

Administrative Council Guidelines

RATIONALE FOR THE PARISH ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Through Baptism and Confirmation all are called to exercise both our right and responsibility to participate fully in the life and mission of the Church. Mission that is rooted in the mission of Christ who commanded everyone - clergy, religious and laity - to "*Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all of creation.*" (Mark 16:15).

All members of the Church - laity, religious and clergy - according to their proper charisms and roles collaborate in the responsibility for fulfilling its mission. Vatican Council II urged active involvement in the life of the Church by emphasizing the principles of the collaborative responsibility, consultation and lay participation.

...the laity have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness. Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 10.

Pastors also know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary, they understand that it is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and recognize their service and charismatic gifts that all, according to their proper roles, may cooperate in this common undertaking with one heart. Dogmatic Constitution On the Church, 30.

The Pastor needs to consult with the laity who in turn have the right to express their views and concerns to their Pastor. An important structure initiated to foster this collaboration with the mission of the Church by all its members is the Parish Administrative Council.

The Code of Canon Law states that "*In each parish there is to be a finance committee to help the parish priest in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to canon 532.¹ It is ruled by the universal law and by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, and it is comprised of members of the faithful selected according to these norms.*" CLL 537.

The Administrative Council is envisioned as a select group of parishioners known for their human and spiritual maturity and love of Christ and the Church, endowed with special competence in financial matters and of prudent judgment, who offer their time and talents as a Christian service or ministry in the development and management of the parish's financial resources so that the parish may effectively pursue its proper mission of spreading Christ's Gospel and love.

The Administrative Council must serve more by the Gospel values than by secular business philosophy. Efficient use of resources and money management in the context of Parish must be measured primarily by their ability to nurture and foster the Christian mission and ministry of the community and diocese.

GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the St. Matthew Parish Administrative Council is to advise and assist the pastor on matters pertaining to the business and financial management of the parish. The St. Matthew Parish Administrative Council carries out its mission in accordance with the Parish Mission Statement, and the policies and priorities determined by the Parish Pastoral Council. It is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop.

FUNCTION

The general function of the Parish Administrative Council is to provide assistance to the Pastor in those financial matters presented to it by the Pastor or the members. It carries out its function by:

1. Administrating the parish goods and in assessing needs for present and long-term financial support.
2. Assist in the development, review and preparation of the annual budget of income and expenses according to the guidelines of the Archdiocese.
3. Monitoring the budget throughout the fiscal year.
4. Advising the pastor in all financial matters of parish administration.
5. Coordinating the development of the Parish school budget into the total budget of the parish.
6. Reviewing the monthly or quarterly parish financial statement and monitoring payment of all the obligations of the parish.
7. Assisting the pastor with an ongoing review of internal control procedures.
8. Evaluating and recommending needs and effectiveness of parish efforts of church support through offertory collections and fundraising efforts.
9. To consult with the pastor on all "extraordinary" administrative acts including: acceptance or refusal of a major gift or inheritance, sale, transfer or lease of church property, significant capital repairs or improvements, incurring long-term debt, instituting financial campaigns, purchase of land or property, special collections, acts of alienation (some of these extraordinary administrative acts require approval or action by the Archbishop or his designees. Check with either the Vicar General or the Director of Financial Services if questions arise).
10. Assisting the pastor to insure there is informed and active participation of the parishioners in the Archbishop's Catholic Appeal.
11. Keeping current and assisting the pastor with conforming to Archdiocesan policies.
12. Insuring that the parish remains current with its obligations with the Archdiocese and its employees including payment of assessments, insurance premiums, retirement premiums and payroll taxes.
13. Monitoring and establishing just, fair and non-discriminatory salaries and benefits for parish employees.
14. Ensuring that the standard Annual Financial Report is prepared and submitted to the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center and presented to the parish.

ROLE OF THE PASTOR

It is the role of the Pastor to preside over the Parish Administrative Council. The Pastor presides by:

1. Assuring that the scope and priorities of the Council's concerns reflects the mission of the parish and of the Universal Church;

2. Assisting and creating among the members of the Council an atmosphere of trust and unity as a witness in strengthening and nurturing the parish faith community;
3. Approving the Council agenda after consulting with the Administrative Council Chairperson and Business Manager;
4. Sharing information, listening actively, contributing to the discussion and promoting consensus.

