

Epiphany Parish Leadership Council Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: December 9, 2008, 8:35 p.m.

Location: Meeting Room

Attendees: Robert Breitbach, Richard Burke, Amy DeRaad, Bernie House, Mike Lentz, Mike Kraft, Bob Mueffelman, Greg Mueller, Alan Savage, Scott Schulte, Clyde Schultz, Tim Sullivan, Fr. Zehren, Mary Zielinski

Minute Taker: Mary Beth Ineson

- I. Approval of Minutes from November Meeting
Minutes approved with recommended modifications.
- II. Open Mic
No open mic this evening
- III. Commission Reports
 - Finance Commission – Alan Savage
The commission had a guest speaker this evening from the Catholic Finance Commission, Phil Bolter. We have 1.4 million in back assessments. We received good reviews, though, from Phil. Our assessments are expected to be paid off in 2015-2016. The commission also discussed selecting a new auditor. They have requested that Mike Lentz pursue this search. The typical turnover for an auditor is three to five years. As of December 7th, we are \$123,000 cumulatively under budget, and \$53,200 under compared to last year. We expect that Christmas will even this out.
 - Pastoral Care and Outreach – Bernie House
Mary Powell from Education was the guest at their meeting. They asked her a lot of questions, discussed the purpose of the education commission, and uniforms, etc. They received reports on a few of their ministries such as Meals on Wheels.
 - Liturgy Commission – Amy DeRaad
The commission focused on the lector ministry this evening. A new lecturn has been made for taller lectors. They are changing the binders for the petitions to match the color of the liturgical season. With the Feast of the Epiphany coming up, the commission is focusing on immigrants in our Parish. Also discussed adult education and beginning a Greeter ministry that would be different from the Usher ministry.
 - Education Commission – Mary Zielinski
Thanked all of the commissions and chairs for welcoming their commission members. The commission did meet earlier to discuss their strategic plan. They are also discussing the need for volunteers for Faith Formation.
 - Community Life – Richard Burke
The commission is finishing up their action plans and developing goals. Their focus tonight was how to get better communications across the Parish. They discussed ways of communicating to Parishioners. They received an update from the director's meeting and the need for new siding for the nun's house.

- Mike Lentz – The Parish Council will be hosting hospitality after all Masses the Feast of the Epiphany. An e-mail will be coming from Clyde for leadership to sign up for a Mass.
- Clyde Schultz – Attended the Community Life Commission meeting this evening.
- Stewardship Commission – Greg Mueller
The commission had two special guests this evening. Bob Mueffelman presented a couple of ideas that he has discovered in his travels. These ideas have also been presented to the Liturgy Commission. The two groups will meet and determine feasibility of these ideas. Susan Crook joined from the Education Commission and led some good discussion.

The committee has received approximately 797 talent forms, which is comparable to last year at this time. They continue to come into the office. We are planning to run the reports for the ministry leadership in mid-January. It is imperative that the commission leadership emphasize to their leaders the importance of contacting those interested in their ministries.

The mini-fair that was held by the Liturgy commission in November was well-received. Therefore, the commission is looking to see how this can be continued with other commissions periodically throughout the year.

Alan Savage suggested a follow-up since Stewardship has received so few forms. The January/February Stewardship topic should be a report of the statistics. A recommendation would be to send out a reminder and also information as to where the forms can be picked up.

- Bob Mueffelman – Attended the Stewardship Commission meeting this evening. Bob also commended the Education Commission for attending the other commission meetings this evening and invited more cross-over amongst all the commissions. It is a terrific benefit in all the commissions intermingling.
- Operations Commission – Mike Kraft
The commission discussed thoughts on saving energy across the facilities. They are also working on the master plan for the campus. The plan for the skilled nursing facility should be on the January agendas for each commission. Operations will meet with the commissions in February to gather recommendations. Mike Kraft will be e-mailing a form to all of the commission chairs to share with their members outlining the recommendations.

IV. Fundraising Policy – Bob Mueffelman

The policy has been in place for three years. Greg Mueller, Alan Savage, Richard Burke, Mike Lentz, Sister Marion, Eric Gunderson, and Bob Mueffelman met to discuss the policy. They have changed the timeline as follows:

- February 1 – Letters sent to ministries
- March 15 – Deadline for applications
- March 16 to April 1 – Fundraising Committee review the applications
- April 1 – Committee submits recommendations to Pastor
- April 15 – Responses back to all the ministries.

