

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, January 25, 2010**

**Council Members in Attendance:** Fr. Bill Wagner, Vic Ivers, Kathy Hornschemeier, Larry Bush, John Duncan, Janet Tate, and Neil Kamphaus, Jr.

**Council Members Absent:** Jim Conrady

**Others in Attendance:** Mike Gennett, Mark Duff, & Rhonda Roberts.

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

Vic Ivers invited two representatives to the meeting to update Parish Council on their ministries: Mark Duff Cub Scout Cub master and Rhonda Roberts July Fest Chair.

**Mark Duff - Cub Scouts - Cub master Pack 452** - Mark stated his sons are in the program. This year, we have 50 boys in the cub scouts including 15 Tigers (the Tiger number is especially large this year). He said our pack is moving in the right direction. We have great den leaders. In fact, we have volunteers asking to be trained leaders. One very important goal is to build on the number of boys that receive religious awards.

Recognition is important and is accomplished by knots that are worn on the uniform. Knots can be earned by a variety of accomplishments. Scout Sunday is also important for awards. This year, Scout Sunday is Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at the 4:00 PM Mass. It was suggested that this might also be a time to thank all the leaders.

The Blue & Gold Banquet is Tuesday, February 9.

Other goals include having all our leaders trained by 2011. Another goal is to have 50 boys going to summer camp this year. Mark said we want to raise the standards of the program and build the leaders of tomorrow.

**Rhonda Roberts - July Fest Chair** - Rhonda made a presentation regarding all the work that goes into planning a Festival. She spends at least 600 hours in getting ready for the event. A Festival takes about 500 volunteers to be successful.

Rhonda stated she has three critical needs for 2010: Dave McCarthy is not returning as one of the co-chairs this year. Dave handled all the facilities work for the Festival. Help to find a new chair or even a couple of co-chairs that might split up this work would be appreciated.

Finding a grounds volunteer would also be helpful. We currently have to contract out the nightly cleanup since we do not have any one that has volunteered for this work. This would raise the Festival profits.

Lastly, tearing down the Festival on Monday is always an issue because we do not have enough volunteers to complete this work in a timely manner. Even a tear-down chair and adult volunteers would be greatly appreciated. Today, it is just the parish staff and the Youth Ministry Super 8 kids that do all the work. And it takes all day well into the evening to accomplish this. This is also a critical need.

Neil Kamphaus suggested using the bulletin as a vehicle to communicate these needs now. Larry Bush said we need to ask for a Cleanup Chair. Others stated we need to put more information about what is involved in planning a July Fest on the parish web site as well as in the bulletin. Many stated the parish at large does not have an idea what is involved.

It was discussed that Festivals are now regulated by the Ohio Attorney General's Office. We have to follow all the rules regarding the license, the liquor licenses, county facilities inspection, etc.

Fr. Bill suggested publishing the entire "to do" list it takes to set up our Festival.

This list is reproduced below in its entirety:



## JULYFEST TIMELINE

### **August- 25 hours**

- Review and authorize invoices from July Fest
- Reconcile accounts with parish Business Manager
- Obtain feedback from area chairs

### **September-20 hours**

- Finalize July Fest accounting
  - Meet with Finance chair and reconcile accounts.
  - Meet with Parish Business Manager to finalize reporting.
- Meeting with July Fest committee to review feedback and accounting
- Meet with Ride Vendor (Current contract through 2011)
- Attend Eastside Festival Alliance Meeting

### **October- 15 hours**

- Obtain commitment from previous year area chairs for upcoming season
- Meet with Bid N Buy chair(s) to begin planning campaign
  - Review previous vendors
  - Review items and bids placed
  - Review other area Bid N Buy for suggestions
  - Develop solicitation letter
- Begin to audition/visit area bands for entertainment
- Attend Eastside Festival Alliance Meeting

### November-15 hours

- Gambling Licensure process begins- must be completed by 12/31  
This involves both the general chair and the parish business manager.  
**Hours for the festival are determined at this time** as it is required for this licensure. This licensing covers both the casino and the pull tabs. Volunteers are reviewed and pertinent information is provided. The parish business manager completes this on-line for the Attorney General's Office.
  - Provide necessary pull tabs reconciliation for report.
- Verify inventory of letterhead, envelopes, thank you cards and order if necessary.
- Attend Eastside Festival Alliance Meeting

