

Parish Pastoral Council Minutes
Church of the Holy Spirit, East Greenbush, NY
April 27, 2017 at 6:45 pm

In Attendance: Amy Boel, Cathy Bruno, Mike Kosar, Karen LaFrank, Fr. Joe O'Brien, Frank Putallaz and Steve Wiech. ***Present:*** Eddie Trevino.
Absent: Cathy Bellisario, Nick Bruno, Deacon Bill Dringus, Kevin Haggerty, Rick Hannmann, Matt Heitker and Ellen Murphy.

Opening Prayer – Fr. Joe opened with prayer at 6:50pm

Review of Minutes – Frank Putallaz moved that we accept the minutes, with a second from Karen LaFrank. The minutes were accepted.

Old Business – none

New Business

Parish Pastoral Council direction and Council By-Laws

Council members reviewed the By-Laws and questions were raised concerning membership (the structure of terms, number and selection). Mike Kosar suggested looking at school board guidelines for guidance in drafting amended by-laws. After some discussion, Fr. Joe O'Brien asked if any members wishes to be part of a subcommittee to review our By-Laws. Karen LaFrank volunteered to take part in this review. Nick Bruno was later approached and he accepted to review the By-Laws

Parish Pastoral Council survey: summary and results

Several points from the survey were raised in discussion:

- The survey highlighted hearing more news on the Building Plan (direction, progress, fundraising), Cathy Bruno indicated that we were seeking a summary on Building Plan expenditures and fundraising, particularly to determine how much has been spent using church funds and how much has been spent using Building Plan donations. Fr. O'Brien indicated that Tracy Basila is working on a cash flow summary and hopes to have it available for our next meeting.

The desire for changes in the weekend Mass schedule, particularly the return of the Sunday 7 pm Mass, were expressed. Fr. O'Brien indicated that this was not a parish decision but reflected the thinking of the local Catholic parishes as part of the continuing Called to Be Church initiative from several years ago.

Amy Boel mentioned that it may be good to address suggestions from the Parish Council survey that simply cannot be done. This way, we can better identify those suggestions we can work on and make progress.

Some survey comments seek more information on the school's continued viability. Mike Kosar stated that the school is operating currently with a surplus and hopes to meet its budget goals. Some wanted to know more about what is happening at local charities (Circles of Mercy, in particular). There were a number of comments directed towards improvements to the sound system. It was mentioned that Kevin Haggerty is arranging for sound engineer to return for a review. Some adjustments have been made which have resulted in improvement.

Parish and School Financial Report

Steve Wiech indicated that the church deficit is largely driven by the current decline in weekly offertory. He indicated that the Finance Committee has been reviewing this for a few months and has been unable to find enough clear statistics to analyze this in depth. The decline can be attributed to the Building Plan pledge and gift campaign. The impact of an aging community should be considered as well. The Committee has talked about developing and supporting a an improved offertory program once the Building Plan meets some fundraising targets. Given the impact of summer vacations, it is thought an offertory improvement plan could be initiated in the fall.

Mike Kosar offered a report on the school results which reflect a surplus for nearly \$30,000 at the end of March. The school is projected to end the year with a balanced budget and Mike hopes we achieve that result. Just about all of the state funds expected for the current year have been received.

Fr. O'Brien reported that our Bishop's Appeal goal for 2017/18 is \$57,633 which is down from last year's \$65,300 total. He explained that the diocese was making adjustments this year in anticipation of adjusting the diocese's assessment formula for next year's Appeal.

Holy Spirit Building Plan

In Kevin Haggerty's absence, Fr. O'Brien provided a report. Since our last Council meeting, Kevin, Fr. Joe and our architect Paul Mays met with representatives from the Town of East Greenbush to review our project and discuss what planning matters would need to be addressed. With the Town Planning representative unavailable, we met with the Town Supervisor, Jack Conway, who was very supportive of the direction and scope of the Building Plan. The Supervisor did not see major challenges in the plan; he will have the Planning representative contact us in the near future.

The Facilities Planning Committee is reviewing what has been collected, and what has been spent on the project to date to determine how much remains available to complete Parish Center improvements. With this information, we will move towards a final design and cost with Paul Mays. Kevin Haggerty and Fr. Joe O'Brien will review information with Tracy Basila to facilitate her cash flow study.

Holy Spirit School

Mike Kosar reported Kevin Haggerty arranged for some electrical service upgrades in the 1961 wing of the school over the Easter break.

All of the teachers, but for one pre-school aid, have signed letters of intent to return for the new school year. Fr. O'Brien announced that Mike Kosar will be returning for the new school year as well.

The school has a \$29,500 surplus at the end of the third quarter. We have received pretty much all we expect to receive from New York State funding sources for this fiscal year.

Amy Boel and Mike Kosar had a conversation regarding a new statue of Mary.

LIFT report

Our April gatherings were centered on how we celebrate Holy Week in prayer. The parishioner evaluations were good. The focus of time and preparation is now shifting to our May Stewardship Week/Stewardship Day celebrations.

Youth Report

A group of youth and parents from Holy Spirit will be doing a room makeover at Copson House on the weekend of April 29. This project has increased participation in the youth group has helped to identify a core group of youth for future events and projects.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 25th at 7 pm in the Parish Center. We will meet after the 6pm Mass on Ascension Thursday evening.

Closing Prayer at 8:20 pm.