In the “Additional Considerations” area of the policy the committee is also removing the statement: “The parish assumes no liability in regard to the particular event”. As before, the events of Springfest, State Fair Diner (and any other events held at the State Fair Diner), Scrip, and Marathon are exempt from submitting applications.

New this year will be the policing the groups to be sure the 10% contribution and the weekend of hospitality are completed. Mike Lentz will follow up. A copy of the new policy will be sent to Clyde Schultz to distribute to commission chairs.

V. ICSC 2008 Annual Stewardship Conference – Terri Willaert

Sister Marion, Clyde Schultz, and Terri all attended the International Catholic Stewardship Conference in Chicago in October. They met to discuss what they learned and summarize for the Council. They divided the topics into three sections: what we are doing well, what do we need to improve, and areas to discuss in the future.

- Increasing involvement in our ministries, which means greater involvement in the Church, and then greater involvement in Stewardship.
- Gift identification is also important so members know what gifts they have to share.
- Education is important and should continue.
- Financial/fiscal responsibility.
- The accountability of the ministry leaders. Not contacting someone who is interested in volunteering is a huge insult to the volunteer.
- We need to be creative as a stewardship parish.
- Implement terms that are comfortable for ministry leadership.
- Giving clear, concise volunteer guidelines.
- Communication is an important area. We have made some strides, but it is an area that everyone at the conference stressed. The main means of communication used to be the bulletin, but now we need to use technology. A lot of people are leaning toward e-mail.
- Updating our database. We tried to do this a few years ago by sending out a survey. We may want to consider doing something like this again.
- Increasing Mass Attendance. One suggestion was having the ushers counting Mass attendees periodically. It would have been good to have done this three years ago, two years ago, and now. It seems like the Masses are better attended.
- Inviting feedback from parishioners.
- All Churches (including non-Catholic) are experiencing an issue with keeping young adults involved (between Confirmation and age 40).
- Have a group of people review the website periodically to make sure the data is accurate and up to date.
- An important thought from the conference is "the school of Stewardship is the Mass; the textbook is the scripture."
- Continue to encourage through the talent forms. We always want 100% of the forms returned. However, 30% is a good return. An option would be to send the forms out again to those parishioners that have not returned their forms.

VI. Staff Meeting – Stewardship – Mike Lentz

Staff meets regularly. Approximately about a week ago, we had a larger staff meeting, not including the teachers. We commit to periodically reviewing our six goals. We discussed the first goal how do we continue to build on our culture of Stewardship here at Epiphany. From our perspective of staff, what we have done in the last year or so to lead us in fulfillment of that goal. The second question from our perspective is what needs to be added. The final question is what do we think would threaten all of this. The thought would be for all of us as a whole take a look at this and reflect on what you witnessed that is getting us toward this goal, what needs to be added, and what could possibly throw it all away. We could then move on to goal two and periodically just bring these thoughts before us.

From the staff perspective, we really like the emphasis that stewardship is making toward the one commitment of time. We believe the Stewardship message that Spirituality and Stewardship is still core to Epiphany parish. We agreed that we particularly like the steps taken with children and youth (the children's envelopes, the brochures, etc.). We need to develop and articulate our vision and goals for total stewardship and how it relates to finance and the school. Some of the threats are the current economy and the greater demand on people's time. Think about what other threats there are so we can deal with them.

We are addressing the ongoing need to clean up the database. We did have some issues with the financial statements as a result of running them for the first time from the new system. We apologize for that. The year-end statements will be better. We know we have 2400-2500 people that contribute. We know we have approximately 3000 people who don't contribute. Of that 3000 we know we have people who volunteer but just can't give. We understand and respect that. The problem we have is how to contact the people who are not contributing or volunteering and invite them to participate in the parish.

Tim Sullivan sat in the Finance Commission meeting with Phil Bolter. It came up again that Epiphany is seen as a role-model in what we have accomplished in our efforts to stabilize our financial situation. That came up as well when we implemented stewardship. That is a true testament to what we have here. The leadership quality and the dedication of the people here. We should be proud of what we have done and be thankful for what we do have here.

VII. Adjournment / Closing Prayer

The meeting was concluded at 9:30 p.m. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 13th, at 8:30 p.m.