

Church of St. Paul - Comfrey
Administrative Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. – Church basement

Members present: Fr. Mark Steffl, Fr. Sam Perez, James Rathman, Matt Eischen, Dale McMullen, Marianne Schotzko, Denice Evers, Judy Augustin, Dan Davis, Nellie Richter – Secretary

Members absent: Darrell Platz, Connie Kelly, Matt Grausam

Guest: Richard Callanan

Meeting was opened at 6:32 p.m. with Fr. Steffl leading group in prayer.

No additions to Agenda. M/S/C Schotzko, Evers to approve September 9, 2021 Administrative Meeting Minutes as printed.

Financials from September thru November, 2021: As Grausam was absent, Fr. Steffl briefly went through them and read Grausam's note on Adult Support on doing well so far compared to this time last year, even with the budget increase of \$23K. Callanan asked if any totals yet on the Church Dinner. A few bills just came in early December so will hopefully get the report out soon. Various questions asked by members on some of the bills paid. M/S/C Evers, McMullen to approve financials.

Cemetery Report by Callanan: Cemetery Board met on October 20, 2021 and Cemetery is doing very well financially and continues to be well-maintained. Cemetery Perpetual Care purchased a \$210K Annuity investment with Bankers Life in September of 2020. At the 1-year anniversary, the balance was \$225,818.66. Cemetery Board decided to keep the interest in the Annuity rather than moving it to the Operating Fund since there is \$46,922 in Operating Funds as of 6/30/21 Report. Discussed the trees in the middle of the cemetery and revisited making a Cemetery Directory (of which Evers has volunteered to pay for in memory of her parents). Brian Callanan does the mowing and trimming, works on headstones and other areas that need attention, and reports to Doug and Richard. Brian is keeping our cemetery in good shape. The interest can be kept in the Annuity, or taken out, and is an option every year. There is enough money in the Operating Fund right now along with donations received during the year without needing the interest. Richard also mentioned that we are keeping up with the basic maintenance during the year. Mr. Callanan left the meeting after his report.

Old Business:

Fr. Steffl reported that Sleepy Eye Electric (Judd Walters) hasn't started our camera project yet.

Fr. Steffl talked with John Urlaub (Catholic Mutual Ins.) regarding water issues and westerly neighbor and his feeling is that the church has been here for years and nothing has changed on that part of the church building. We should try to find a solution to this issue and be a good neighbor, but if it ends up to be an expensive fix, Doug Steffl should be expected to pay part of the project cost. Rathman removed the black tile from the church downspout for the winter months.

Rectory foundation: Schotzko reported that Stan tuck-pointed large areas of the foundation but did not fix by the outside basement doors. Fr. Steffl said he will check with person who is doing cement work at Leavenworth and revisit this in spring.

Members present concurred that the Church Dinner Chair people did a great job with this year's dinner. Had a great turnout (served approximately 1290 meals). Did receive a few complaints regarding wait time, but we can only cook and serve so fast. Workers all did a great job again.

Church basement storage room (off dining room): Rathman reported that humidity is down to 36% today and kitchen humidity was down to 30%. The east store room under the stairs he cannot get under 40% and still smells musty. Fr. Steffl asked if we need to install a dehumidifier in that room. Schotzko thought we should be okay through winter.

Letters to parishioners from Fr. Steffl regarding the budget increase were sent out first half of September. Another contribution up-to-date mailing was sent out early December (envelope program does not create statements for zero contributions).

The DMA 2021 Project this year is the outdoor church sign and the glass portion of the old sign was saved and is in store room. Will look at this at the end of meeting.

Discussed the interior of the church walls and paint failing in many areas all over the church interior. Eischen talked about wicking ropes being put in new brick construction, but not sure what was done with brick construction back in the late 1940's. Decided the church interior was painted over 20 years ago. Fr. Steffl will check with another person for a painting quote – always good to have several quotes to choose from.

