

**Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic  
Family of Parishes  
Finance Council Meeting Minutes**

February 28, 2022  
7:00pm  
Zoom Video Call

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**Finance Council Chair:** Chris Treftlin

**Minute Taker:** Cathy Cimetta & Lisa DeSena

**Attendees:**

Louis Guimond, Fr. Brian Jane, Chris Treftlin, Andrew Jones, Aneta Fojna, Mark Roehler, Cathy Cimetta, Lisa DeSena, Fred Oliver, Lily Wong

**Regrets:** Maurice Coulombe, Kathryn Poole

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**MINUTES:**

**1.0 Welcome:** Chris Treftlin

**2.0 Opening Prayer and Reflection:** Fr. Brian Jane

Scripture reading Matthew 6:1-5,16-18. Ash Wednesday.

Reflection: This reading deals with the practice of three kinds of religious acts: alms giving, praying, and fasting. The point is the same when applied to each of them: These are not to be done in a way that attracts attention to oneself, or God will not reward them. Our attitudes should not be those of self-seeking hypocrites but should reflect a heart focused on the kingdom of heaven.

**3.0 Approval of November 22, 2021 Minutes:** Chris Treftlin

The minutes were approved by Andrew Jones and seconded by Mark Roehler.  
No additions to agenda.

**4.0 Round Table Introduction of the new Business Administrator:** Louis Guimond

Louis introduced himself to the group by giving a bit of background of his work history with the Coast Guard. He comes to the Family with a wealth of engineering and accounting knowledge. He is currently the treasurer of Bluewater Health and the President of Club Jolliet. He has been with the Family for one month and is getting to know the staff, facilities, and processes. He admits that it will take time to get to where we want to be as a Family.

**5.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest:** Chris Treftlin

No declaration.

**6.0 Financial Reporting:** Louis Guimond

**a) 2021 Year-End Financial Statements**

Highlights:

- The Government's Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) helped the bottom line for most of our parishes. This subsidy ended in October and there is a small amount of residual funds yet to be received from the government.

- The balance sheet shows an adjustment that was made to OLM and SB where there was an amount that showed as a payable, which in fact, was given to OLM from SB as funds from the capital campaign that were earmarked for “Greatest Need”.
- Question was raised asking how the parishes did in 2021 compared to budget. There was no set operating budget for 2021, as the first half of the year the parishes were stand alone, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> half they were part of the Family.
- St Benedict Parish’ bottom line for 2021 seems to be of greatest concern.

#### **b) 2022 Proposed Budget**

- **Revenues** include loss of CEWS, a minimum of 3% increase to offertory for those parishes in the black, a higher increase to offertory for those parishes where higher revenues are needed to present a balanced budget (bringing the surplus/deficit to zero).and the addition of **stretch goals** of collecting revenue through Parish/Thanksgiving Appeal to match the amount of assessment that we will be charged by the diocese. We are hoping that as attendance restrictions are lifted this week, we will see a return of more people in the pews and that the collections will also reflect the increase in attendance.
- **Expenses** – There isn’t much to cut in the way of expenses. The chart of accounts for all 6 parishes needs to be standardized. This is a goal for the Financial Secretaries to have completed sooner than later so that comparisons can be made more accurately between the parishes, and actual to budget numbers can be more accurate.
- **Compensation budget** reflects splitting of most shared staff amongst the 6 parishes. To date, we have not made any changes to how the salaries were allocated in 2021. Before we do this, we want to see how close to budget we get with our current method.
- **See attachment for answers to Kathryn Poole’s questions regarding the budget.**

#### **7.0 Financial Terms of Reference: Louis Guimond**

a) Louis commended the Council for customizing the Diocesan version of the Finance Council Terms of Reference to fit with our Family. The re-worded document with changes in “red” was distributed and was adopted as the document to be used by this Finance Council.

##### b) Creation of Subcommittees

i. Building Committee - This committee would be involved in capital projects, use of facilities, etc. The Building Committee would report to the Finance Council. Louis envisioned one committee encompassing all seven churches. Mark suggested that one committee would be best to show cohesiveness of the Family. Fred questioned if existing committees could continue to exist, as he was a long-time member of Sacred Heart’s and felt that the committee worked well together to get things done, such as small repairs and installations. Fred doesn’t want to lose our loyal volunteers to the big picture. Mark shared that QoP also has a group of volunteers that takes care of minor building issues, but don’t consider themselves a formal Building Committee.

It was decided that the discussion around the creation of a Building Subcommittee would be parked and revisited at the next meeting. Louis will be speaking with Fred, Ana Maria and others to determine what is the best way of approaching this.

ii. Fundraising / Revenue Generating Committee - Fundraising usually has three focusses: Operations, Capital Upgrades to buildings, and Mission. This new committee needs to know what it should focus on. We don't want to create donor fatigue. We need to be co-ordinated for any fundraising efforts to be effective.

Chris commented that we need to re-establish operational financial well-being for the parishes before we move to Mission. Also, the South Zone parishioners just completed a 5 yr capital campaign and will most likely not want to donate for capital projects. Overall consensus that we need to show where the money goes. Fred commented on recent history of bad spending decisions at Sacred Heart. He feels that the SH parishioners will need a time of healing.

