

Holy Redeemer Parish Council Minutes
January 20, 2010

Holy Redeemer Church, Saint Maria Goretti Room, 7:30 p.m.

Attendees: Dave Fortuna, Rosemary Allender, Ellen Davis, John Enns, Mollie Huitema, Arlene Peterson, Brenda Cooley, Mark Russo

I. Opening

- a. The meeting was opened with a prayer.

II. November Meeting Minutes

- a. The report on solar panels should be part of the School Advisory Board report
- b. It was agreed that the minutes are approved and should be forwarded to Carol Macknis for posting on the Parish website.

III. Convent Renovations

- a. The convent/school renovations were reported to cost \$33,000
- b. There was a question about discussion at a previous Parish Council meeting that indicated that expenses over \$25,000 must be approved by the Archdiocese of Washington (ADW)
- c. There was also a question about the source of funding for the renovation project.
- d. Ellen Davis stated that the expenditure did not have to be approved by the Finance Committee

IV. Reports

Social Justice- Brenda Cooley

- a. It was stated that Social Justice is not a formal committee of the Parish Council.
- b. Social justice appears to be more centered on events, rather than groups.
- c. Brenda stated that the function of the Social Justice Advocate is unclear.
- d. The question of whether right-to-life activities are considered part of social justice was posed and several people indicated that they are.
- e. There are inadequate connections with the other groups within the Parish performing social justice work.
- f. Most of the info is obtained from weekly parish bulletins.
- g. It would be useful if social justice issues were discussed in church on Sundays (besides right-to-life issues, which have been discussed on a number of occasions).
- h. The possibility of having a coordinator for social justice issues was discussed- the coordinator would be focused on advocacy for existing efforts/groups, not control.
- i. The idea of a Coordination Day for all members of the parish involved in social justice issues was discussed.
- j. The question was raised about how we identify all the people in the parish that are currently engaged in social justice issues/activities. It was reported that the parish office should have a list of groups/contacts.

- k. The idea was put forth of having a monthly Social Justice Mass, that would be followed by a meeting of people interested in social justice issues.
- l. Examples of social justice activities/groups within the Parish:
 - Safe Haven
 - Community Café
 - Pro-Life Group
 - Job Bank
 - Bereavement Ministry
- m. It was discussed that it would be desirable to have the clergy more visible at social justice activities, such as the Community Café.
- n. There should also be increased recognition of social justice activities within the Parish, such as the Bread for the World program.
- o. The ADW has a lot of materials/publications available on social justice activities.
- p. The idea of having a handout for new parishioners summarizing social justice activities/opportunities was discussed.
- q. The question was raised as to whether and how the results of the Call to Service questionnaires are distributed to Committee Chairs and Parish Council members.
- r. Brenda Cooley volunteered to check with Ginny Williams on the above.
- s. Another way of reaching out would be to have more Parish groups give announcements in church during masses.

Liturgy Committee

- a. There is currently no representative on the Council from the Liturgy Committee.
- b. Dave Fortuna has asked Father Smarsh to provide notes from the Liturgy Committee meetings.

School Advisory Board

- a. Mollie Huitema provided a written report on the December 2, 2009 School Advisory Board Meeting (copy attached).
- b. Mollie and Father George attended the December 2nd meeting, during which Father George advised the Board that they would be responsible for sending a representative to the Parish Council meetings to report out on their activities.
- c. The Pre-K program has been approved by ADW.
- d. The solar panels have been installed on the school roof.
- e. The school will be requesting \$36,000 in support from the Parish in 2010/2011.
- f. Area Catholic schools have generally been experiencing declining enrollment.
- g. ADW will be going to a two-tiered tuition schedule for 2010/2011 (Catholic, Non-Catholic).
- h. Holy Redeemer School (HRS) enrollment is currently 226. The target enrollment is 245.
- i. St. Hughs- had 125 students, but experienced a significant decline over the last year.
- j. St. Mark's will be blending with St. Camillus (Takoma Park).
- k. St. Mark's will be receiving no financial support from ADW.
- l. ADW High School principals want to be involved in determining the future of the two schools.

- m. St. Mark's to close next year for renovation- all students will go to St. Camillus.
- n. There will be 500 students (K-8) at St. Camillus next year.
- o. When the renovations are complete at St. Mark's, the student body will be split up, with K-4 or 5 attending St. Camillus and St. Mark's taking the "junior high" students.
- p. The name will possibly be changed to St. Francis International School.
- q. Total enrollment will be up to 700 students, when combined.
- r. The school will not be funded by ADW, but educationally coordinated.
- s. Teachers and principals will likely have to re-apply for their positions.
- t. The HRS Marketing Committee has been considering the following initiatives:
 - New signage
 - Banners
 - A new school brochure
 - An awning outside the entrance
- u. The school is planning a Volunteer Fair in 2010.
 - This is envisioned to include a planning session involving leaders of all Parish groups.
 - The question was raised as to whether this type of meeting should be the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Youth Group

- a. There is a Youth Advocate as part of the Council makeup.
- b. The Council has not been successful in getting Marie Winterson to designate a rep for this position.
- c. Arlene Peterson agreed to speak with Marie about this.
- d. It was pointed out that the Parish supports the youth group through such activities as the Giving Tree.

Finance Committee- Ellen Davis

- a. The Committee met during the week of January 18th
- b. The Year-End report covering the period July 1-June 20, 2009 was just completed/delivered.
- c. On the income side, receipts are currently 50% of the annual budgeted amount. This is actually somewhat behind previous years.
- d. The Harvest Bazaar usually puts the Parish over the 50% mark.
- e. Weekly collections during the snowstorm period were down.
- f. A shortfall of \$90,000 for the year is currently projected.
- g. Father George has been in discussions with ADW about co-signing a 5-year loan of approximately \$75,000 for installation of light poles in the parking lot and replacement of the convent/library roofs.
- h. Parking lot repavement was not included in the figure above.
- i. Last year there was an unplanned expense of \$30,000 on the heating plant.
- j. There was a question about the gift certificates program and whether and how much of that money can be used by the Parish.
- k. It was reported that the Home School Association (HSA) has money available, but the School does not have surplus funds.

- l. The school budget was due on December 15, 2009, however, the Finance Committee had not seen it, as of their meeting during the week of January 18th.
- m. For the 2010/2011 school year, only 36 families will have more than one student attending HRS.
- n. Everyone requesting financial aid for any school in the Archdiocese must apply to ADW directly for aid.
- o. There was some discussion about whether the Parish Council should request a briefing on the school and parish budgets.
- p. An action item was identified for the Finance Committee to provide an explanation of what types of expenditures are included in the various budget categories contained within the Parish and School budgets.

Security- Mark Russo

- a. The Committee has not met since the last Parish Council meeting.
- b. Works in progress include a letter to the College Park City Council on additional street lighting, church and school lighting survey, and video surveillance cameras for the church/school parking lot.
- c. Coordination with the PG County Police contract cars assigned to College Park was effected and resulted in coverage for all of the Christmas masses.

IV. Parish Constitution Revision

- a. This was tabled until the March 2010 meeting of the Council.
- b. Later in the meeting, a small-group discussion on the Parish Constitution was scheduled for Wednesday, March 22nd at 7:30 p.m. <meeting subsequently cancelled>
- c. Council members were asked to submit comments ahead of time.
- d. Ellen Davis offered to send out a revised draft, with the changes tracked.

V. Holy Redeemer Parish 100th Anniversary

- a. Dave Fortuna provided a handout with a number of ideas for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Parish.
- b. There was some discussion about whether the centennial is in 2011 or 2012 (the first church was built in 1912).
- c. Rita Thompson had agreed last year to chair an ad hoc committee on the 100th anniversary.
- d. The importance of soliciting ideas from parishioners was discussed, and Council members were encouraged to talk to people about it.
- e. Pros and Cons of using the website to communicate with the parishioners were discussed.
- f. A feedback form and suggestion box in the church.
- g. Brenda Cooley suggested that a square dance be held in the parking lot, in order to accommodate more people than would fit in the Four Seasons Room.
- h. Funding/budget were discussed as issues.
- i. Arlene Peterson and Dave Fortuna volunteered to discuss 100th Anniversary planning with Rita Thompson on Sunday, January 24th.
- j. A number of suggestions were made related to Parish history, including:

- Creating a Parish History Book
 - Collecting photos from parishioners, which could be scanned after masses, so people wouldn't have to part with rare or easily damaged photos.
 - Oral histories. Brenda Cooley has had significant experience with these and suggested that a questionnaire be developed to facilitate them.
 - A revised Parish directory.
- k. It was discussed that 100th Anniversary events should be separated from Harvest Bazaar activities.

VI. Parish Council Elections

- a. The Vice Chair usually coordinates this.
- b. A bulletin announcement is normally published seeking interest and advising of the election date.

VII. Parish Council Meetings

- a. The question was raised as to whether Council meetings should be held when Father George is unavailable to attend.
- b. After discussion, the consensus seemed to be that the pre-established schedule should be adhered to whenever possible.
- c. It was also suggested that Father George's availability to attend be checked 1 month prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- d. The scheduling of the next Parish Council meeting on St. Patrick's Day (March 17, 2010) was discussed.
- e. There was a suggestion that the meeting be moved to March 24th.
- f. After consultation with Dave Fortuna about changing the meeting date, Mark Russo will notify Carol Macknis of any change, so it can be posted on the website.
- g. Brenda Cooley volunteered to bring snacks.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Russo
Secretary
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