

St. John the Evangelist Parish Council
September 15, 2009 Minutes

The St. John the Evangelist Parish Council met on September 15, 2009, in attendance were Fr. Tom Powers, Sr. Evelyn Rowan, and members Norm Boucher, Mimi Eldridge, Pat Fiege, Susan Jablonski, Bob Kelliher, Sally Miller, Mike Racette, John Salvati, and Joe Tierney.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm

Opening prayer and reflection was led by Sister Evelyn and was a remembrance of Jane McDaid, former council member who died on July 17, 2009. The remembrance included a recitation of Psalm 23, the poem Lead Kindly Light by John Cardinal Newman and an Irish Blessing.

Prior Minutes

The minutes of the May 19 meeting were accepted after an amendment to correct the members in attendance.

Nominations to Parrish Council

The first order of business was to agree on a process for informing those parishioners who have been nominated to fill three seats on the parish council and determine their willingness to serve a three year term.

Individual parishioners will nominate candidates after masses on the weekends of September 20th and the 27th. The nomination sheet holds a concise description of the council and its duties.

There were 23 nominees last year from which 17 were willing to serve, with 2 having been away and four names were drawn.

It was decided that Mike Racette would distribute the names of the nominees to current council members who would in turn contact the nominees to discern their willingness to serve. The names of those candidates would then be placed into a hat from which three names will be chosen on the 11th of October. New members will be invited to the next meeting of the Parish Council on Tues., Oct. 20.

Pastoral Planning Group

This segment of the agenda began with Fr. Powers noting that while we have a parish mission statement, he had asked the Group to think about creating a description or outline of a Pastor's job, as part of their charge to be a "think tank" to envision a future parish structure given the changes on the horizon. In providing background to the discussion, Fr. Powers noted that given the priesthood's changing demographics, priests of the

archdiocese have been asked to remain in active ministry until age 75, which for Fr. Powers would mean 6 or 7 more years. As a result we all need do some reflecting on the role of the pastor to determine what the key areas for concentration are, in order to ensure that the parish's needs are met.

Fr. Powers emphasized that while he would serve as requested, the description of the Pastor's duties is important to St. John's so that the Parish could to assess his ability to perform the tasks, particularly those falling into the identifies key areas for concentration. Fr. Powers agreed that he would do an initial sketch of a description

Discussion occurred around how to formalize this and whether or not a formal HR function existed within the parish and what might be in place at the diocese. Fr. Powers would check at the diocese and Mike Racette volunteered to place this overall issue formally on next month's agenda.

One of the difficulties to be faced is that the parish priest's role can change given the particular characteristics of the person and he parish. Fr. Powers sketched brief examples of such changes that have occurred at St. Johns over the years. Understanding this point would seem to refocus us more on the key elements to be maintained in this parish and less on a boilerplate description.

The point was made that we are talking about performing a sort of "gap analysis" to determine the scope of the issue to include getting a better grasp on several things; what even now may not be getting done and possibly name certain things that no longer can be done; to determine if some help can be brought to certain areas, etc.

Another question introduced for discussion was the relationship between the two groups, Council and Planning; was there a need to establish a more formal working relationship, modeled perhaps on Bob Kelliher's role as liaison between the Council and the Finance Committee.

As the conversation reached its conclusion Sister Evelyn noted that we are facing a profound and complex issue and that conversation brings us into defining new forms of leadership for the community, multiple roles that now exist may well need reshaping, we may find ourselves on the edge of finding new ways for the community to flourish and grow. She recalled John XXIII's decision to be a gardener rather than a procurator that could serve as our guide s we strive to cultivate the community.

Welcome Weekend

Sister Evelyn explained the plans for the upcoming Welcome Weekend including the dissemination of information about many areas of parish life the school, external ministries, Arise, help for new parishioners, etc.

The new format is focused upon participation and new beginnings with the result being a warm welcome to all. We will apply a critical eye to the day with the intention of understanding what possible improvements can be made in the future.

November Anniversary of Church Expansion

Building on the discussion that began during our June dinner each Sunday in November was given a focus. The first Sunday would focus on a remembrance of all parish members who have been buried in the past ten years. The second would be the actual anniversary that falls on Friday November 6. The third would look back at ten years of change 9/11, the wars, and the financial crisis with intentions for special needs. The fourth would look toward the future with a focus on the next generation listing all the baptisms that have occurred in the ten year period

The notion of Thanksgiving will be woven into all four weeks and the day will have its usual 8:30 mass.

How best to communicate these plans will be made an agenda item for the next meeting.

A final note was made to once again do a family photo book for the parish.

Next Meetings

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Parish council is Tues., Oct. 20, 2009 at 7:30 in the Parish Center

Fr. Powers noted that the Parish governing bodies, including the Council, the Planning group, the finance committee and parish staff will meet on Sat., Oct. 17 from 8:30 - 10:00 am in the Social Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM