

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2007
6:30 p.m., Saints of the America's Room

Attendees: Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Coerver, Tony Acuna, Nick Alberts, Lorraine Chambers, Julie Dulac, Bob Guzik, Dan Muckensturm, Karen Moss, Jose Rodriguez, Yolanda Rodriguez, Bill Stewart, Karen Stonecipher, Rob Taylor, and Lupe Martinez (Finance Council). Also present were Jeff Carleton, Bob Boyles, B.J. Martin, and Kelly Colbert, Youth Minister.

Absent: Norm Brennecke and Brett Ensor

Father Bob opened the meeting with prayer.

Bob Guzik welcomed the new members of the Parish Council that were present: Jeff Carleton, Bob Boyles, and B.J. Martin. Brian Moss was unable to attend. The new members were invited to attend although their terms will not officially begin until January, 2008.

The outgoing members of the Parish Council were also recognized: Julie Dulac, Karen Moss, Lorraine Chambers, and Yolanda Rodriguez. Council members and Fr. Bob expressed gratitude and good wishes to these ladies who have all given so much time and energy to OLOL. Thank you all for your unending dedication and hard work for the past three years. You will be missed.

Draft Proposal for Liaisons

Because of the changes to the Organizational Chart, Fr. Bob proposed that the liaisons assignments of the Parish Council Members should also be modified. This modification would ensure that any one ministry head or employee would only have one Parish Council Member as his or her liaison. Some liaisons may have more than one person assigned to them due to some organizations not having a Ministry Head. The Council feels the New Year is a good time to receive new liaison assignments as new council members are coming on board and the changes to the organizational chart are in effect. After discernment, the Council felt that complete reassignment of liaisons seemed much easier than trying to adjust the present assignments. It was discerned and agreed upon that random assignment is the most fair procedure to follow. The Council was reminded that the Chair of the Parish Council does not receive a liaison assignment. Therefore, all other 11 members of the Council will receive their new, random assignments at the January meeting.

A new member of the Council asked for clarification of liaison duties. The liaison is a direct communication line between the Parish Council and his or her assigned ministry or organization head. When an issue is brought before the

Council that concerns a particular ministry or organization, that liaison then contacts the head of that ministry or organization to work on said issue. If a ministry head or organization head has an issue that they would like to be brought before the Council, they may contact their liaison to get this accomplished. Bob Guzik reminded the Council that an effort should be made by each Council member to have a constant and open line of communication with assigned ministries or organizations.

New Council Membership

Having already introduced the new members of the Parish Council, the meeting continued with a discussion of how to best promote interest in serving on the Parish Council. Several suggestions were made:

1. Have a table at the Time and Talent Festival staffed by Parish Council members to answer questions and possibly generate more interest from parishioners.
2. Put up signs at hospitality, inviting parishioners to take a closer look at the Council and what it does.
3. The recruitment process should begin now, with more concentrated efforts beginning as early as June when outgoing members will have only six months left to serve.
4. Put in the bulletin and on the website a description of the Council's responsibilities. The bulletin item could be published in June as efforts are increased to find new members.

Fr. Bob noted that OLOL may be adding pages to the bulletin, which would allow more space for an informed description of the Council's duties.

Space Subcommittee Report

Kelly Colbert, Youth Minister, attended the PPC meeting to present a proposal to the Council to lease space at Heritage Christian Academy. A copy of that proposal is attached to these minutes. In general, the youth ministry staff would like to rent both the cafeteria and gym spaces at HCA on Sunday evenings. They are proposing that the Junior High program (7th and 8th grades), which currently meets on Wednesday evenings, be moved to Sunday evenings at 5:30. The high school students would meet at 7:00 on Sunday evenings. These changes are being proposed for the 2008-2009 school year. The current youth room at OLOL is not large enough to accommodate our youth. As a result, often the youth are gathering outside which presents a Safe Environment issue. Renting the HCA space would give the youth an enclosed area for their free time. Moving the junior high program to the same night as the high school results in only needing to lease the space for one evening a week. This move also will open up the Holy Family Center should the Director of Religious Education for grades 1-6 need to add an additional session on Wednesdays.

Kelly has met with a staff member at HCA. HCA is very open to leasing the space to OLOL, as they no longer have a lessee on Sunday. Kelly informed the Council that approximately 120 students attend classes on Wednesday; while the attendance reaches up to 60 on Sunday. Council members questioned if the change in days would negatively affect the attendance of the youth, as well as, teachers. Kelly stated that she had asked several teachers who were all in favor of the move. She has also spoken to some parents who felt the day change was not a problem. Fr. Bob responded that he had heard complaints about the junior high program being on Wednesday. The Council is hoping that parishioners reading these minutes will come forth with any objections or support of this proposed change. A council member also asked if the change could be made this year. The youth ministry staff does not want to disrupt the program in mid-year.

Council members are in favor of leasing this space from HCA. The Council agreed that it was the appropriate time to recommend to the Finance Council that they pursue this matter. Lupe Martinez, Chair of the Finance Council, agreed to put the Space Committee on the Finance Council's December agenda. Members of the Space Committee and the Youth Minister will attend the Finance Council's meeting to present this proposal for leasing space from HCA. Fr. Bob noted that the Bishop has to sign any long-term lease agreements.

It was noted that Yolanda Rodriguez, a member of the Space Committee, is also an outgoing Council member. Because non-Council members have been asked in the past to serve on various PPC sub-committees, Yolanda will remain a member of the Space Committee.

A Council member brought up the question of whether the HCA space would still be available to us in September. He suggested that we ask HCA for first right of refusal.

Parking/Access Subcommittee Report

Father Bob asked that this report be given under Executive Session.

Parish Website Subcommittee

The Website Subcommittee handed out a report of a phone call meeting with E Catholic Churches.com. The report outlined what E Catholic Churches.com could offer OLOL as a potential webmaster provider. Rob Taylor, member of the Website Committee, reported that E Catholic Churches.com can sell templates to OLOL so that we can design our website as we want or E Catholic Churches.com can move what OLOL currently has to a new web outline. There is an hourly fee for this. This company is asking for a two-year contract.

Subcommittee members were not impressed with the newspaper format being offered by this company.

This is only one of at least three quotes that the subcommittee will have to obtain. The subcommittee has learned that Camelback, OLOL's current provider is going to make some changes in their service but has not been forthcoming with that information. It is believed by the subcommittee members that Camelback is raising the price and improving the base level website which the church currently has. The Council agreed that the subcommittee needs to find out definitely what the increase will be and when it will occur.

A Council member suggested that the subcommittee look at the webmasters of the church websites that Council members had liked as we began this process. It was further suggested that the churches should be contacted to find out if they were happy with their providers.

Fr. Bob stated that currently we are severely lacking in amount of links that we are allowed. Fr. Bob also stated his support of this project and believes we can serve OLOL far greater with a more efficient website.

Lorraine Chambers, also an outgoing Council member, will remain on this subcommittee.

Ministry Meeting Sub-Committee

Bob Guzik reported that he had met with his sub-committee members, Norm Brennecke and Karen Stonecipher. The sub-committee set a due date of January 23, 2008, for all ministry meeting forms to be returned. Bob will send out the forms as soon as corrections are finalized. The Ministry Meeting is set for March 1, 2008, from 9:00 – 11:30. There will be nine presenters. The format of the meeting will be the same as last year with the exception of more time being given this year for questions and answers.

Clarification of the purpose of the Ministry Meeting was noted for the benefit of new Council members. This meeting gives ministry heads an opportunity to present their accomplishments and needs to the PPC. The PPC prioritizes each ministry's needs and discerns about these needs versus the needs of the parish.

Hospitality

On November 28, 2007, the organizations that have staffed Sunday hospitality were emailed and informed that the new Hospitality Ministry has been formed. Fr. Bob thanked the Council of Catholic Women; the Catholic Mother's Council, the Knights of Columbus, and the Parish and Finance Councils and informed them that they would no longer be responsible for staffing hospitality. However, the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils will continue to help out with hospitality

one Sunday per month. This gives parishioners an opportunity to visit with Council members and present any concerns or questions they may have. Bob Guzik passed out the 2008 Hospitality Schedule.

Fr. Bob thanked and commended the PPC members for aiding Margaret Cook in getting this project accomplished.

Waiting Space for Parents

Karen Stonecipher, liaison to the DRE, reported that due to conflicting schedules, she was unable to follow-up with Beth Wright about the status of the waiting space for parents. Fr. Bob reported that he believed Beth was in the process of writing a letter to be sent home with the Faith Formation children after the Christmas break. The letter will inform the parents of the availability of the St. Anne's Room, and also explain the safe environment issues faced when allowing parents to wait in the Holy Family Center.

Food Baskets

After the November meeting, Tony Acuna contacted Mike Humphrey with the Council's recommendation that he ask the Cub Scouts to assist with delivery of the food from the food basket. Mike sent Todd White, Cub Scout liaison, an email asking if the Cubs could possibly assume the responsibility of delivering the food to Helping Hands. Todd responded that he would ask the Cubs and let Mike know. He further stated that he would be willing to find a solution to this issue, if the Council agreed. Fr. Bob stated that he doesn't mind the food sitting in the Narthex for a couple of weeks as it is a wonderful sight to see the generosity of this parish.

A Council member asked if we should begin our own food bank. Fr. Bob stated that he felt we are better serving the needy of Rockwall by contributing to a food bank that is supported by the Rockwall Community.

Establish Policy for Funding Education

Fr. Bob reported that this issue has come up because in the past and currently, many times Ministry Heads want to become more educated. This is often how churches get future Ministry Heads. The question has been raised if the church should bankroll these continuing education endeavors.

It was suggested that the PPC form a sub-committee to write some guidelines to help the Finance Council discern how to set up a policy. Rob Taylor and BJ Martin volunteered to be on this sub-committee. Some suggestions that were made included:

1. Set a dollar amount per semester; setting a cap for funding education of volunteers
2. Needs of the parish could be a parameter

Ushers and Safe Environment Issues

Dan Muckensturm read a letter from Ellen Stelmar, head of the ushers, to the Council. In this letter, Ellen reports that she is having some difficulty getting some of the ushers to complete the Safe Environment training. The question was raised if this is due to our current procedure for getting volunteers cleared, or is it a lack of effort on the part of some of the ushers. Council members questioned if classes for Safe Environment training are well publicized and if sufficient notice is given. Fr. Bob believes the dates are published in advance, but a liaison will check with Maria Dempsey, OLOL's Safe Environment Officer to confirm this. It was suggested that a year-long schedule be given to all organizations within the church so that volunteers are well aware of upcoming training sessions. Another question brought before the Council was that of teens being Safe Environment certified due to teens being ushers. The suggestion was made by a Council member that a time frame should be given to all ushers to obtain Safe Environment certification. If this deadline is not met, those who have not complied should be removed from the usher roster. Lorraine Chambers reminded all Council members of the importance of the entire Council being Safe Environment certified.

Report Concerns of Parishioners

Tony Acuna brought a concern of the Welcome Ministry before the Council. The Welcome Ministry would like to attend a PPC meeting to give a report on their ministry. This ministry expressed a concern that the PPC is not fully aware of the work they do. Council members worried that other ministries may have the same concern. Discussion was held on how the PPC can give those ministries that do not attend the Ministry Meeting a format of reporting their accomplishments and concerns. The suggestion was made to invite members of these ministries to a PPC meeting, giving them the opportunity to address the Council. It was agreed by the Council that PPC liaisons need to be especially diligent in contacting those ministries not attending the Ministry Meeting. A Council member questioned why some ministries are not present at the Ministry Meeting. Fr. Bob responded that the Ministry Meeting is for Ministry Heads. Not all ministries have Ministry Heads at this time. Another suggestion made by a Council member was the need for the PPC to educate the parish on the services performed by each ministry. Although the bulletin was suggested as a format for doing this, Fr. Bob stated that this may be difficult with the bulletin being so full. However, if the size of the bulletin does increase, perhaps there would be available space. This item will be placed on the PPC January agenda for further discussion.

Comments by Fr. Bob

Fr. Bob announced that he has been selected as chairman of the representative body of priests of the Dallas Diocese to the bishop.

Concerns of Parishioners

Fr. Bob informed the Council that a baby changing table has been installed in the upstairs restroom. We thank David Rossato for taking care of this parishioner concern.

A council member expressed concern of the safety of Damascus Road. She reported that she has been in two near-accidents as she is leaving Faith Formation classes on Wednesday's. This once again brings up the issue of OLOL needing to widen Damascus Road. The Access/Parking made note of this parishioner's concern.

PPC/FC Hospitality Schedule

Due to the Christmas holiday, there is no hospitality schedule for the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils for the month of December.

Snacks/Closing Prayer for October PPC Meeting

Bob Guzik is responsible for snacks at the January 14th meeting. Rob Taylor volunteered to provide the closing prayer.

January Agenda Items

Agenda items for the upcoming December meeting were decided.

- Draft Proposal for Liaison Assignments

- Sub-committee Reports

1. Space
2. Access/Parking
3. Parish Website
4. Ministry Meeting

- Waiting Space for Parents

- Food Baskets

- Ushers and Safe Environment Issues

- Funding Education

- Building February Agenda

 - Comments by Father Bob

 - Report Concerns of Parishioners

 - PPC/FC Hospitality Schedule for January

 - February Agenda Items/January Bulletin Notes

December Bulletin Notes

Items for December Bulletin Notes were suggested:

- Agenda for January meeting

Karen Stonecipher closed the meeting with a prayer.