AM but Fr. Devine said that this was discussed with Fr. Andy who felt that an 8:00 AM mass would be too early for his people.

Ann also noted that the condition of the classrooms in the Parish Center that are used for teaching as part of the Generations of Faith, were not cleaned up by the parties using them before GOF. She said that wastebaskets were overflowing, used juice straws were lying around under chairs and there was food ground into the rug, all of which required substantial cleaning prior to use. There was an overwhelming concern that this showed a lack of respect for the property. Fr. Devine will address the cleanliness of the rooms moving forward.

Ann also had a question regarding the status of the railings in the sanctuary area of the church. Fr. Devine said that this is very much on the radar. She mentioned that there was a photo in a recent Catholic Transcript that featured the Vietnamese community at St. Mark's where a mural was in the background. She wondered if this was the mural that rumor had it was to be painted on the back wall of the altar. In addition, she said that the handicapped door doesn't lock which was a security issue. However, it was noted that the door does indeed lock and there is a button at the top of the door that needs to be set to do so.

Nancy Czaplá inquired as to the status of the panic buttons being installed. Fr. Devine stated that he was advised by all the security people he spoke with that they are, in effect, useless. With the prevalence of cell phones, it would not be an effective use of funds.

Ken Provencher stated that there should be documentation regarding the rules and regulations of using any church facility that needs to be signed off on. Fr. Devine said that there was, in fact, an agreement of understanding that was prepared but with the recent news of Louann's retirement, the agreement will need to be tweaked. There are also standards of procedure within the archdiocese that will be a part of the document.

Ken Bach asked about the leak in the roof at St. Mark's over the organ loft. Fr. Devine advised that the leak has been fixed. He is also entertaining several bids for the repair of the organ in order to comply with the insurance claim. The 3<sup>rd</sup> party is due to submit their bid by mid-June.

Nancy Czaplá wanted to know how we could better communicate the status of issues such as security, the roof, insurance, etc. and where these updates could be posted for parishioners to access. She said that there needed to be more ways to communicate the information to the parishioners.

Fr. Devine stated that the council meetings are time limited but the opportunities to contact him are unlimited.

Jim Birmingham stated that he had heard that the mural being considered for behind the altar was going to cost \$35,000 and he thought that was out of line and that we don't need any fancy painting. He mentioned that the frame of the door that leads to the rest room area in St. Mark's needs replacing and that the ground under the lamp post in the corner of the parking lot is crumbling. Fr. Devine said that the figure for the mural was not accurate and thanked him for his input.

## **COUNCIL CONSTITUTION UPDATE**

Version 9.5, as Fr. Devine referred to the latest version of the By-Laws, has been completed by the committee overseeing this project. Donna Wolcott made a motion for approval and acceptance of the By-laws as written. Motion carried.

Norma Spadola inquired as to where these By-Laws should be posted. Fr. Devine said that we need to have another meeting to determine that. Barbara Judycki said that there should be a closed Council meeting scheduled in order to finalize any outstanding matters related to this document.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

Fr. Devine asked Mary Berstene about the status of her inquiries into the combined ministries of the two churches in the parish. She said that she has been contacting people who head the various committees and believes that she has identified everyone involved. She has a list of questions that she would like to send out to everyone via an online survey. Then she wanted to coordinate in person meetings with the ministry heads, individually, in order to be able to prepare her report.

She is happy to have help and Betty Ferreira agreed to assist with this project.

Donna Wolcott mentioned that she had given Karla details on the ministries at St. Brigid but that information was not reflected in the outline that was provided. Mary said that she had yet to update the outline but acknowledged receipt of the information.

The next steps would be to work together to contact the heads of the ministries and schedule meetings within the next month. Hopefully, this task will be accomplished by the end of June or at the latest, mid-July. She wanted to understand the challenges that the ministries face, what it will take to work together and the realistic steps that need to be taken to be successful.

Fr. Devine asked if there are any possibilities of any new ministries. She will communicate feedback to the Council by mid-July.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. GIANNA

Fr. Devine noted that by now most everyone was aware that Louann Warren would be retiring. He said that he met with her and she shared the reasons behind her decision and that it was time to do so.

Regarding the Generations of Faith program, she acknowledged that there aren't many DRE's that are inclined to continue the GOF program. Fr. Devine noted that a farewell party was being planned for the end for June for Louann.

He also said that he had tried to start a GOF program at St. Lawrence O'Toole years ago but due to the bilingual element (Spanish speaking parents and English speaking children), the program didn't get off the ground.

He acknowledged that GOF is part of the Religious Education tradition at St. Mark's. He also noted that there is a financial matter to consider and moving forward, the position needs to be part-time, not full-time. Ultimately, it may be combined into one position for the entire parish of St. Gianna.

Fr. Devine has drafted up an ad to post for this position but needs to touch base with the Archdiocese to ensure that the job description meets their standards.

Fr. Devine thanked Donna Wolcott for her good service and she said that everyone is welcome to attend their more traditional faith formation program.

Norma asked if the Archdiocese would be able to post the position internally to attract a wider audience of candidates. Fr. Devine said that he would reach out to the Office of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis (OEEC) and see if they are able to post the job as that would be the best source for candidates.

## PASTORAL WELCOMING POINTS

Following up on Father Bob's comments regarding stewardship, Fr. Devine wanted to review how we welcome people into the parish. From his perspective, he tries to walk from pew to pew to greet people prior to mass as well as greet them following mass.

He noted that he liked the idea of the ushers at St. Mark's handing out the bulletins after mass as another way to connect with the parishioners.

Fr. Bob had provided several ideas such as a Welcome Packet to all new parishioners that included a letter of welcome from the parish priest. In addition, Council members

were given the names of new registrants to reach out to and there was some sort of “freebie” provided (ex.-a bible or similar). Barbara Judycki mentioned that St. Helena’s used to have a welcoming mass once a year on a selected Sunday. She suggested that perhaps we can do the same for both churches and have representatives from the ministries attend to represent the Council.

Glen Baldi suggested that meetings could be held at alternate churches to embrace the communities of both churches.

Mary Berstene loved the idea of a welcoming mass.

Norma Spadola inquired as to the feasibility of doing a presentation in each church at all the masses on the same weekend. Fr. Devine said that this would be an overwhelming technical task to accomplish.

Norma also suggested the idea of being consistent with hospitality by providing some sort of social “coffee and” event or similar after mass each week.

Fr. Devine said that St. Brigid hosted something monthly after the 8:30 AM mass and Donna noted that it used to be every week. It was suggested that the priests should make announcements at the end of mass, inviting people to attend any function being hosted at the church as well as provide updates on any outstanding matters that concern the church and parishioners.

Mary Berstene said that St. Mark’s used to host such an event 3 times a year and Glen Baldi said that the Knights of Columbus hosted events such as the senior breakfast to fill in the gaps between the GOF meetings, which also served as a form of hospitality.

Betty Ferreira noted that the Ladies Guild was active on the hospitality front. Ann Bach stated that she has put notices in the bulletin regarding the Annual Craft Fair at St. Mark’s and has had no response.

Barbara Judycki asked Mary about the status of the Youth Group program and was advised that she has not gotten far. She was unable to schedule any meetings and there are no further updates.

Mary also asked about the Sacrament classes for the fall of 2019 and how it would be handled. The new DRE at St. Mark’s would likely handle this individually. Details are to be worked out pending the selection of a candidate.

As there were no further agenda items, it was decided that the next parish council meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, September 24 at 6:30 PM at St. Mark’s.

Father Devine closed the meeting with a prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Norma Spadola