### December -10 hours

- Review completed Gambling License with Parish Business Manager and sign off on prior to submission.
- Meet with various area chairs to begin process for upcoming year.
- Attend Eastside Festival Alliance Meeting

### January-40 hours

- Attend Fun Town Open House to view new games, tents/awnings and meet with possible vendors. Area chairs also attend this event.
- Order games that will be utilized by children's and midway areas, order tents/tables/chairs/benches.
- Begin planning layout of July Fest- initial
- Meet with Children's and Midway to determine prize selection
- Begin to research advertising opportunities/cost
- Typically first joint meeting of July Fest committee.
- Begin meeting with Grand Raffle area chair to begin process
  - Review/revise annual Grand Raffle letter
  - Determine Grand Raffle prize
  - Determine Second place prize
  - Determine process for distribution of Grand Raffle packets
- Meet with Volunteer Chair and Web Designer to discuss enhancements to website for registration and web design.

- Meet with Volunteer Chair to begin determination of volunteer requirements.
- Attend Eastside Festival Alliance Meeting
- Bus Mgr files W-2G Gambling withholdings with IRS & Ohio

### **February -80 hours**

- Contact vendors for quotes on services
  - Transportation of guests
  - Port-o-Lets
  - Trash Dumpsters
  - Coca-Cola
  - Concessions
  - Communications
  - New vendors if applicable
  - Security
  - Parking
  - Trash Pick up
  - Beer/Wine
  - Food vendors
  - Ice
  - Pull Tab Suppliers
- Contact Union Township Police to request their services during July Fest
- Contact Union Township Fire to request their services during July Fest
- Begin initial request for volunteers
- Meet with Volunteer Chair for ongoing volunteer requests and website
- July Fest Committee Meetings
- Meet with Grand Raffle chair to finalize information and order necessary tickets. Request volunteers to assist with packet insertions.
- Meet with Bid N Buy area chair to review progress

- Meet with Beer Sales area chair to determine beer pricing and mug design
- Meet with Beer Ticket Sales area chair to determine ticket design and to review procedures. Review volunteer training (for ID's and completion of required training)
- Schedule training for all involved in alcohol sales/ticket sales
- Begin running weekly updates in parish bulletin
- Finalize entertainment for July Fest
- Attend Eastside Festival Meeting

### **March -50 hours**

- Finalize contracts for vendors and place required orders
- Meet with Finance Chair for initial requirements
- Meet with Bid N Buy Chair for
- Meet with Food Chair to determine booth assignments
- Attend Rinehart Food Service Food Show- by attending this event and ordering our supplies we are able to save 10-20%.
- Meet with area chairs as necessary
- Begin to review new liquor licensing requirements
- Monitor volunteer registrations with Volunteer Chair
- Confirm electrical requirements based upon layout (2<sup>nd</sup> submission)
- Contact volunteer electricians to confirm above
- Monthly July Fest committee meeting
- Grand Raffle distribution
- Attend Eastside Alliance Meeting

### **April -45 hours**

- Advertising finalized
- Review layout with facility chair for final approval
- Discuss layout with area chairs
- Begin State of Ohio Liquor license process- Must be done minimum of 30 business days from event.
  - Completing application
  - Notarization
  - Chief of Police Signature

- Mail application to State of Ohio for licensure
- Meet with Casino chairs to discuss/schedule dealer training
- Continue to meet with area chairs for problems/concerns
- Monitor Grand Raffle process
- Business Manager to order ATM Machine
- Monthly July Fest committee meeting
- Bid N Buy annual drop off
- Attend Eastside Alliance Meeting

### **May -25 hours**

- Request necessary documentation from tent supplier to obtain licensing from Clermont County.
- Review any new licensing requirements from Clermont County
- Monitor Grand Raffle progress
- Meet with Bid N Buy to review progress or any additional assistance needed.
- Monthly July Fest committee meeting
- Attend Eastside Alliance Meeting

### **June-100 hours**

- Clermont County Licensing (Electrical/Temporary Occupancy/Fire Inspection)- Must be done 30 days prior to event
  - Complete Application
  - Provide layout with electrical requirements
  - Provide layout with booth/tent locations
  - Provide layout with fire extinguisher locations
  - Provide layout with traffic flow
  - Notarization of application
  - Taking of application to Clermont County
  - Scheduling of Electrical/Fire Inspections
- Confirmation of final requirements from vendors
- Scheduling of security personnel
- Meeting with Finance chair to determine necessary cash requirements for July Fest. (This figure must be into the parish business manager no later than June 20<sup>th</sup>)

- Review of volunteers
- Review of training and completion for volunteers distributing alcohol and tickets.
- Scheduling of tent and booth installations
- Final July Fest committee meeting
- Attend Eastside Alliance meeting

**July 1-July 15-200 hours**

- Be on site for tent/booth installation
- Be on site week of July Fest for
  - Ride placement
  - Vendor placement
  - Bid N Buy Set up
  - Parking Lot layout
  - Vendor check requirements
  - General Set up
  - Electrical
- Coordinate Inspections and receive compliance certificates and display as required.
- Receive all necessary insurance guarantees from vendors
- Be on premises at all times July Fest is open.

