

St. Matthew Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Jan. 22, 2025

6:45 p.m.

Roll call

Council members in attendance: Jenny Bruce, Betsy Burke, Tom Dempsey, Beth Desalvo, Chris Dobrota, Rick Gale, Tom Jones, Bob Kowal, Phyllis Mahoney, Nick McCallum, Mary Marsh, Dan Murphy, Victor Neff, Father Bill Stumpf, Ann Tully, Beth Wissler.

Absent: Christine Gann, Pat O'Brien, Kate Thedwall.

Opening Prayer: Ann Tully

Comments from president: Rick Gale stood in for Pat O'Brien in running the meeting. He asked that people remember to send in their commission reports. They can be sent directly to all parish council members or to Phyllis Mahoney to pass on to the council.

Approval of minutes: Tom Jones moved to approve. Chris Dobrota seconded. Minutes were approved.

Nominating committee for new parish council members: Betsy Burke, Tom Dempsey, Rick Gale and Dan Murphy volunteered to be on the nominating committee. Rick Gale said he would call a meeting of that group soon.

Parish council election vs. appointment: Father Bill suggested we think about a model where we include appointed and elected council members to make sure we are not missing out on people who may not be as well known in the parish but might possess the gifts that we need to do the council's work.

Rick Gale said that our bylaws include both discernment and elections as options for appointment and nothing precludes using those in a hybrid manner.

Ministry fair: Jenny Bruce said the fair is set for March 1-2. The Generous Hearts Commission wants to call it the Amy Stimpson Ministry Fair this year to honor Amy, who helped lead it for so long. The Generous Hearts Commission brings food for the Saturday Mass happy hour. Spiritual life does 7:30. Phyllis Mahoney and Betsy Burke will do the 9:30 Mass. David Smock is going to spearhead getting the gym set up, but setup and cleanup help is welcome. The commission was going to coordinate with Deb Ward about the music.

Party/reception for Father Bill's 40th anniversary: May 31 after 5 p.m. Mass. Mary Marsh said there will be drinks in a tent and a reception in the gym. She said Father Bill requested it be low key.

Funeral policy: Father Bill said churches have more often been used for callings the night before the funeral. While we are happy to be able to do that, we don't always have staff available to help do that. We also don't always have hospitality space. We need a policy that sets parameters so we can be clear what we can do and what we can't do. The policy will say what we are able to provide

and when and what costs are involved. Father Bill said we want the costs to be minimal, and we would never turn someone away because of cost. The parish staff will put together a policy. The Parish Council expressed backing for the idea of a funeral policy to help set expectations for parish members.

Oktoberfest: John Walsh asked that they be able to do Oktoberfest on Sept. 27. It's the natural day for the Feast of St. Matthew celebration. Typically the parish picnic has been that weekend and has been free, so it's hard to combine with Oktoberfest. The council discussed perhaps moving the picnic and outdoor Mass to the spring, especially since the Gala has moved to the fall. Father said he would tell John Walsh we are OK with Sept. 27 for Oktoberfest.

Potential Capital Campaign: Father Bill said if the archdiocese does a capital campaign, there will be a moratorium on capital campaigns for parishes while it is being planned. Parishes could then piggyback on the archdiocese campaign. Now is our opportunity to do a capital campaign if we want to do one before a moratorium goes into effect. So we need to decide if we want to wait a couple of years or try to move forward with putting together a capital campaign now. Some things possibly that would be considered: parking lot resurfacing, HVAC, more space, refresh of the church (baptismal font that works), more music space, another community room, refreshing classrooms, a second gym.

Council members pointed out our membership and collections are up, which might make it a good time to move forward.

If we do move ahead, we have to do a feasibility study to gauge support.

Father Bill said we need to establish an ad hoc group within the next month to move forward.

Names from the council (and spouses) for the ad hoc committee: Beth or John DeSalvo, Mary Marsh, Paul Wissler, Victor Neff.

Father asked for other names for the committee to be sent to him as soon as possible.

Old business:

Pastoral plan next steps: Rick Gale suggested that at each meeting we take one of the pastoral plan areas and focus on it to see what we need to do. Ann Tully suggested we speak to the parish about what we have done and what our next steps are. It might highlight to people things they can get involved with. Nick McCallum suggested we really put it out there everywhere.

Commissions:

School: Beth Wissler said if you know anyone who is interested in the school, have them reach out to the school staff. Father Bill said there were quite a few people who came through the open house, a lot of potential kindergartners and sixth graders.

Haiti: Bob Kowal said the two schools in Haiti had their Christmas parties right before Christmas with funds raised from the kids at St. Matthew. It looked like a fun time.

New member: Rick Gale belatedly introduced Beth Wissler as our school commission member.

Fish Fries: First three Fridays in March (March 7, 14 and 21). The prizes have increased for the men's club raffle.

Trivia night is coming Feb. 22: It will likely sell out. There will be about 40 tables.

Parish mission: First weekend in April. It is three nights. Father Ron Hoye, a Vincentian priest, will be the speaker. His website is www.parishmissions.org.

Closing prayer: Dan Murphy