

The Basilica of Saint Mary
Parish Council Meeting Minutes. October 19, 2022

Parish Council Attendance: Carole Burton, Edith-Nicole Cameron, Matt Celichowski, Roger Cloutier, Steven Kim, My Lam, Jennifer Lange, David Link, Susan Link, Andrea Lutterman, Tom Paul, Jill Reilly, Donna Wieneke. Staff: Terri Ashmore, Fr. Daniel Griffith.

Absent: Guest: Deirdre Palmer, Landmark Liaison

Welcome and Call to Order

Jill Reilly called the meeting to order, and Fr. Daniel Griffith led Council members in prayer with a reading of the Gospel and discussion.

Review and Approval of September 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes

MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2022 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN WAS MADE BY DONNA WIENEKE AND SECONDED BY CAROLE BURTON.
MOTION CARRIED.

Pastor's Report – Fr. Daniel Griffith

Fr. Daniel highlighted the upcoming Faith, Justice and Healing series (Nov. 13, 19 & Dec 3).

- November 13th: Msgr. Chad Gion works at the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota. This summer, he accompanied a contingent of boarding school survivors to meet with Pope Francis in Canada and hear his apology. Canada. Msgr. Gion will share his experiences and lead a discussion at The Basilica on November 13th. On
- November 19th: There will be a film called A Place at the Table: African-Americans on the Path to Sainthood.
- December 3rd: There will be a session about truth telling and healing entitled, “Here I am Lord, Journeying Toward Healing through Listening and Truth Telling.” This session will be kicked off by Dr. Yohuru Williams, founding director of Initiative for Racial Justice at St. Thomas followed by storytelling, and small group discussion. To prepare for this gathering, Fr. Daniel and Julie Craven from St. Thomas Law School will train volunteers to lead these circles for small group discussion.

Archdiocesan Synod: Fr. Daniel is still seeking 12 of parishioners to serve as Synod representatives. He asked members to share their ideas of volunteers to recruit.

Parish Council Retreat Follow-up: Fr. Daniel shared and updates Staff Directors about the conversation at the September Parish Council Retreat. Directors were excited about these discussions but due to the high number of open positions and capacity challenges, asked the Council to consider waiting until the new year to engage in these new initiatives. Fr. Daniel noted that the current Strategic Plan doesn't address the idea of fostering a spiritual encounter with God and one and other and hopes for further discussion of how Plan goals intersect with this idea.

Listening Sessions: Fr. Daniel asked council members to bring ideas to the November meeting for engaging a broad and diverse section of the parish in listening sessions. His hope is to offer an opportunity for people to engage in dialogue and help us shape the future of the parish. Questions

discussed included what data we have, or may want to gather, any insights about why people have not returned to in person Mass and activities. Several ideas were shared including outreach to people

Staff Retention: Fr. Daniel is working with Audra Johnson, head of HR and Terri Ashmore about how to affirm our current staff and new hires. He shared that he has been inspired by the dedication of long-term staff and the skills and expertise new staff are bringing to the team.

Parish Council Chair's Report / Update – Jill Reilly

Jill has connected with Council members about the focus areas they expressed interest in at the September retreat and encouraged them start conversations with the staff directors about Strategic Plan goals and desired outcomes. Council members are in the information gathering stage and are also looking for ways to retain and support staff.

Finance Reports – Roger Cloutier and Tom Paul

Roger shared a financial update about results in September and year to date. He reported that there has been a strong operating performance in first three months, but not as strong as needed on the donation side. Overall, the parish has started the year off in good shape.

In September, monthly net income was up \$25,000 over budget, with expenses under budget. Also, during September, Financial Stewardship contributions were up 5% compared to budget. Overall year-to-date (YTD), there is a deficit. YTD expenses were under budget. Financial Stewardship was also under budget by 3% toward a goal of a 4% increase over last year. YTD the parish net income is \$9,000 positive to budget. With the new hires, it is anticipated that costs for Salary/Benefits will increase. Mass attendance was approximately 1,100 in person and 200 on livestream each weekend. Pre-Covid in person Mass attendance averaged 1,800. If we compare revenue to pre-Covid years, we are \$88,000 behind.

Long Term Financial Task Force, Update – Tom Paul

Tom provided an overview for new members of the Long Term Financial Task Force, which is working on building a long-term 5 year financial plan through 2027 to restore revenues, manage expenses, and manage environmental risks that affect both revenues and expenses. During the past year, the focus has been on how to increase revenue. At the last meeting, metrics were discussed that would offer leading indicators to help evaluate if the model is sustainable.

The meeting packet included information about the Parish Cash Reserve which is one metric for consideration. By Finance Committee and Parish Council policy, the Cash Reserve has 2 categories. First, the Parish must keep 55% of its annual budgeted expenses in the Cash Reserve, and this is called the “Target Amount.” Second, anything above that 55% is considered “Excess” and the Parish Council and Finance Committee can authorize use of this “Excess” amount. This is what happens when we run an operating deficit for the parish. The Cash Reserve is healthy but the “Excess” is starting to diminish.

Annually, a portion of school rent and some estate gifts go into the Cash Reserve and funds are invested at the Catholic Community Foundation, and in Bank Acceptances. Budget surplus or deficit impacts reserve levels as does investment performance. Investment returns help grow the Cash Reserve. There is an amount of about \$400,000 in the Cash Reserve that is restricted as a parish endowment that needs to be retained in the Reserve.

At the next Task Force meeting, assumptions around revenues and what is achievable will be discussed. The current plan calls for revenue increases that range from 4-7% over the next four years with a goal of getting back to pre-pandemic levels.

Campus Master Plan– Tom Paul

Tom shared the history of the Master Plan process which started in 2018-19 with work to craft a vision statement, followed by a search and selection process to choose a team to craft the 30-50 year Master Plan. HGA led this process with a team of experts and they looked at the Church interior and exterior, the entire campus including landscaping, urban strategies about The Basilica's connection to the community and future needs which resulted in the idea of a new building on the campus.

In January 2020, the Parish Council, Finance Committee and The Basilica Landmark Board approved a new Campus Master Plan and a Capital Campaign for up to \$25 million for the exterior and interior of the Church. With the start of the pandemic in March of 2020, the campaign rollout was put on hold. To revisit the Master Plan for members, HGA Architects will make a presentation to all 3 groups again in early December, with discussion of how priorities and opportunities have changed.

Managing Director's Report – Terri Ashmore

Basilica Annual Fund: The annual appeal has been launched, 12,000 pieces of mail have been sent to parishioners and past supporters, and people are giving but it is very early in the process.

Campus Projects: New exterior lampposts with LED fixtures are being installed this month. The Church front steps are being recaulked to prevent moisture. Moisture has been eroding the foundation under the front steps, and eventually they will need to be rebuilt. In the church, the ceiling plaster is starting to dry out and it is crumbling and falling. Netting has been installed along the nave walls as a safety precaution and will remain in place through Christmas. In January, scaffolding and lifts will be used. Crumbling plaster will be removed, damage to the plaster will be assessed, as will the upper stained-glass window leading, and methods of cleaning the stone will be tested. A year-long envelope study is also being conducted to monitor humidity and moisture levels in the building throughout the 4 seasons of the year. These campus projects have all been funded by The Basilica Landmark.

Staffing: The parish has experienced staff turnover. 5 new staff have been hired since the start of September, but there are still 3 open positions.

Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN MOVED BY STEVEN KIM, SECONDED BY ROGER CLOUTIER.
MOTION CARRIED.