

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COUNCIL MEETING (VIA ZOOM) – January 15, 2025

The Finance Council of Divine Grace Parish met for a regular monthly meeting (via Zoom) on Wednesday, January 15, 2025. The meeting was called to order by Jamie Shearer, Chair, with an opening prayer by Father Jim.

Those in attendance: Father James Wehner, Jamie Shearer, Deacon Don Pepe, Amy Behun, Peter Boyer, Jay Cortez, Felicia DiNardo, Joe Ennis, Daniel Jenkins, Chelsey Knapton, Licia Lentz, Frank Lordi, Kate Maseth-Ready, Frances Tartal, and Andrew Welch

A. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Form B - Replacement of St. Ferdinand Rectory windows and doors: Presented by Deacon Don Pepe. Five bids were submitted, and the winning bid was by Pella Windows for twenty-two windows, five man doors, and three sliding patio doors. Each will have to be custom-made, and the work should begin in April or May. Total cost with contingency is \$74,000.00. Kate asked if ALL windows needed replaced; Deacon Don stated that they did as they were original to the structure, many leak, and many do not open/close correctly. Frank Lordi also mentioned that it can be a code issue with poor performing windows. A motion to approve and submit Form B to the Diocese for this project was made by Daniel Jenkins, second by Kate Maseth-Ready. and passed by a unanimous voice vote. Council members will receive an email o electronically sign and submit the form to the Diocese.
2. Form B - Lighting at St. Gregory's Church: presented by Deacon Don Pepe. The lighting at St. Gregory's is very inefficient; they are not LED lights, so they frequently burn out, and it is an issue to constantly replace them. These lights will be the same as they were installed at Holy Redeemer Church. The total cost of this project is \$100,461.41. We are saving a significant amount of money by purchasing the fixtures ourselves from Architectural Lighting Sales with our tax-exempt certificate. This cost is \$46,553.31. We received three bids and decided to go with Parkway Electric for \$44,775.00. Parkway was chosen due to their shorter timeline; the fact they have completed numerous projects for us; and their relationship with suppliers allows us to enjoy discounts on the fixtures we are to purchase. Kate Maseth Ready raised her concern that we seem to be "blowing through" money with all of these expensive projects without a five-year plan in place. "Is this absolutely necessary" she asked. Deacon Don feels we could "limp along" but it is

much better to replace with the LED lights rather than continue with the inefficient incandescent bulbs. He noted that the funds are in the Church Alive account and had been earmarked for this project. Daniel Jenkins mentioned that we would see energy savings going forward. Licia Lentz stated that with the new lighting at Holy Redeemer, that it is a “game changer” and makes the church experience much more enjoyable. She also thanked Deacon Don for all of his hard work and time over-seeing these many projects. Deacon Don added that Mickey from Parkway Electric said we will be able to see the cost savings going forward. As well as saving on cooling costs in the summer as we are reducing the number of fixtures. A motion to approve Form B for the lighting project at St. Gregory was made by Frank Lordi, second by Daniel Jenkins and passed by a unanimous voice vote. Jamie Shearer thanked Deacon Don for all of his efforts, and asked him to extend a thank you to the Temporalities Committee as well. Jamie said without their efforts, Finance Council would not be able to make informed decisions.

3. Review and approval of the November 20, 2024, Finance Council minutes on a motion by Felicia DiNardo, second by Amy Behun, and passed by a unanimous voice vote.
4. St. Agatha property disposal news was presented by Father Jim. We have a signed Letter of Intent for \$192,000 that was signed last Friday. Father reminded us we dropped the price to \$225,000. The interested party is writing a \$5,000 check with a 10-page document. The details/paperwork will be handled by Tom at Howard Hanna Real Estate. There are a lot of moving parts to this process; but Council needs to decide if we move forward with this process. As far as the reassessment of this property is concerned, there is a hearing at the Lawrence County Government Center regarding the tax increase appeal. The motion to move forward was made by Frances Tartal, second by Felicia DiNardo, and passed by a unanimous voice vote.
5. The annual Car Raffle netted a profit of \$38,600.00. This profit was a little less than last year, but the car last year was much more expensive, so it was felt there were more ticket sales last year. We still did very well financially this year.
6. The Annual Parish Appeal was discussed. Council members were assigned dates and mass times to present to the congregations. The presentation dates are Saturday, March 2, 2025, and Sunday, March 3, 2025. Frances Tartal is rewriting the script to shorten it a bit. Andrew Welch mentioned that Divine Grace Parish has been doing wonderful things of late for our spiritual growth

with the terrific array of “heavy weight” guest speakers we have invited to our Parish. They were all very impressive and motivating.

7. MyCatholicwill.com - We will further discuss at the February 19, 2025 Council meeting. Frances Tartal has had discussions with the folks at the Diocese, and she got the impression they would like us to proceed with this, as they don’t seem to have an alternative at this time to MyCatholicWill, even though Mike Freker stated at our November 20, 2024 meeting that the Diocese MAY be coming out with their own platform.

B MOVING FORWARD:

1. Father Jim reminded us of the Epiphany Dinner to be held for all of the Parish Councils on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, 6:30 PM, at St. Ferdinand’s (Oldenski Hall)
2. Jamie Shearer noted that we need to have a 2-to-3-year plan in place not only for operating expenditures, but capital outlays as well.

There being no further business, Father Jim offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

The next regular meeting of the Divine Grace Parish Finance Council will be held on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at the St. Gregory’s School Library.

Respectfully Submitted:



Kate Maseth- Ready
Recording Secretary

Approved:



Jamie K. Shearer
Chair