Chris volunteered to draft a Terms of Reference for the Revenue Generating Committee and lead it with a focus on re-establishing operational well-being for all seven parishes.

Lily questioned if it would be a silo'd approach (each parish) or one committee.

Chris suggested that it would be one committee, and that their first focus would be on the parishes that are hurting more financially.

Mark still wants a focus on capital for upcoming needs of our church buildings.

Andrew commented on an article he recently read about churches becoming irrelevant because they are not central in today's family life. He feels that our revenue generating methods should be led by community activities.

The discussion ended with Chris stating that he will prepare something on paper and share it with the Council within the next couple of weeks; to be discussed again at the next meeting.

## **8.0 Business Administrator's Report – February 2022:** Louis Guimond

As per report shared with group as attachment. Louis covered off work plans/updates for Finance, Real Property, Human Resources and Strategic Plan.

Discussion around Sacred Heart's outstanding amount owing to Servicemaster for additional expenses at SH Rectory. Louis and Cathy are meeting with Servicemaster Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> to better understand what is still owing. Fred feels that the SH building committee should be involved in these talks. Louis re-iterated that no money will be sent out until the SH Building Committee are satisfied with the answers.

Discussion around St Michael capital project and how the Diocese is in a position of control of all capital projects undertaken by parishes. Louis is looking to create a virtual project office to oversee large capital projects. Fred mentioned that he had offered to be involved in assisting the parish in looking at the project when it was first being looked at, but he was "shut-down" as it has to be a Diocese driven project.

Council to invite John Barnfield to one of the upcoming monthly meetings so that he can present his Bubble Diagram and updates. The Finance Council should have active participation in the strategic plan. The plan is expected to be rolled out in mid summer. The focus is "Where do we want to be in 5 years?"

Louis' goal would be to create a Balanced Scorecard and measure Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

## **9.0 Next Meeting:** Monday, March 28, 2022 In person, location to be determined.

## **10.0 Closing Prayer:** Fr Brian Jane

# Business Administrator's Report

February 2022

## Work plan/updates

### Finance

- Consolidate one Chart of Accounts for the Family of Parishes.
- Standardize accounts definition for the budgetary process.
- Create a fundraising committee.
- Look at fund raising tools, such as Pllenty. Starting at one parish (OLM/St Joe).

### Real Property

- Create a virtual project office to oversee large capital projects.
- Review usage of facility.
- Research and create a facility booking tool.
- Projects update:

	Description	Completed	Paid	Committed	Outstanding
Sacred Heart	Flood restoration and additional Work	100%	\$240,766		\$46,400?
St Michael	Roof and HVAC project	20%?	\$130,000	\$87,000	\$628,795
St. Benedict	Rectory change of usage	0%			

### Human Resources

- Establish the best way to communicate with Family of Parishes staff via electronic technologies and face to face gatherings.
- Gather, update and standardize all personnel files.
- Link performance management of personnel to Balance score card Key Performance Indicators.

### Strategic Plan

- Plan presentation with John Barnfield on Bubble diagram and strategic planning update.
- Engage the Finance Council in active participation with the strategic plan.
- Create a Balance Score Card from the priorities established by the Strategic Plan and establish Key Performance Indicators.

Kathryn Poole Q&A

*Q - Given compensation is the largest single expense, I would like to understand how it is to be allocated in 2022, and how that has changed from the latter half of 2021?*

A- When personnel is shared, the 2022 budget allocates compensation in an even split between the 4 larger parishes (20%) and 10% for St Thomas d'aquin and Queen of Peace. For parish specific personnel, such as administration, caretakers, musicians and housekeeper, each parish is allocated the full cost.

In 2021 personnel cost was distributed between the various parishes by assigning shared resources to specific parishes.

*Q - I understand the receipts are likely a bit of a guessing game, and represent our best guess of where we may be this year?*

A - The receipts were adjusted to produce a balance budget. We have renamed Thanksgiving Appeal to assessment receipts and made the target equal the diocesan assessment.

In these times of unknown economic factors triggered by the pandemic, we understand these are stretch goals and will require vigilant monitoring and fundraising efforts.

*Q - I would also like to understand the methodology for sharing of rectory costs?*

A - Sacred Heart and St Michael cost are shared 60/40

St Benedict and Our Lady of Mercy is share food cost 50/50

St Thomas d'Aquin and Queen of Peace are assuming their full cost

*Q - I see facilities costs are down substantially, is that due to a planned reduction of controllable costs or elimination of 2021 unanticipated costs or is there offset due to reclassification on another line?*

A - The issue was caused by differences in the chart of accounts for the 6 parishes and accounts definition used during the budget process.

A standardized chart of account and account definition will be produced for the Family before the next budget cycle.

*Q - I see office costs are up significantly. I am not sure if that is related to my point above, or if not, then what is driving that?*

A - Correct

*Q - As a final note, I would like to see a report on the capital work being done at St Michaels, given it is by far the largest project being undertaken. What has been spent, what is still outstanding?*

A-

Paid	\$130,000
Committed for work done	\$87,000
Outstanding in Contract	\$628,794.79

This project is generating numerous discussions with London since they are assuming project responsibility as owner's representatives.