Eischen met with Nickel Construction here on Monday. There are 2 tile lines of perimeter tile. The ground under the concrete slab (new addition) wasn't done properly. Heavy rains, plugged gutters (on backside of addition where it meets old church building) and water going over the gutters found areas around the cement to trickle in and came in along the west stairway wall in addition leading down to church dining hall. The sump pump was not plugged with leaves as first thought as those tiles are different than what goes to the sump tile. Gutters need to be kept clear of debris and the landscaping in that area needs to be looked at. Blueprints of addition – need to check where they are or check with the architect. Callanan just has hand-drawn diagrams of tile placement, etc. Talked about some type of leaf guard on the back gutters but Eischen felt that correcting the landscaping should do it. The drywall area (along the bottom of new steps going down to dining hall) can be left for now.

New Business:

Religious Education Report by Dan Davis: Classes are going well. Virtus training was done in October. On December 1st, grades 6-11 attended the Purified Event held at St. Raphael's in Springfield featuring a chastity talk by Jason Evert. Was well attended. Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8th) mass attendance was required – all students were at mass. No classes for December 22& 29 due to Christmas break. Confirmation students attended the COR Youth Night in Olivia on Nov. 14th instead of having a retreat at Schoenstatt's. First Reconciliation – parents of students met on Sunday, December 5th. Reconciliation will take place at St. Mary's on Sunday, January 23rd at 2:00 p.m.

CCW Report by Schotzko: Monthly meetings have added activities to help attract more members to attend. December was CCW Christmas party. CCW Sunday in October -served rolls and coffee after mass and had Phantom Bake Sale for month of October. Assisted caterers for one funeral in October. Christmas Joy Meal was prepared and delivered on Dec. 6th – used Thrivent money from Wendell Fredin and delivered 49 meals along with 15 workers' meals. Schotzko looked into replacing heavy tables, but feels we do need to keep some of these heavy ones when we are serving for funerals or Church Dinner. Decided it is not a high priority at this time.

Liturgy Report by Augustin: Looking for new choir members to join. Started practices again.

Liturgical Environment by Schotzko: In Advent now and looking at decorating Church for Christmas on Tuesday, Dec. 21st after the 5:30 p.m. mass. No potluck after decorating this year.

Our Janitor (Diane Radtke) will be gone after Christmas through mid-March, so we need someone to fill in cleaning church. Fr. Steffl suggested Schotzko to ask Marge Prokosch.

Tuesday evening mass – change to Wednesday morning? Fr. Steffl doesn't have a preference, but winter does keep a few people from attending (dark at night, winter weather, etc.). Fr. Sam said 7-8 are attending Tuesday nights now so numbers have gone down. Schotzko said it is a nice option for people that work during the day. Fr. Steffl will put a note in bulletin and ask people to voice their preference. Fr. Sam is okay to move to Wednesday morning as the priests have to drive in dark and weather also.

Fr. Steffl feels that St. Paul's parish has been the slowest for people to return to mass (from COVID concerns). In the 12/12/21 bulletin, Fr. Steffl will have a note regarding the Sacred Vessels (chalice and ciborium) needing to be refinished and donations sought for that. He also ordered a drop safe (approx. \$500 cost) for sacristy so ushers can put the collection money in after mass and then 2 counters should be present to remove the collection each week.

Maintenance: Rathman said the light ballast in the men's bathroom is bad and should be replaced by electrician. Rectory furnace – fuel oil was out. Rathman reset furnace after fuel fill. Elevator problems – when it gets reset, it erases the codes so he would prefer it not get reset. Eischen said there is a safety feature on the elevator doors. If the doors try to close but something is preventing them to close, it will 'shut down' after 5 tries. He feels resetting should be done so people can use it.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 17th at 6:30 p.m. Fr. Steffl led group in closing prayer. Council looked at the old outdoor sign – will discuss more at next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nellie Richter