The Pastor shall consult with the Administrative Council on the following matters although he remains the juridical authority for final decisions:

1. Any commitment of non-budgeted parish resources in excess of \$5,000.
2. The management of funds that the parish is authorized to retain and manage under Canon Law 1281-1288.²
3. At the minimum, review of the Annual Budget and Annual Parish report before submission to the Pastoral Center. To the extent practical, the Administrative Council should be involved in the preparation of both reports, particularly the Budget report.
4. The financial report presented to the parish as required by Canon 1287.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Administrative Council meetings should be regularly convened on a monthly basis. Extraordinary meetings can be held at the request of the Pastor. All meetings require a quorum consisting of the simple majority of members, including the Pastor or his appointed representative. All meetings will begin and end with prayer. Members will notify the Chairperson or Business Manager if unable to attend a meeting.

SIZE OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

There must be no fewer than 3 members exclusive of the pastor. Maximum membership shall be at the discretion of the pastor. Parish employees, such as the business manager or school principal, shall serve on the Council only as ex-officio and non-voting members. Due to the difficulty of consensus building in large groups, it may be beneficial to keep the numbers no higher than 7.

MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be active parishioners as shown by his or her participation and commitment within the parish community. Since the purpose of the Parish Administrative Council is to provide the pastor, the Pastoral Council and other leadership bodies with financial analysis, it is important that the Council be composed of individuals who have experience in the areas of business, management, accounting, fundraising, law, building maintenance, and other fields that could be helpful. While this is not meant to imply that the council should not have varied representation, it is extremely important to find individuals who have a working knowledge in these areas.

Membership is determined as follows:

- a. Ex Officio:* Besides the Pastor and the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit there are 3 ex officio members, the parish business manager, school principal and a School Advisory Council representative. The first two are non-voting members, while the School Advisory Council representative is a voting member.
- b. Appointed:* The Pastor is to appoint parishioners to the Council with input from the current council and the parish.

TERMS OF OFFICE FOR MEMBERS

All members serve a three-year term with the possibility of serving a second consecutive term at the discretion of the Pastor. For serious reasons, the pastor can also terminate a member in this role. Normally, not more than one third of the Council's membership should be changed at one time. The three-year term is to run April/May to April/May. All members are to be presented to the community and installed at a Sunday Mass of the Pastor's choosing after the new members have been selected, but no later than the last Sunday in June.

Members who resign prior to the end of their term must send a letter of resignation to the Pastor and a copy to the Administrative Council Chair. If the term remaining is greater than one year a new member will be appointed by the Pastor to complete the term.

Members of the Administrative Council may serve in other volunteer service roles in the parish, provided such dual service will not create a conflict of interest. Members shall not be related to the pastor. Parish employees shall serve on the Administrative Council only as an ex-officio, non-voting members.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled council meetings as well as any meeting identified beforehand by the pastor (i.e. vision meeting, joint Pastoral-Administrative-School Advisory Council meeting, etc.) as requiring Administrative Council attendance.

If a member cannot attend a required meeting, notice should be sent to the Chair or Secretary prior to the meeting. More than 3 consecutive unexcused absences or 4 unexcused absences over the course of a year requires the Chair to investigate the reason for the absences and can result in a recommendation to the Pastor to terminate the member's term.

COUNCIL OFFICERS

The chairperson and the secretary are members of the Council who have served preferably one year and who have a basic understanding and working knowledge of the Council process. Both are appointed by the Pastor after receiving recommendations from the Council, and serve a two-year term, unless their membership expires prior to completion of a two-year term.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON

1. Chairs the Council meeting;
2. Assists the Pastor in conducting the Council's work;
3. Assists the Pastor and Business Manager in formulating the Council's agenda;
4. Carries out other duties as described in the parish guidelines;
5. If unable to attend a meeting will appoint a replacement chair from the existing council for that meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY

- Records the minutes of the Parish Administrative Council meetings and sees that the minutes and the agenda are made available to the Council members. A copy of the minutes will be kept in the Pastor's office;
- Maintains attendance and other records, including membership and contact lists;
- Handles all Council correspondence;
- Carries out other duties assigned in the parish guidelines;
- If unable to attend a meeting will appoint a replacement secretary from the existing council for that meeting.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL AND SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The **Administrative Council**, mandated by the Code of Canon Law, is separate and distinct from the Pastoral Council. Communication between the two Councils is, however, essential.

The purpose of the **Pastoral Council** is to foster full participation of the entire parish in the life and mission of the parish. They do this by informing the Pastor of the needs and concerns, gifts and resources of the whole parish and its members; developing and reviewing a parish mission statement and periodically re-evaluating and revising it; developing a parish pastoral plan; participating in ongoing pastoral planning; recommending policies, procedures and programs which would assist in the implementation of the mission statement and the parish pastoral plan; reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of existing programs; reflecting on Archdiocesan pastoral priorities and recommending how they can be implemented in the parish.

The Administrative Council shares with the Pastoral Council information regarding the parish finances and temporalities on a regular basis. The Administrative Council assists the Pastor in implementing the pastoral plans suggested by the Pastoral Council by making fiscally responsible recommendations.

The Purpose of the **School Advisory Council** shall be to provide policy direction for program needs of the school, especially in planning, finances and development; to promote the implementation of said policies; and to insure that all local policies are in accord with the intent and spirit of the policies established for the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Portland.

The School Advisory Council is governed by the policies of the Administrative Council, and provides information and requests parish funds from the Administrative Council through the mechanism established by the Archdiocese and the Administrative Council.

Communication between the three Councils is, essential. There will be a minimum of one joint meeting between the Parish Administrative Council, the Parish Pastoral Council, and the School Advisory Council each year. It is the Pastoral Council's responsibility to organize this joint meeting.

Hillsboro, Oregon.
October 2007

REFERENCES MADE TO CODE OF CANON LAW:

¹ *“In all juridical matters, the parish priest acts in the person of the parish, in accordance with the law. He is to ensure that the parish goods are administered in accordance with cann. 1281 - 1288.” CCL 532.*

² *Can. 1281 §1 Without prejudice to the provisions of the statutes administrators act invalidly when they go beyond the limits and manner of ordinary administration, unless they have first received in writing from the Ordinary the faculty to do so.*

§2 The statutes are to determine what acts go beyond the limits and manner of ordinary administration. If the statutes are silent on this point, it is for the diocesan Bishop, after consulting the finance committee, to determine these acts for the persons subject to him.

§3 Except and insofar as it is to its benefit, a juridical person is not held responsible for the invalid actions of its administrators. The juridical person is, however, responsible when such actions are valid but unlawful, without prejudice to its right to bring an action or have recourse against the administrators who have caused it damage.

Can. 1282 All persons, whether clerics or laity, who lawfully take part in the administration of ecclesiastical goods, are bound to fulfil their duties in the name of the Church, in accordance with the law.

Can. 1283 Before administrators undertake their duties:

1° they must take an oath, in the presence of the Ordinary or his delegate, that they will well and truly perform their office;

2° they are to draw up a clear and accurate inventory, to be signed by themselves, of all immovable goods, of those movable goods which are precious or of a high cultural value, and of all other goods, with a description and an estimate of their value; when this has been compiled, it is to be certified as correct;

3° one copy of this inventory is to be kept in the administration office and another in the curial archive; any change which takes place in the property is to be noted on both copies.

Can. 1284 §1 All administrators are to perform their duties with the diligence of a good householder.

§2 Therefore they must:

1° be vigilant that no goods placed in their care in any way perish or suffer damage; to this end they are, to the extent necessary, to arrange insurance contracts;

2° ensure that the ownership of ecclesiastical goods is safeguarded in ways which are valid in civil law;

3° observe the provisions of canon and civil law, and the stipulations of the founder or donor or lawful authority; they are to take special care that damage will not be suffered by the Church through the non-observance of the civil law;

4° seek accurately and at the proper time the income and produce of the goods, guard them securely and expend them in accordance with the wishes of the founder or lawful norms;

5° at the proper time pay the interest which is due by reason of a loan or pledge, and take care that in due time the capital is repaid;

6° with the consent of the Ordinary make use of money which is surplus after payment of expenses and which can be profitably invested for the purposes of the juridical person;

7° keep accurate records of income and expenditure;

8° draw up an account of their administration at the end of each year;

9° keep in order and preserve in a convenient and suitable archive the documents and records establishing the rights of the Church or institute to its goods; where conveniently possible, authentic copies must be placed in the curial archives.

§3 It is earnestly recommended that administrators draw up each year a budget of income and expenditure. However, it is left to particular law to make this an obligation and to determine more precisely how it is to be presented.

Can. 1285 Solely within the limits of ordinary administration, administrators are allowed to make gifts for pious purposes or christian charity out of the movable goods which do not form part of the stable patrimony.

Can. 1286 Administrators of temporal goods:

1° in making contracts of employment, are accurately to observe also, according to the principles taught by the Church, the civil laws relating to labor and social life

2° are to pay to those who work for them under contract a just and honest wage which will be sufficient to provide for their needs and those of their dependents.

Can. 1287 §1 Where ecclesiastical goods of any kind are not lawfully withdrawn from the power of governance of the diocesan Bishop, their administrators, both clerical and lay, are bound to submit each year to the local Ordinary an account of their administration, which he is to pass on to his finance committee for examination. Any contrary custom is reprobated.

§2 Administrators are to render accounts to the faithful concerning the goods they have given to the Church, in accordance with the norms to be laid down by particular law.

Can. 1288 Administrators are not to begin legal proceedings in the name of a public juridical person, nor are they to contest them in a secular court, without first obtaining the written permission of their proper Ordinary.