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

**Haiti Earthquake Relief Update** - The grand total donated through January 24 is \$9,916.86. All funds that are donated are forwarded weekly to Catholic Relief Services.

**Tax Letters** - The 2009 contribution letters for total donations of \$250 and higher were mailed today. Anyone that does not get a letter can contact the office. There is legislation pending in Congress to permit the Haiti donations to be deducted for 2009. We have posted all the Haiti donations to 2010 and will wait further word how this plays out.



## 2009-2010 Budget update

We projected a deficit of \$45,298.75 for this fiscal year back in August. This deficit developed after we learned that our aid from the state had been cut by 13% as a result of the state budget agreement. As of January 2010, the deficit is projected to be \$43,774.67. As late as last October, the deficit could have been as high as \$60,000 or more depending on the capital contributions that were budgeted this year for the first time. The numbers are clearly moving in the right direction!

Our deficit was created because there are 19 fewer students enrolled in the school and higher financial aid dollars were granted to those in need. Plus, the staffing levels in the school are almost at the same levels as the previous year with no increase in total tuition dollars. The state aid reduction was not known until late July. We also budgeted last winter for flat health care costs that did not materialize (our tuition was set based upon this information). It all added up to create the deficit for this year.

We do have many things that are working in our favor. They include:

Our Sunday contributions are running over budget by \$16,879 or 3.4% and last year by \$30,827 or 6.5% through January 24<sup>th</sup>. The mini stewardship campaign last fall has paid off more than we could have anticipated (our contributions were down prior to the campaign). The strength of the campaign week after week has been nothing short of outstanding. For that, we are grateful.

It was a risk when we budgeted \$50,000 in capital donations in the budget. \$43,000 has been received through January 25! We are very grateful to those who have helped the parish.

We have some additional income by opening up the sale of additional bricks and benches in the Marian Grotto. We have sold one bench and 19 bricks to date.

Our state reimbursement funds are coming in slightly higher than the number we budgeted in late July. We were informed in December that all

the funds previously cut to private schools were restored by the legislature. We have not learned anything more than what was originally communicated. These anticipated "restored" funds will not be included our projections until we have the funds.

Our school tuition continues to be paid in full. We were not experiencing any defaults as of mid-January.

Our operational expenses continue to drop even by small amounts, but they add up. We signed an agreement with Energy Alliance for electricity for two years. Even though the projected savings are only \$433 a month, it still helps.

We received a \$1,100 credit on our first half assessment to the diocese for collecting and paying on our parish debt. This was unexpected.

We continue to make monthly payments on our parish debt and interest. As of this month, the principal owed is down to \$846,549.95 and the unpaid interest is \$588,444.14. The original amount borrowed was \$1,800,000. We plan to pay \$100,000 this year and in next year's budget. We were scheduled to pay \$120,000 this year and \$135,000 next year. The time frame for the debt to be paid in full will extend beyond the 2020 date.

We are in the process of building three new computer servers to replace our current four servers. Our old servers are 5-8 years old and need to be replaced. The new servers were donated.

We also have a few things that did not break our way.

As you know, five heat exchanges in part of the school building had to be replaced. The final cost was \$7,400 and was \$1,000 less than the bid. This is included in our results. Thankfully, this maintenance emergency expense has been absorbed.

Our interest earned on our deposits continues to drop. As the diocese bonds roll over at the bank, the rate becomes lower. This affects the interest earnings on our deposits and savings.

The Cafeteria is down this year due to fewer lunches being served. More kids are bringing in a packed lunch.

Latch Key will drop 40% this year due to few children enrolled. This is an expense many families have elected not to participate in this during these difficult times.

The major school expense that is soaring is sub teachers. This expense looks like it will double from where we were just a year or two ago. Most of the sub costs center on just a few of the school staff.

