

St. Augustin Parish
Parish Council Meeting
May 12, 2009

“Guided by the Holy Spirit we seek to do God’s will, to grow in faith and to serve others.”

Present: Emily Duong, Rob Den Hartog, Sandra Mosley, Fr. Polich, Todd Erzen, Sue Kenny, Steve Heimbach and Linda Goeldner

Absent: Kary Schulte

Guest: Mindi Dickinson Patti Neal

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Emily Duong

Opening Prayer. Opening Prayer was led by Emily Duong

Welcome New Music Director. Emily Duong welcomed Patti Neal who is the new music director. The Council reviewed the previous Parish Council discussions about the music liturgy and preferences for music style. There has been discussion about preference for adding more contemporary music as well as general discussion about music preferences of the congregation.

Review and Approval of April 14 Minutes. Emily Duong asked if there were any additions or changes to the April minutes. Sandra Mosley moved and Sue Kenny seconded to accept the minutes as last distributed. Motion carried.

Board of Education. Mindi Dickinson reported that all the teacher contracts are all signed. The eighth graders just returned from a trip to Washington DC.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

St. Augustin Foundation. Rob Den Hartog distributed a brochure that Andy Ball developed. He made comments on the materials in the brochure. A few more edits will be made before distributing widely.

Finance Council. Rob Den Hartog reported that the Council discussed that a purposeful deficit is being run. The Finance Council discussed more about Patricia Wright’s report; there are some financial issues are an outgrowth of some of the declining household base. Need to get a lot of the different committees working together.

Parish Life (welcoming): *Social Club, Altar & Rosary, Home and School, Nine to Dine, Mother’s Group, Knights of Columbus; from the Parish Council: Todd Erzen, Rob Den Hartog and Sandra Mosley.* Sandra Mosley announced there will be a Newcomers gathering Sunday, June 14 from 4-6; they plan to serve heavy appetizers and invite the children. It will be a reception rather than a dinner in order to have people moving around and mingling rather than a dinner where only a few people get acquainted with each other. There is also planning for a volunteer recognition event. There is intent to contact the heads of each of the Parish committees to invite them to promote joining their committee.

Father Polich announced that on Saturday, May 30 the Knights of Columbus will host a chili supper after the forum about the discussion of the recent Iowa Supreme Court decision on civil unions.

A planning meeting will be held on Thursday May 21 for planning the Feast Day celebrations. Linda Goeldner will represent the Parish Council in that planning group

Building & Grounds: *Mindi Dickinson, Andy Ball, Bob Beh and Kirk Peterson, Sue Kenny, Emily Duong, Bob Beh.*

It was announced that there is now a fund of money to install an elevator. This fund was initiated by Mary Ann Van Liew in memory of her husband, Denny. Some of the memorial fund monies have been donated to this. Knights of Columbus have also expressed an interest in supporting funds to install an elevator.

Rob Den Hartog asked about the purpose of office relocation. It was explained that offices are in three different locations.

Education: Cassie Sheik, the RE director, Cindy Kodis, Jim & Emily Duong; from the Parish Council: Steve Heimbach, Kary Schulte. – no report

Liturgy: Deacon Kevin Heim, the liturgy directors, head ushers, Katie Martin, ministry schedulers and Mike Woody, altar server trainer; from the Parish Council: Todd Erzen. – no report

Communications: Pamela Meis; from the Parish Council: Sandra Mosley and Linda Goeldner- no report

OLD BUSINESS

The corporate board has petitioned the Bishop to make a purchase; The proposal is to use part of the request to amortize the payment over a fifteen year mortgage so as to pay for itself. There are only two conditions – 1) cannot use parish operating funds and 2) will be required to hire a property manager. Now the proposal is on the Bishop's desk. It is expected to hear within the week about the Bishop's decision.

Vote on Summer Mass Schedule. Emily Duong reviewed some pros and cons. Fr. Polich recommended leaving the Mass schedule as is, but to rope off some of the back pews and investigate further the cost of refinishing the floors and pews during the summer since attendance is lower during the summer. Fr. Polich's motion was seconded by Rob Den Hartog. Motion carried.

Parish Council Nominations. Two people, Milton Anania and Sherill Whisenand, have submitted their bio and picture to run for Parish Council. Joe Knight expressed an interest because he wants better representation of the Knights of Columbus on the Parish Council. Others who have expressed an interest to serve on the Parish Council are: Brian Hoffa, Steve Pyle, Joe Dunbar and Ann Cernicky.

Parish Council members completing their terms this summer include: Steve Heimbach, Sue Kenny and Linda Goeldner.

NEW BUSINESS

Comments on Parish Analysis done by Patricia Wright. Emily Duong opened the discussion and stated that perhaps it should begin with non-monetary issues. Parish life and liturgy all have to be working together to bring about change; there seem to be so many things to accomplish. There seems to be enough material to develop a skeleton outline of a plan.

There was a group of St. Augustin parishioners who did meet with the Bishop and he advised the parishioners to develop a strategic plan for the Parish. He would like to see that strategic plan in six weeks time and that it address how the parish become more financially stable and bring up the number of parishioners. This situation was brought to a head with last year's school budget issue. A number of other issues were revealed as well.

The suggestion was made that each member recommend an element of a strategic plan. The report clearly recommends work with committees. Some of those work plans could include: 1) Communicating the different functions of the Parish to the community, 2) Developing a business plan for the parish.

There was discussion of the Mission is "what can we do to improve this parish". We need to all ask each committee about how to work together to improve the church. Fr. Polich stated that the mission of the Catholic Church is to: 1) Give glory to God and 2) the salvation of humanity. How are we involved in giving Glory to God and in God's plan of salvation in the mission statement and work plan?

In refining the mission of the parish, Fr. Polich shared that Bishop Pates wants every parish to begin a two year effort "Our Journey Together" (modeled after RENEW program); build community on a small group basis. It would involve two leaders-the host and the group leader (who has been through a training program) in homes. This will build spiritual enrichment.

But to implement this effort and the recommendations of the study, there is need for a skeleton plan about the direction of the Parish. Emily Duong asked for a summary statement about how recommendations will be accomplished. Emily Duong, Todd Erzen and Rob Den Hartog were identified to work in a small group with Fr. Polich about what to do to improve the parish and to identify the best features and programs of St. Augustin Parish.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m. Linda Goeldner moved and Todd Erzen seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 9, 2009 at 7 pm.

Closing Prayer was written and offered by Emily Duong

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Goeldner