

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

Council Members in Attendance: Fr. Bill Wagner, Vic Ivers, Kathy Hornschmeier, Janet Tate, Ralph Bedel, and Larry Bush.

Council Members Absent: John Duncan and Jim Conrady.

Others in Attendance: Mike Gennett.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order by Fr. Bill Wagner at 7:00 PM EST with a prayer.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The last council meeting was held on Monday, October 16th. Vic Ivers asked if there was any feedback regarding the minute's draft that was previously distributed. Mike Gennett stated the minutes were not released on November 2nd since a request had been made by Janet Tate to change who made the statement regarding a Christmas pre-sell program for scrips. Janet stated it was Kathy Hornschmeier who made the statement. Both Janet and Kathy agreed and asked that the names be changed.

Kathy Hornschmeier made a motion to accept the minutes as written with the one change. Larry Bush seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 6 to 0.

Issues concerning the Parish Council Minutes – Mike Gennett stated he has received feedback during the last couple of months regarding the Parish Council minutes. A couple of individuals have stated:

- The Parish Council minutes lack focus, vision, and leadership.
- The Parish Council minutes are negative – they are more like a complaint session and at times cast a negative light on the parish.
- The Parish Council minutes contain far too much information and need to be condensed.

- Neighboring parishes are reading the minutes and are making subtle remarks about the contents of the minutes.
- There is a concern that if potential new parishioners would first read the minutes, they would not want to join the parish.

It was further suggested to Mike he step aside and arrange for someone else take the minutes. Mike asked council to be relieved of this responsibility since his effort is a concern to some.

Mike further stated he feels they are shooting the messenger. Council members get a draft copy of their minutes and they either approve them or make modifications prior to final release. Parishioners who are concerned about the quality of the Parish Council meetings should consider joining council as one way to positively affect the meetings. There currently are two openings.

Parish Council had a discussion regarding this issue. The conclusion was Parish Council is an advisory panel to the Pastor about the parish regarding both positive and negative issues. This process is different from any other organization. The intent is to communicate and bring issues to the table. Issues are discussed because they are valid and need to out in the open for the good of the parish as a whole.

Council then summarized:

- 1) Condense the information for the minutes when warranted
- 2) Council members must state in the future when they do not want a specific comment included in the minutes. This has not happened in the past.
- 3) The minutes will remain on the Internet for now.
- 4) Mike Gennett was told he would continue to be responsible for the Parish Council Minutes.

(Even though everyone agreed to leave the minutes on the parish web site for now, Fr. Bill and Mike decided on Nov. 21 to no longer communicate by email to the parish at large that the minutes are available on the web.)

Business Manager Report: Mike Gennett gave the report:

- The 2007 Bingo & Festival licenses are currently being prepared.
- Once the Bingo license has been filed, the process for the 2007-8 budgets will begin.
- The Archdiocese has advised there will be at least a 15% increase in health care costs next year. It could even be higher.
- Issue 5 was passed on November 7 and becomes law on December 7. It will primarily affect our Bingo. We have been a smoke free facility for years.
 - There are a number of issues we need to address once they are defined by the Ohio Board of Health. This includes outside door non-smoking signage including a telephone number to report smoking violations.
 - Each smoking violation could cost us anywhere from \$100 to \$2,500.

Pastor's Report: Fr. Bill gave his report:

- The McNicholas High School Principal has resigned. He is going to teach at Xavier University. An interim Principal will be hired and a Search Committee will be formed.
- Our own Principal was recognized last Friday at Mass for doing an outstanding job.
- Our surge protectors are in. We are stopping surges on the old transformers in the church building and in Heider Hall. The protectors count up the number of surges that are being stopped.
- Fr. Bill asked for a vote to approve adding lighting on the next beam back from the altar. It will help to light up the front of the Sanctuary. The cost is \$7,500. The rest of the lighting study would be shelved for now. Kathy Hornschmeier made a motion to approve the funds to add track lighting on the beam in front of the Sanctuary. Janet Tate seconded the motion. The vote was 6 to 0 to add the lighting.
- Fr. Bill proposed canceling the December 18th Parish Council meeting because it was so close to Christmas. He also proposed moving the January 15th meeting to January 22nd so he can attend a workshop on Parish Stewardship Development. Everyone agreed to change the dates as requested.
- Our RCIA class has 5 adults and 4 children this year.

- We have an issue with Mass Stipends. We receive over 900 requests for Masses and can only say 412 Masses in a year. A policy will be written on how to manage this process. Some parishioners insist on many Masses be said here and at specific times which is no longer possible due to the priest shortage and in fairness to others.
- The 2006-7 Guidebooks have been released and are in the homes.
- The playground issues discussed at the last meeting are on hold. There is a playground committee looking at the entire program.
- Fr. Bill announced he will formally retire from the US Army Reserves next summer.
- The school has received a few complaints from some families that the Postponing Sexual Involvement class is inappropriate for 6th graders even though the Archdiocese has approved this program. Councils members voiced they did not feel it was inappropriate, but necessary to do.
- Seniors day of Reflection is December 5 at the Comboni Center. Eucharist and Sacred Scripture is the topic. Please pass the word.

Other Business:

- Janet Tate had a request from her husband, Don. He would like to have the last pew in the church reserved for the handicap. Fr. Bill said this request needs to be made to the Worship Committee.
- Janet also asked why we do not advertise in the Community Press like St. Bernadette and many other churches in our area. Fr. Bill stated that Catholic Churches generally do not advertise in that Catholics generally finds a church in their area on their own rather than through advertising.

Ralph Bedel made a motion to adjourn. Janet Tate seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

Mike Gennett said the draft of these minutes would be released after Thanksgiving. Since we do not have a meeting for two months, every attempt will be made to secure approval by email. The notes would be automatically approved two weeks after the draft has been sent unless changes are proposed.

**Next meeting - MONDAY JANUARY 22 - 7 PM - SCHOOL LIBRARY
(NEW DATE & TIME)**