

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, March 20, 2006**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Michelle Stultz, Jim Conrady, Duane Bradley, Ralph Bedel, Doug Young, Janet Tate, and Kathy Hornschemeier.

**Council Members Absent:** Vic Ivers and John Duncan.

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order by Kathy Hornschemeier at 7:01 PM EST. Fr. Bill Wagner opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The last council meeting was held on Monday, February 20th. Kathy asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes. Mike Gennett stated there had been no feedback.

Duane Bradley made a motion that the minutes be accepted as written. Jim Conrady seconded the motion. Council voted 8 to 0 to accept the minutes.

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

**Virus Update** – Mike stated the virus that someone has in their home computer has not been resolved. A number of staff members continue to receive the [W32.Netsky.P@mm!enc](mailto:W32.Netsky.P@mm!enc) virus along with lots of spam email. Mike stated he has had lengthily conversations with our email provider, James Stegemeyer. We have isolated the problem to someone who is in the Parish Council list serv and also has a number of staff members in their address book as well as the list serv email address. This individual evidently does not have and/or has recently has not updated their anti-

virus software. It is not someone on staff. An email has been sent to everyone in the list serv to update their anti-virus software. Mike stated a number of the emails are from the United Kingdom and we centered on those folks who might have had a connection with England, but to no avail. Duane Bradley stated some of the list serv emails are business addresses and their anti virus at work stops the problem. Mike stated our anti-virus software here at the parish is stopping the virus as well, but it is annoying. Clearly, it is in someone's home email address file. We have about 28 email addresses in the list serv. Mike asked the group if there is anything else that can be done. Duane Bradley said everything has already been done until the party responsible acknowledges and fixes the problem.

**Matt Malott letter** – Mike passed out a “farewell letter” to everyone on Council from former council member, Matt Malott. Matt and his family have moved out of the area and left the parish. A number of council members stated they appreciated Matt's letter.

**Budget Update** – Mike stated we will probably finalize our 2006-7 operating budget sometime in April. We are waiting on school registrations to wrap up. He stated we do know the following new information since the last meeting:

- School enrollment for 2006-7 stands at 287 as of today. The usual last minute families continue to delay in completing their registration.
- Our health care costs for next year are now firm and will increase 10%. We probably will add 2-4 more employees to the plan.
- We were informed today that our unemployment insurance will rise from 2% to 3.5% of payroll for a 75% increase.
- We have good news and bad news regarding our energy costs. Our natural gas usage was down 27.4% and electrical consumption was down 12.7% in the past month. The Cinergy bill was down 5.0% from March of 2005 and there were 31 days in this billing cycle versus 29 last year. Our overall energy costs are up 5.6% for the season which includes our natural gas recovery costs. We really have done a good job. (It was asked if there were any complaints. Fr. Bill stated he only received one letter complaining about us conserving energy.)

- Mike stated we were informed at the Business Managers meeting last week that the electrical demand rate calculation that takes place in May of each year will dramatically escalate. The demand charge is the highest 15 minutes of usage during the May billing cycle. That highest 15 minutes of usage sets the demand charge for the next full year. Our demand charge currently for 2005-6 is \$6.50 per kilowatt hour. The going market rate (that would begin in June) is 85% of the current demand rate of \$14.69 per kilowatt hour. This is a whopping 92% increase we could see for our electricity demand! Both the main church building and Heider Hall have the demand charge.
  - Both Duane Bradley and Kathy Hornschemeier both stated they were aware of this issue. Kathy also said PUCO is involved in this. It is a political issue as well.
  - Fr. Bill stated he felt this was not even reasonable and maybe we should get our lobbyists involved.
  - Duane Bradley suggested maybe not running the air conditioning during the May billing period. Others suggested off peak time cooling if the air conditioning is needed.
  - Mike Gennett stated we have not really decided anything at this point, but we probably can not sit back and do nothing. We have sent in a request to have our energy bill analyzed by WSG Energy services. Part of our natural gas is with them now. We are waiting to see if they can help us since they stated they do not measure electrical service with this demand charge. Our energy costs would be pooled with a variety of businesses.
  - Mike also stated the Business Managers were told it was not a good idea to buy energy as a group because churches and schools are not good at conserving energy. We have done a better job than most of our fellow parishes and buying with them more than likely would raise our costs since we probably are now below the average usage rate for the group.

Fr. Bill stated it is getting harder and harder to operate. So many things are coming into play.

**New Phone System** – A new phone system has been selected. We looked at Visions Communications, Spectrum, Cincinnati Bell, AltiGen IP, and 3Comm. Visions Communications was selected because of a number of

factors: price, service, features, and recommendations from other parishes. In fact, Visions is in a number of churches and schools. The goal is to have the phone system installed over spring break. We probably will just start out with the basics and add the bells and whistles later.

