

**Epiphany Parish Leadership Council  
Meeting Minutes – Pending Approval**

**Date and Time:** November 11, 2008, 8:35 p.m.

**Location:** Three Kings Meeting Room

**Attendees:** Richard Burke, Amy DeRaad, Eric Gunderson, Bernie House, Mike Lentz, Mike Kraft, Bob Mueffelman, Greg Mueller, Alan Savage, Clyde Schultz, Tim Sullivan, Fr. Zehren, Mary Zielinski

**Minute Taker:** Mary Beth Ineson

I. Approval of Minutes from September Meeting

There was discussion as to the amount of detail that should be included in the minutes.

The minutes are typically a summary of what occurred. Do we want the minutes to be more detailed? Richard Burke suggested they should be a summary of the discussion. Details can be referenced during the commission meeting minutes.

The September minutes were approved as amended.

II. Approval of Minutes from October Meeting

When we make the amendments, the approved minutes are then posted on the website with the corrections.

Minutes approved as amended.

III. Open Mic

No open mic this evening

IV. Commission Reports

• Pastoral Care and Outreach – Bernie House

Tonight we did an update of our ministry. Discussed the Skilled Nursing Facility Location Recommendation. The Jesse tree goes up on Wednesday, and the health fair is this weekend. For the food shelf bring in a turkey or other contribution, and get a feather on the wall in the cafeteria. An additional Parish nurse will be added. The home bound calls will benefit from this addition. They will be meeting Epiphany Extra November 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for their article. One of the goals is to continue to work on the website. The goal this year is more interaction with our ministries.

• Liturgy Commission – Amy DeRaad

The commission met last week on Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and they met again tonight. We discussed our minute approval. Minutes for both meetings will be approved this week. We now have a liturgy corner in the bulletin. Our first articles will be submitted to Father Zehren for approval. We discussed the welcome of our RCIA catechumens. One of the items we worked on is how we welcome after the celebration of Mass has ended. We talked about highlighting some of the candidates and what is bringing them into the faith. As many of you know, we had a mini ministry fair at the Masses this weekend. It gave both new parishioners a chance for involvement and existing members a chance to meet the leaders. We discussed the senior housing proposal as Mike requested. We also discussed notifying the Parish Office if unable to attend the dinner at the council meetings. We also discussed the overflow at our holiday Masses. We discussed the potential of adding another Mass on Christmas Eve and discussed whether this will be a feasible option. The staff members will take this to Father for approval.

- Community Life – Richard Burke  
They had a guest speaker this evening from the Knights of Columbus to discuss the chili cook-off that will benefit the food shelf, and how they can help to promote it. They followed up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual cookie exchange being held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Last year about 35 people participated. We are hoping to get about 60 this year. Along with exchanging cookies, we have cookies there to frost. Another event we are working on is the car show at the State Fairgrounds in June. We are hoping to get communication back from the state fair to open the diner for that 3-day weekend. We have received favorable feedback from the fair staff, and we are waiting word from the car show itself. The Epiphany Extra deadline is November 15<sup>th</sup>. Get your info to Cathy Sullivan. We also discussed the City of Coon Rapids 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and how Epiphany can be involved in that event.
- Education Commission – Mary Zielinski  
We developed a couple of work groups to work with school for accreditation and to develop a plan to recruit volunteers for faith formation. We assigned commission members to committees so each committee has a representative on the commission. Each commission member would like to attend the other commission meetings in December. We also reviewed the education commission's strategic plan. We discussed the action plans and what we have accomplished or have in progress. We are making a lot of progress. We talked about setting up an open forum (as a result of last month's open mic and also other comments in the past) where people could come to the education commission and talk to us about concerns, ideas, what are we missing in faith formation and the school. We talked about the skilled nursing facility as well.

When will the commissions have their own web pages or link? Richard Burke stated he had a conversation with Clyde Schultz, Libby Huebner, and Mike Lentz to discuss the web site. The goal was to have the new website ready the end of September. The school one is complete, but the church web site still needs to be completed. The tentative goal is January for the commission websites.

- Finance Commission – Alan Savage  
The entire meeting was the audit report. We came in last year with four material weaknesses and one going concern. Through the hard work of Mike Lentz and Jenny Heiling, we have no going concerns this year. There were two material weaknesses identified that Alan considers benign. A big round of applause needs to go to Mike and Jenny. The second discussion was selection of auditors for the 2008-09 year. The commission is currently taking bids and discussing the pros and cons of switching auditors. We also briefly touched on Mike Kraft's housing proposal.

Bob Mueffelman stated that the audit last year identified four material weaknesses, while this year's audit identified two material weaknesses. This reduction of material weaknesses is the result of much work that has been done. Furthermore, the audit last year issued a going concern due to financial instability. This year's audit did not issue a going concern, which the auditors of Froehling Anderson said is directly correlated to the difficult decision to re-implement tuition. Froehling Anderson stated that by re-instating tuition Epiphany saw a \$1,300,000 swing in the bottom line. The elimination of the going concern will have a positive impact on our ability to borrow money

- Mike Lentz stated a lot of people have a hand in the audit report and they all deserve a hand for their hard work. The Gift shop is 25 years this December. We now have credit card access. We will be celebrating with them.

Mike will also be following up with last month's open mic participant. We have a lot of families that are expressing concern with keeping their children in school due to the economy. We don't want to lose the tuition, but more importantly we do not want to

lose those students. It is in our best interest to keep these families here, and we need to continue to support our Parish families. We are \$120,000 behind in collections and about \$30,000 behind where we were last year at this time. The staff is looking at how we can reduce expenses and be responsible stewards of our resources.

- Stewardship Commission – Mary Beth Ineson

The annual Stewardship renewal is in progress. Everyone should have received their packets. Our goal is to return these the weekend of November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The forms will be brought up during the Presentation of the Gifts as we are presenting our gifts in gratitude to God. The Stewardship Series continues. This Thursday will be "Living Your Strengths" presented here in the meeting rooms. "Living a Healthy Lifestyle" will be Sunday morning.

- Operations Commission – Mike Kraft

We discussed Skilled Nursing Facility and reviewed the pieces of the campus that are still open and to be aware of what limited land we have left on the campus. We discussed accommodating crowds. We also began a discussion of looking throughout the whole campus for ways of reducing energy cost. If anyone has knowledge or interest in making recommendations on reducing energy costs, please let the commission know. We would welcome that input and any information you could give us. The commission is also researching another group to do an energy audit.

V. Junior High Information – Jane Carroll

She would like to respond to some of the concerns that were expressed last month regarding general parent feedback in the last couple of years. Jane distributed a summary of a parent survey that was completed in 2006-2007. We surveyed all families with 46% responding. Last year's survey (2007-2008), we had a 57% response. What you will see in this survey is we ask families to strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree to each question/statement. The first section is regarding the quality and Catholicity of Epiphany School. While being in the 90's, there were some areas that were supported by parents and some additional statements that came out the past year. We are looking for patterns of strength and patterns for growth. Some of the patterns for growth are the six listed on the summary. As a school staff, we have worked to improve these areas, and we continue to work in those particular areas. In the areas needing improvement, #6, "My child is treated with dignity and kindness by faculty and staff is on Jane's list because she feels we should always receive 100% agree.

Also in this survey, we ask families to commend what they really like about the school, and what they would recommend. Many families commended the faculty and staff, which Jane shared with the staff. In terms of recommendations, these fall into some of the areas that were mentioned last month. Any pattern that we see that has 10 or greater comments need to be addressed at our school. The comments regarding the quality of the professionals addressed behavior. She hopes this gives a better understanding of parent perceptions of the school.

One way the concerns are being addressed is through the accreditation process. We are meeting the standards and criteria identifying both strengths and challenges. From the challenges, Epiphany school will be creating a 3-5 year plan. Components of the plan will be meeting the diversified needs, curriculum, marketing and retaining students, finances, and Catholic identity. Since the survey was taken, she has met with the Junior High staff to review what has been stated and how it will be addressed. She recommended reviewing the school website, paying close attention to the web pages for the junior high staff. They are letting parents know what the students are learning and have examples of work by students. In December, the Junior High staff will be attending a conference (half going to one of each day of the 2-day conference) to get information to bring back.

Another survey will be distributed just to the Junior High parents. She would also like to comment that if there are issues or disputes; Epiphany school has a recommended process that mirrors the scripture. What works best is resolving concerns at that closest level.

Concerns were also expressed last month regarding the declining enrollment. We have seen in the last two years a dramatic decrease in enrollment. Finances have been the main cause. As it has been tracked over the past two years, it has been the significant factor but demographics has also been a factor. We don't always meet the particular needs of a child at Epiphany school, although we try to meet the needs of all students.

Staff issues that are brought to Jane are taken very seriously. She has taken any issues to the particular staff members and has always found them to be cooperative.

VI. Skilled Nursing Facility Location Recommendation – Mike Kraft

Epiphany Senior Citizen Housing Corporation is researching the possibility of building a Skilled Nursing Facility at Epiphany. From a marketing and growth perspective, this seems like a good idea. The corporation asked the operations commission whether there is land to do this. The bulk of our land is wetland that cannot be swapped. The land available for development is the southwest corner, the sandy area by school, and perhaps a small area along Hanson for future parking. The corporation needs to just have a chunk of land to do a feasibility study. We would like them to review the possibility of building within the land they already have. Another option would be to move the garage and allow building in that spot. Another option would be to relocate the Parish offices and combine with school offices, with the Senior Housing Corporation participating in the expense of the relocations. The Skilled Nursing Facility could then go where the Parish Offices are today. The softball fields are not an option because they are used for a lot of functions even outside of Epiphany. Due to the structure of the entrance from Hanson, it would not be feasible to move the softball fields.

The question was raised by whether we could build up. Mike Kraft felt that was not feasible. Alan Savage brought up the Parish's long range plan for the land before we determine if we can give up land to the Senior Housing Corporation. The Operations Commission would need to visit the commissions and discuss the plan. The corporation would like to do a financial feasibility study in order to do that, they would like a plot to contribute their feasibility study so we would not be committed to anything at this point.

The council discussed letting the corporation do a feasibility study on the first two proposals. The commission chairs should take this back to their commissions and discuss at January's meeting.

VII. Adjournment / Closing Prayer

The meeting was concluded at 10 p.m. The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 p.m.