

St. Michael's Parish Council Meeting

March 19, 2019

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

- Holly Brown-Borg called the meeting to order.
- Fr. Braun mentioned that it was the Feast of St. Joseph & he led the opening prayer.

II. Organizational & Routine Matters

- **Roll Call: Present:** Fr. Braun, Holly Brown-Borg, Bob Kunze, Lowell Schweigert, Sheila Schreiner, Kevin Fruhwirth, Judy Jahnke, Kevin Bosh, Ed Finch, Sut White, Mary Ann Whalen
Absent: Jennifer Modeen, Kevin Boehm, Jennifer Loraas, Pete Bouley
- **Approval of Minutes:** A correction was made to the Feb. 19 minutes. Under "New Business" Holly Brown-Borg's name should be "Holly", not "Helen". The February minutes as corrected were then approved.

III. Reports of Representing Organizations

- **Altar Society:** St. Therese's Circle held their St. Patrick's Luncheon on Sat, March 16. 114 people were served. A portion of the profit will go to St. Joseph's Food Pantry.
- **Men's Club:** Their first Fish Fry was held Fri., March 8. There was a good turnout of workers. 418 people were served—down a little from last year. The Men's Club will have their second Fish Fry on Friday, April 12.
- **Knights of Columbus:** Ed Finch reported that fewer than 50 tickets are still left to be sold for the meat raffle. The KC's sold shamrocks the past weekend and raised \$900 for the Home on the Range. The February Family of the Month was the Tom Helbling Family, who was also selected that month by the Supreme Council. The Pete Bouley Family is the March Family of the Month.
- **Bridge Builders:** Kevin Bosh reported that of the 500 letters with ballots sent out Feb. 14, 32 of them had come back. Thirty of the ballots were for the merger of the Bridge Builder funds into the Catholic Development Fund in Fargo and only two against. Fr. Braun also said he had heard the preliminary ballot results continue to be very favorable—90% approving along with some unexpected donations. The Bridge Builders' annual meeting will be Sunday, March 31, at 1 pm. (No banquet this year, just pie will be served.) At this meeting, all the ballots will be counted and the final decision made.

IV. Reports from Parish Boards and Councils

- **Education Board:** The school is having a Kindergarten Roundup on March 28. Twenty-seven kindergarteners have already registered. The first-graders this year will continue on as two second-grade classrooms next year. Jesse Zyskowski has put out a letter the Youth Group to consider a mission trip to Guatemala in July. (Jesse went two summers ago to check it out.)
- **Finance Council:**

Business manager Sut White passed out the Feb. Statement of Activities. He said the Feb. Collection took in \$76,000 and we are ahead in our budget right now. However, in the next three months we need to take in \$84,000 each month to meet our budget. Our budget for the year is \$1,077,000.

The parish still has \$230,000 left to pay on our loan from the Diocese for the Pastoral Ctr. We have been paying it off at about \$20,000 a month. We had only received \$70,000 of the \$100,000

from the Diocese's Hommerding Grant so we've asked for the remaining \$30,000.

The parish is now subsidizing the school at about 20% to 25% instead of 30%. In the last few years the percentage that we subsidize it has been going down. (At one time it was 54%.) It was mentioned that the school principal had gotten a grant for the school from the Engelstad Foundation for stage improvements.

We are still owed \$378,000 from the Lake Property sale. This is due by June 2020. \$225,000 of the sale is committed to scholarships: \$100,000 to St. Mike's School and the rest to St. Mike's students going to Sacred Heart.

- **Pastor's Report:**

1. **Annual God's Gift Appeal:** Last year 521 out of 1557 households contributed: 33% participation
This year our goal is \$162,213. As of 3/19/19, 55% of our goal had been reached with 16% participation.
2. **Community Christmas Eve Dinner Update:** An open exploratory meeting is scheduled for Tues., April 9. Several area churches will be invited to attend. We are looking for additional leadership from other churches.
3. **Safe Haven Sunday:** Sunday, March 3, was designated by the Diocese to focus on the harmfulness of pornography and other online threats to marriages, family life, and culture. After Mass, each family was given the Covenant Eyes' book: *Equipped: Smart Catholic Parenting in a Sexualized Culture*.
4. **Parish Lenten Mission** will be held March 31-April 2 with female recording artist Taylor Tripodi.
5. **RCIA:** Rite of Election was held Sun., March 10. The seven Candidates will celebrate Confirmation at the Easter Vigil.
6. **A list** of parish & school long- and short-term repairs, improvements, & major renovations is being drafted for review & approval by the Finance & Parish Councils.
7. **Poverty Summit:** The Grand Forks United Way wants to hold a Poverty Summit in April. This way we can see what the non-profit groups are providing for services. Is there any overlapping?

