

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, June 19, 2006**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Michelle Stultz, Jim Conrady, John Duncan, Doug Young, and Ralph Bedel

**Council Members Absent:** Vic Ivers, Kathy Hornschmeier, Duane Bradley, and Janet Tate.

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett and Rick Kellerman, Vice-President of the Boosters.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order by Mike Gennett at 7:00 PM EDT. Fr. Bill Wagner asked the meeting start without him since he was running a little late. The President & the Vice-President were not available to attend.

Jim Conrady opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The last council meeting was held on Monday, May 15th. Mike Gennett stated there were two requests submitted to modify the minutes.

The first was from Doug Young who felt that the statement made at the last meeting regarding McNicholas High School Alumni was too strong. He suggested it be modified. Council Members in attendance had no objection to his request. The change was made.

The second change was submitted by John Duncan. He suggested that the following sentences be added to the minutes regarding the music at Sunday Mass: *"Fr. Bill said we need to have at least one Mass that is more traditional. This was strongly supported by John Duncan who asked why not just pick one of the Masses to bring back more traditional music and more of the organ."* This addition was approved by council. A second statement change regarding the music, *"This was voiced strongly and*

*unanimously*" was not approved. Michelle Stultz pointed out this was not unanimously approved at the last meeting. This change was therefore not approved.

Council voted 5 to 0 to accept the minutes as noted.

Mike Gennett pointed out that there are concerns when the minutes are released about what was said at a Council meeting. Sometimes Council does not always know everything that is going on and their comments are misinterpreted. An example was the recent email sent out by the School Marketing Committee. Jim Conrady stated School Marketing could be asked to make a presentation to Council prior to launching their program for 2007-8.

**Business Manager Report:** Mike Gennett gave the report.

**Email Server Change** – Mike stated the issue with the spam and virus emails have gotten worse. A decision was made last week to install our own mail server. We hope to get this done before school opens. Jim Conrady stated that he and Duane Bradley had talked about assisting the parish with this issue. Mike said he appreciated their offer, but the problems have gotten so bad we are moving ahead as quickly as we can. We are going to be able to purchase the software from a non-profit web site which will reduce the costs. We still believe the problem is in a parishioner's computer and the server our email is hosted may also now be part of the problem since the owner is no longer in business and has no time to maintain it. Mike stated that the parish sends a big thanks to James Stegemeyer for hosting our email for the past seven years for free. However, we need to move ahead on our own as we continue to grow and we need to be responsible regarding viruses and spam email being passed on.

**School Registrations** are up to 300 students. Our estimate is we will be around the same number as the past year which was 304. We made a decision last week to retain the all day Kindergarten class. We have seven that are registered with 2 more who have verbally committed. Others are still asking about the class. We want to maintain the class from a consistency standpoint. We also continue to enroll students in other

classes which help to pay for this teacher. We would have to refund the tuition money for the all day Kindergarten if we did not offer it.

Mike stated we remain baffled as to what the issue is with our all day Kindergarten enrollment numbers. We called St. Veronica and their class is filled and their tuition is \$4,570 compared to our \$3,995. We also know St. Bernadette has opened a second all day Kindergarten class at the reduced rate of \$2,300. Both locations have done a good job of enrolling students.

Jim Conrady stated that something is not right. Doug Young replied that as an all day Kindergarten parent this past year the parents felt they were kept out of the loop. He said the teacher did not even know when the last day of school was. Their buddy family never came forward. (Michelle Stultz stated this was not a school issue but a PTO breakdown.) Doug further stated the issue was an overall lack of communication with the Kindergarten parents. Mike Gennett stated he would pass on these comments to Peg Fischer.

**Preliminary financial results** for 2006-5 look very good. We will have a surplus which is growing. Most of the surplus will be due to expense control rather than an increase in contributions. We expect to break even on energy costs to the previous year which saved a lot of money. Our June Duke Energy bill was up 4.9% over the previous June. This is good considering electricity costs went up 30%. Most of the surplus will be used next year to fund the all day Kindergarten teacher, to fix the email problem, and to conduct an electrical study of the church building including upgrading the lighting in the church. Fr. Bill also stated some of the money will be used to add more speakers to the back of the church. We continue to receive complaints about the sound system in this area.

**Deanery Update** – Fr. Bill stated the Pastoral regions for Clermont County are still an issue. The Pastors of Bethel/New Richmond, and Amelia want to go back to the drawing board. Sharing a Pastor for these three parishes will not work as things stand. The issue is St. Bernadette needs to build a new church to make the cluster work and have many hurdles they have to go through to get it done. The new church plans have been whittled down to just a steel building. They also have been told by the diocese they must have 100% of the funds in advance to build the church, present a balanced

budget for the first two years after construction funding the parish with the new church plus pay on their old debt. They have not been able to get such a plan together.

There are those who feel that St. Bernadette should be placed in a Pastoral Region with St. Thomas More. Fr. Bill stated he strongly objects to reopening the issue since we are so far down the road. We have already worked out our plans with Holy Trinity in Batavia. This issue could be sent to the Archbishop who in turn could mandate the change. We will have to see how this plays out as time goes on.

**Red Cross Emergency Plan** – Fr. Bill stated we have been asked to update our thoughts with the Red Cross regarding the use of our gym during an emergency. In the past, we had declined offering our gym on a planning basis. However, with something like Hurricane Katrina in mind, we might want to consider this. If something of that magnitude happened here, we would no doubt have to offer the gym. School more than likely would be closed anyhow. Jim Conrady stated the use of the gym is the one building that makes the most sense for emergency use.

**Staff Changes** – Rhonda Roberts, School Administrative Assistant, is stepping down from a full time to part time employee (2 ½ days) effective July 1. Fred Haas has been assigned as a Deacon at our parish. He is head of the Religion Department at Fenwick High School. He has moved in the area to be near his grandchildren. Fr. Bill also stated we will have two more Deacons next year provided our two candidates; Michael Thomas and John Convery successfully complete their studies at the Seminary.

Fr. Bill also stated the Parish Secretaries continue not to be able to keep up with their workload. He plans to shift some of their duties to the School Office.

**Council Member Term Expirations** – Three Council member terms end this year. They are Vic Ivers, Duane Bradley, and Michelle Stultz. Fr. Bill asked if the discernment process that was used last year could be carried forward. There were still a number of names from the process that could be asked to serve. Fr. Bill and Michelle Stultz had a conversation about

another term and decided the constitution needed to be checked regarding second terms.

An open discussion was held regarding the First Communion banners in the church. Jim Conrady stated it really livened up the building. Maybe a program could be put in place to have banners in the church on a more consistent basis. Fr. Bill stated thought this was a good idea and would discuss it with the Worship Commission & the Environmental Committee.

Mike Gennett acknowledged Rick Kellerman who was representing the Boosters. Rick asked to let the Boosters know if there is anything they can do. Rick mentioned that practices will start in August.

Jim Conrady made a motion to adjourn at 8:22 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

**NEXT MEETING - SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>.**

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Scheduled Parish Council Meetings for 2006-7 are:

September 18  
October 16  
November 20  
December 18  
January 15  
February 19  
March 19  
April 16  
May 21  
June 18