

St. Joseph, Guardian of the Holy Family

Parish Council Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, January 17, 2024

1. **Meeting Opening** - A meeting the Council was held on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at St. Anthony Church (all churches and chapels are hereinafter abbreviated with first initials). The Agenda and the Minutes of the November 15, 2023 Council meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. The meeting began at 6:32 p.m. Fr. Matthew Laird opened the meeting with a prayer. Jim Quinn read the Statement of Purpose.

2. **Attendance** - Msgr. Stephen Avila (hereinafter Fr. Steve), Fr. Matthew Laird. Council Members: Chair Frank Geishecker, Jim Quinn, Jane Hopewood, Mary Lou Palumbo (by phone), Paula Tredeau, Susan Cronin, Jim Roux, Linda Hamilton, Mat Baldasaro, Louise Gagnon, Bill LaRuffa Matheus Araujo. Deacons (*ex officio*): Paul Harney, Gus Adams. Excused: Deacons (*ex officio*) Pat Mahoney, Peter Guresh, Bill Hays. Absent: Daniel Cunha, Director of Business and Operations, Thomas Palanza, Pastoral Coordinator, Maura Polles, Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization.

3. **Secretary/Minutes** - Paula Tredeau served as temporary secretary. Jane Hopewood moved to approve the Minutes from November 15, 2023 as submitted. Second by Bill LaRuffa. Motion unanimously approved.

4. **Strategic Planning Committee Report** - Frank Geishecker introduced the Strategic Plan which he had emailed to the Council on January 4, 2024 for their review prior to discussing the Plan at this meeting. Paula Tredeau, Chair of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee, gave a brief introduction of the process of drafting the Plan and complimented the entire Strategic Planning Subcommittee on their diligent work and effort on this final version of the Plan. The Plan had been reviewed by Fr. Steve and Fr. Matt in December, 2023 and their revisions were made prior to distributing it to the Council.

Frank Geishecker led a section by section review of the Plan with the Council, with each member of the subcommittee addressing the sections that he/she drafted:

Volunteer Growth - Jim Quinn and Mary Lou Palumbo discussed the need that the Parish offer a warm welcome to all parishioners; the importance of the Hospitality Ministry; the need for continuity among the churches in this ministry; the need to continue to train the Hospitality Ministry to be even more effective. Fr. Steve added that a message should be conveyed to all parishioners that they all have unique gifts from God, and that there is a calling for all parishioners to share his/her gifts with the Parish.

Evangelization - Jim Quinn and Mary Lou Palumbo discussed Faith Formation and how effective Maura Polles is doing in this role. There is an effort to bring younger members into the Parish, and to involve youth to take leadership and ownership of roles in the Parish. Jim reported about the goal to build a day care facility which would help younger families and increase their role and association with the Parish. He discussed Eucharistic Revival and the need to emphasize how special this is to our faith. Jim mentioned the interfaith cooperation with other churches in Falmouth. Mary Lou discussed hospitality as an important role in evangelization and for the Parish to have a strong local media presence to share with others the story of our faith.

Finance - Frank Geishecker and Paula Tredeau discussed that there are steps to be taken to further improve financial management in the Parish and also to have better transparency of Parish finances for the parishioners. They reported that they used guidance from the Diocese of Fall River website for many of their recommendations. Two documents with Diocesan guidance for Finance Councils and Parish Councils are attached as Addenda B and C to the Plan for direct reference.

Administration - Bill LaRuffa and Mat Baldasaro discussed that a large part of the administration section involved the process to combine the three parishes from the Collaborative into our one Falmouth Parish. They interviewed staff for information and suggestions. The goal is to structure the administration such that the Pastor mainly focuses on liturgical matters, and have staff and volunteers handle the administration matters. They intend to create redundancies in certain positions to allow for continuity, and eliminate redundancies in other areas where not needed. The section is divided into liturgical and non-liturgical positions. Fr. Steve added that the staff worked together on ideas during this process. Bill reported that the administration is now going in a good direction. An employee manual is attached as Addendum A in the Plan for reference. Fr. Matt added that the structure of the section is very well thought out and it should bring confidence to any new Pastor or administrator transitioning into the Parish.

Property - Paula Tredeau and Frank Geishecker reported that all Parish property was inspected as part of drafting this section of the Plan, and the properties are being well maintained to date. The Parish is in a good position financially such that if any serious problem (fire, flood) impacted any of our Parish structures, the Parish has the ability to take time and evaluate all options before deciding on a course of action. Fr. Steve reported that he received a recommendation from Deacon Tom Palanza that all Parish properties should be surveyed to determine and secure boundaries, and to determine what lots are buildable/non-buildable. This is recommended in the Finance section in order to secure the Parish assets, and is now part of the Property section, as well. Fr. Steve has determined that this task will now take priority, so that priority will now be included.

Technology - Bill LaRuffa reported that the main goal in the section has been to connect the prior three Parish's technology systems into one system that works for our Parish. He discussed keyless access for security purposes, but would also bring the added benefit of being able to provide data for the Parish. He discussed the need for more data to determine trends, especially as the Parish moves forward and will make decisions about the use of Parish properties. Bill also discussed the need to bring Aids to Worship technology to all of the Parish churches. Fr. Steve added that technology needs must be part of the budgeting process in order to properly fund these needs, and Bill noted that it is a "crawl, walk, run" process to prudently incorporate technology to our Parish.

Multilingual Community - Matheus Araujo and Fr. Matt discussed that this area of the Parish is growing with young families, which is exciting. In response to our work with the Brazilian community on this Plan, that community has started their own strategic plan for their community needs. The Council is very encouraged to hear this and welcomes this community warmly into our Parish family. The joint events (Thanksgiving Mass was mentioned by Bill LaRuffa, Holy Thursday) are welcoming to all and bring our Parish together in a very supportive way. This community has grown from a monthly Mass to now a weekly Mass, a Faith Formation group (which has started to join the established Faith Formation group in the Parish), a men's club and a women's club. Last year seven children received Confirmation.

Independent Enterprises - Frank Geishecker explained that this section covers those areas "outside the box" of traditional Parish life. It includes future plans to possibly build a day care center and preschool, workforce housing, an over-55 development, and other projects to serve our parishioners in ways outside of traditional Parish life.

At the end of the discussion about the Plan, the group addressed the presentation of the Plan to the Parish. After some discussion, the topic was tabled for further consideration with the idea that a plan would be presented to Fr. Steve for his consideration.

5. Pastor's Report - Fr. Steve distributed the Lenten Schedule. Easter is March 31st this year which is very early. They are bringing back a program of Chowder and Chat.

6. Next Meeting and Adjournment - The next meeting is Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at SES at 6:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.