V. Old & Current Business:

- **Update on the Parish Long-Range Planning Process:** A joint meeting of the Parish & Finance Councils had been held the day before at the Pastoral Ctr. with strategic planners Galen Cariveau & Dennis Elbert who explained the reasons for strategic planning and how it's done. They said first a self-evaluation (environmental scan) was needed. That way the positives (strengths) could be found and then it could be determined what needed to be worked on. Most strategic plans nowadays cover about three years' time but they are constantly referred to & updated. A written strategic plan is the roadmap one uses. After Dennis & Galen left, the principal of St. Michael's School (Sara Dudley) gave a presentation on the strategic plan that was done in-house at the school. It took about 1½ years to complete and they are very happy with the results. Everything at the school is done now *with intention* according to the school's mission & strategic plan. Members of the two councils discussed what was presented and agreed to decide what they wanted to do at their respective meetings the next day.

Discussion continued at the Parish Council meeting on March 19. One person said we needed an objective outside viewpoint and someone outside driving the process along. Members felt that an environmental scan would identify our strengths and weaknesses. However, some were concerned the results would just be put on a shelf and nothing would become of them. One member said if we had a strategic plan (a reference plan), it would be easier to say "yes" or "no" to things. Another said we could decide if we wanted to be a "maintenance" church or a "mission" church. However, the cost was a concern. Hiring Galen & Dennis for just the environmental scan might be \$2000--\$3000 or more.

The entire strategic plan would cost about \$10,000.

Members basically felt the first step would be to do the survey. Then with the results we could decide if we wanted to go any further. We would need to set up a steering committee soon to be ready to do the survey in the fall. Fr. Braun said the Finance Council had voted earlier that day to go ahead with the scan but only with a capped dollar amount. (The amount was not stated at the Parish Council meeting.)

Lowell Schweigert then motioned that the Parish Council commit to having an environmental scan using *gCariveau & Associates* up to the capped dollar amount the Finance Council had voted on. Seconded by Sheila Schreiner. Motion carried.

- **Update on Outdoor Electronic Sign:** Things are looking very favorable. A new proposed electronic sign ordinance went before the City Council on March 16. Until this new ordinance, St. Michael's can install a three-sided electronic sign at the current location. We should be able to install it this summer. ICON is still offering the \$25,000.
- **Sacristy Refurbishment:** The center island storage cabinet/workstation has been installed. It will house candles and wine. Dennis Narlock is refinishing the sacristy cabinetry & window/door framing and is almost done.
- **Mass Celebrated ad Orientem:** No update yet on this proposal. Fr. Braun will bring it up at the local priests' deanery meeting later this week.

VI. New Business:

- **Parish Council Elections:** Parish Council elections are now held the last Sunday in April. This is April 28 this year. The ballot information needs to get to the parish office by April 9. Lowell Schweigert offered to help Holly Brown-Borg come up with people to run. A total of four candidates is needed. There will be two open seats. Holly Brown-Borg said she would be willing to run again.
- Fr. Braun asked if someone could check out the 5:30 pm Sun. Mass at Sacred Heart. Is this affecting our 5 pm Sun. Mass?
- Sheila Schreiner thanked Sut White for coming to this Parish Council meeting. She suggested that maybe the Parish Council could meet with the Finance Council once or twice a year. Members thought perhaps we should get together once we get the results of the survey. It was mentioned that the Parish Council advises the Finance Council. (Fr. Braun said Canon Law mandates a Finance Council.)
It was brought up that maybe the Parish Council should meet before the Finance Council meets rather than afterwards as we do now. Perhaps we could meet the 2nd Tues. of each month rather than the 3rd Tues. If we made this change, we would start next fall.

VII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

- President Holly Brown-Borg said there was no further business. Sheila Schreiner motioned for adjournment. Seconded by Lowell Schweigert. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.
- Fr. Braun led the closing prayer.
- Next meeting: April 23 (The 4th Tues. because the week before is Holy Week.)

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Whalen