Considering everything involved, we should be thankful and appreciative how things are evolving. We are especially thankful to all those who contributed to the mini stewardship drive that began last fall. We presented the facts and opened the door to no set requirement that anyone could help with at any time. We kept the pressure low. Few parishes can claim contribution increases this year.

In addition, we are very appreciative of those who donated large amounts to help the parish.

### **2010-2011 Budget - First Draft**

The first draft of the budget for next year has been submitted to the parish Finance Committee.

The key points included in this budget are:

We planned an increase in the Sunday collections. The Archdiocese is funding a major stewardship effort for all the parishes during the next two years. We will be attending the first meeting on this topic in early February. Hopefully, we can expect further increases in our donations.

We also planned a slight increase in financial aid for the school. Families requesting assistance will continue to be asked to submit to a confidential financial screening by a third party (Private School Aide Service). Of

course what we can offer for assistance depends upon our enrollment numbers and other income.

We will be doing the school re-enrollment process electronically through EdLine for the first time this year. Tuition Management Systems now has a "Rapid Re-enroll" program for those families who used the 10 month plan this year and wish to do so next year....with no changes to their profile or account number. There will be little effort required to enroll for returning families next year.

Our health care costs for the first time are flat. Premiums will rise 4.5% July 1 but will be offset with employee payroll contributions. Singles will pay \$25 a month and Families \$57 a month. The 125 Cafeteria Plan applies if the employee chooses to sign up. Everyone has been notified about this change in the health care benefit. This is the first time the health care cost has been set by the diocese prior to the budget process.

The budget calls for a salary increase. We froze wages in 2009-2010 for everyone. We hope we will be able to implement this for our employees.

There is no capital or walk-in dollars included in this budget. We need to earmark these large contributions in the future for repairs, improvements, and upkeep around the parish. Plus, it is risky counting on funds that may or may not materialize.

The school budget enrollment projection for next year is for 308 students. That is an increase of 11 students from this year. The small 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates and the budget assume everyone returns plus we have an all day Kindergarten of 25 children.

Tuition for all day Kindergarten will be the same as for grades 1-8. There is no ½ day Kindergarten next year. If a waiting list for a second class is required, we need to determine the cut off point for the second class. A second smaller class might be worth having in order to grow the primary grades in the future.

The school is asking for additional staff next year. Their requests are in this budget along with the enrollment projection of 308. The school would

like their budget approved in advance of enrollment. We cannot promise to pay for any payroll increases without the enrollment to cover the costs.

We cannot continue to operate with a deficit each year. Eventually, the savings will be gone. That is not a path anyone wants to go down. To illustrate, we spent \$229,219.39 in December to operate the parish. Even though this is somewhat higher than most months, our savings are not much more than this amount.

We need to watch every expenditure and ensure we can continue to afford to pay for what we have committed to.

### **Pastor's Report** – Fr. Bill gave his update

Fr. Bill stated we have a new Archbishop, Dennis M. Schnurr. His background is finance, administration, and vocations to the priesthood. We have learned he is going to be actively involved with his support in meetings of this nature.

The retirement age for priests is 70 unless there is good reason to retire earlier.

We will be attending a diocese sponsored Stewardship meeting on February 4. We are looking at a fall 2011 kickoff for the program. This program is being managed by a professional firm, The Cunneen Company, which handled our Connector Project Feasibility study in 2008.

While in Texas, Fr. Bill learned that the school fundraising dollars are taxed by their diocese at a 50% rate.

The Business Managers were told this past week that the Columbus diocese has announced a new policy regarding school enrollment. Schools that fall below 200 students will have one year to increase their enrollment above 200 or they will be closed.

We are looking at a procedure the diocese is recommending on utilizing tamper proof bags to handle the Sunday collection. This procedure will be discussed with Finance on Tuesday.

The Pastor's term at St. Veronica will expire this summer. He will be reassigned and a new Pastor will be appointed.

Regarding the spaghetti dinner that was discussed at the last meeting, a date now needs to be selected.

**New Business** – It was stated that the contractor that is plowing the snow is dumping it in front of the recycle bins. A request was made to have him place the snow away from the bins when plowing.

**It was decided that Council will meet in February on the 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM.**

The agenda this evening will be dedicated to other ministry leaders to come and discuss what is going on in their world and how council may be able to help. Neil Kamphaus will extend the invitations.

Kathy Hornschemeier made a motion to adjourn. John Duncan seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.