

Parish Pastoral Council Minutes
Church of the Holy Spirit, East Greenbush, NY
October 25, 2017 at 6:30 pm

In attendance: Amy Boel, Kevin Haggerty, Rick Hannmann, Matt Heitker, Mike Kosar, Karen LaFrank, Ellen Murphy, Fr. Joe O'Brien and Frank Putallaz.

Present: Eddie Trevino. ***Absent:*** Cathy Bellisario, Cathy and Nick Bruno, and Deacon Bill Dringus.

Opening Prayer led by Fr. Joe O'Brien. Meeting began at 6:30 pm.

Review of Minutes The October 2017 Council minutes were reviewed; Ellen Murphy moved we accept the minutes and Amy Boel seconded the motion. Council members accepted the motion adopting the minutes.

Old Business

None

New Business

New York State/Hudson Greenway's Rail Trail Plan for East Greenbush

Fr. O'Brien reported that New York Hudson Greenway released a finding at October's East Greenbush Town Board meeting stating that the Albany Electric Trail's preferred route is now Tamarack Drive, not Berkshire Drive. This finding indicated that Hudson Greenway had no future interest in the Berkshire Drive right of way. There will be no Berkshire Drive trailhead adjacent to the Holy Spirit parking lots used by our school students as a playground.

School Report

At September's Council meeting, there was discussion after Fr. O'Brien shared Mike's school report regarding middle school enrollment and the school's future. Mike Kosar was present for our October meeting and offered a report on school enrollment and plans for student retention and recruitment.

He described the discussions with the parents of rising 8th grade students and their interests in Holy Spirit and in private middle schools/high schools. He described how the rising 8th grade grew smaller to the point where it would not have been a good educational experience for the students. Mike expects that this is a one-year experience, that the current 7th grade has 18 students and that he had met with middle school parents earlier this month to talk about the situation and get their inputs on what they desired for their children's experience in our middle school. The meeting with the parents went very well and Mike received excellent parental input. Mike and the parents group shared many common goals for the student experience. Parents expressed continued support for the middle school. Mike will continue to communicate with them about the school/ the middle school and ways to improve a program parents currently think is strong.

Mike Kosar said that plans for recruiting new students and developing a retention plan for the entire school are under review.

Parish Pastoral Council members offered some suggestions for Mike to consider in his recruiting and retention planning: 1 - a letter from Holy Spirit School and the principal to all new parish families and families in the community; 2 - using parish baptism records, the school should reach out to families of parish children as they approach pre-K and Kindergarten age;

3 - school faculty and staff should be present at LIFT to meet young families; Holy Spirit School families should consider LIFT as a supplement and an opportunity to meet the community; 4 - be present at parish events, ie., have school representative attend parish Advent community night - Cookies, Casseroles and Caroling - on December 9th after the 4 pm Mass.

Holy Spirit Building Plan

Currently awaiting drawings from our architect to obtain a building permit for first stage of Parish Center renovations which would encompass the garage and improved entrances.

Holy Spirit Church and School Finances

The Holy Spirit Church and School Finance Committees have had the opportunity to review their September results. Holy Spirit Church has a surplus of \$3,228 and Holy Spirit School has a deficit of \$1,880. Holy Spirit Church began its improved offertory campaign in mid-October; offertory totals will be observed to see how the program is progressing.

Kevin Haggerty suggested to the Council that we focus more on a quarterly review of financial information, asking our Finance Committees to keep us abreast of their findings monthly. Council members supported this approach.

17/18 Bishop's Appeal

Currently, we have received \$52,000 in gifts and pledges toward our \$56,700 goal.

Diocesan Capital Campaign proposed by Bishop Scharfenberger

Fr. O'Brien had met recently with Thomas Prindle from the diocesan stewardship office. Mr. Prindle has been kept aware of our Building Plan progress and is aware we have an on-going fundraising effort. Holy Spirit will be among the last parishes to begin participation in this new project. Fr. O'Brien will meet with Bishop Scharfenberger, along with pastors from other parishes who also have active capital giving plans. Mr. Prindle will schedule that meeting.

LIFT

Two monthly gatherings (September and October) have been completed. An invitation to come to a LIFT gathering was extended to Council members.

Candidates for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation are required to attend LIFT; sacramental preparation involves participation in LIFT and immediate preparation for the sacrament.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 29th at 6:30 pm in the Parish Center.

Closing Prayer