Fr. Bill stated this new system will do about anything. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Direct phone numbers to most of the key staff members that allows parishioners to call right to the party they want.
- A One Call Now type feature we can use to call parishioners for a variety of reasons.
- A direct line for St. Vincent de Paul allowing them to call back without the caller id issue they now encounter.
- T-1 lines ones that allow for 24 lines instead of the current 12 we have (Duane Bradley said the line to the server can be taken out. He is now going into the server through the Internet.)

**School Family draft letter** – Council had asked for a draft letter regarding contributions for the school families. The draft was passed out. Mike suggested for time sake the letter not be discussed, but welcomes feedback. Fr. Bill stated that Parish Council and Finance want to implement the plan and the School Committee does not at this time. He will eventually have to make a decision. Duane Bradley stated this is something that needs to be done.

**Cunneen Outreach** – A timing and action calendar along with samples of the letters going to our 720 most “inactive” active parishioners was passed out. The first letter goes out March 22. 583 of our active households contributed nothing to the parish in the past year. Fr. Bill stated this consulting firm is certain they can turn some of them around. The costs are guaranteed if we do not collect as much as the cost of the program.

**Pastor’s Report** – Fr. Bill gave his update.

Potential **Mass time changes** came up while we were meeting with Holy Trinity in Batavia. It was proposed at that time we move our Saturday Mass from 4:30 PM to 4:00 PM. The feedback has been extremely positive that we should do it now. This change was approved by the Worship

Commission. Fr. Bill stated if Parish Council agreed, he would soon notify those attending 4:30 Mass of the proposed change. The change would be made by fall. In addition to this change, a proposal has been approved by Worship to move the 11:30 AM Holyday Mass to 12:15 PM. This might help to capture the lunch crowd on these days.

Kathy Hornschemeier asked who we might be going up against on Saturday. Fr. Bill stated St. Veronica, but he hears a number of our parishioners go to church there at that time.

Jim Conrady asked about the Communion to the Sick issue that was noted on the special report sent out by Deacon Jerry Cain. Fr. Bill said that was a Worship issue. People are just walking up to the altar to receive hosts at Communion time. He has no idea who some of them are. This is not "Jesus to Go" or a "Drive Thru". You just can't allow anyone to walk up and receive the host.

Ralph Bedel asked what are the heaviest attended Masses? Fr. Bill stated 10:00, then 4:30, and Noon. And those can vary depending on what is going on and the weather. 8 AM is generally the lightest.

Council stated there were no objections to changing either Mass time as presented.

**Meeting with the Archbishop** – Fr. Bill stated that he and Mike Gennett recently attended a meeting regarding diocese finances with the Archbishop. He said this was a positive step because they were at least asking for input and making more sense about what they do. For example, our Archdiocese fund drive goal was lowered to a more reasonable amount (\$27,500 to \$21,500). It was suggested at this meeting raising the assessment tax from 5.7% which may be one of the lowest in the country. Jim Conrady asked, "What tax?" Fr. Bill stated that parishes are taxed at a 5.7% rate of their income that is forwarded to the diocese to pay for the operation of the diocese offices including worship, the school office, chaplains in the hospitals and jails, tribunal court and marriage, to name a few.

There was no news to report regarding **the Deanery**. The next meeting was scheduled for April.

**Diane Brennan** may be out for six weeks to care for her Mother-in-Law. She fell and broke both wrists in our Library on Saturday. Both Fr. Bill and Jerry Cain would probably be teaching religion classes.

**Michael Thomas's** Mother-in-Law has died. His Mother is not well and has been placed in a nursing home.

We have saved money this winter on snow and ice removal due to the mild weather.

**Bingo** is doing very well and we should be able to add \$50,000 to \$60,000 to next year's budget. Michelle Stultz stated she was surprised since it had previously been stated we would not be doing this. Mike Gennett stated there has been major turn around since the first of February. It was asked how much of the loan has been paid back. Mike stated we should clear everything up this month. April thru June would be profit for the parish.

Janet Tate asked who designed the road signs for the school. They were feeble compared to other schools. They do not stand out. You can not read them. There is no bold lettering. They need help and were a waste of money. Fr. Bill stated the school marketing committee needs to get organized. Other than the post card, very little has been accomplished when it comes to the road signs.

Kathy Hornschmeier asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Duane Bradley made the motion and Ralph Bedel seconded it. Council voted 8 to 0 to adjourn.

The next meeting is scheduled on Monday, April 17, at 7 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM. Fr. Bill led with a brief prayer. One report that was submitted follows.

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**St. Thomas More Organization Report for  
the Monday, March 20, 2006 Parish Council Meeting**

Organization Name: Worship Commission

Key Organization Leaders/Officers: Deacon Jerry

- Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

Worship Commission approved a proposal to change Holy Day mass time from 11:30 am to 12:15 pm and the Saturday evening Mass from 4:30pm to 4:00pm. Eucharistic Ministers training on April 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>. Policy for taking Communion to the sick was established.

- Short list of old issues not resolved:

- Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of: