

Parish Council Minutes – May 09

May 19, 2009. *The meeting was brought to order by our President. Colleen McCabill, at 7:35 and a peace prayer was offered by Dennis Moore. Attending: Fr. Richard Lawrence, Colleen McCabill, Audrey Rogers, Ray Heil, Joan Campbell, J. Edmond Guy, Anne Marie Freeberger, Maureen Fitzsimmons, Pat Ball, Peggy Meyer, Kevin O'Reilly, Nancy Kavanaugh O'Neill, James P. Casey, and Graham Yearley*

Pastor's Report

1. Fr. Lawrence returned to St. Vincent's yesterday after two weeks at Mercy Hospital for knee surgery and physical therapy. He expects to have the brace on another four to six weeks. The congregation welcomes him back.
2. Fr. Lawrence received a note from the Archdiocese informing him that the school at St. Mary's, Govans was being shut down at the end of this academic year. So far, the Queen of Peace Schools seem to be safe to re-open next September.

Financial Report

1. Maureen Fitzsimmons gave the report. Income has increased slightly, so we are less over budget than in previous months. Parking and rental revenues are within reason. We are still trying to get the electrical supplier to look at some double billing in the past. Until it is dealt with, we will not pay the bill.
2. Mass Attendance and Collections Chart: we have an average of 283 attending mass per weekend. The mass collection counting by ushers has almost been perfectly matched by Barbara's count before depositing. As some people give on a monthly basis, the relationship between dates and monies taken in is not always reliable.

Responses to Town Meeting and SAC Proposal

This conversation lasted over an hour; here are some of the principal points.

1. Colleen reported on the written responses given before, during and after the Town Meeting. The responses were almost evenly split between those for the proposal and for the proposal with reservations and those against. There were seven (7) "Other" responses. Most importantly there was no consensus on the proposal.
2. Audrey Rogers submitted a fact sheet with some details of the work of the Park Working Group not known to all Council members. Perhaps most importantly, the fact sheet showed that efforts had been made to form partnerships with other agencies and had failed. With the withdrawal of the City agency (Street to Home) from our park, what progress had been made housing individuals came to a stop. It has proved impossible to stem the flow of donations to the park, despite our efforts to do so.
3. Ray Heil reported that he and Joe Cronyn, in the light of this lack of consensus, have decided to withdraw and table the proposal at this time.
4. Deacon Bill Pearson argued that the parish can work towards finding shelter

3. Fr. Lawrence gave a brief description of each category of Accounts Receivable and Accounts Expenses.

5. It is apparent that the City has been making blitzes on homeless encampments across the city, and our Park may be one of the targets as well. An increasing number of car break-ins in the Mount Vernon area have been linked to our park residents and stolen materials have been found in the park, giving the City even more reason to shut down the park.

6. Colleen promised to prepare feedback material for the entire parish and to run it by the council before publishing it. It was urged we include solicitations for continued funds and for new leadership as Audrey Rogers is stepping down in a few months from the PWG.

7. Jim Casey suggested that the Parish Council make its next task to decide where we want to go with the park. Do we want to remain with the status quo? What would we like to see?

Committee Reports

Peace & Justice spent the bulk of the last meeting discussing their projects of recent months. On June 26, there will be a convention on preventing torture. The next meeting is scheduled for June 12 at St. Vincent's.

Education: No report. Colleen McCahill recounted that there were forty or so at last

for park residents, especially in inclement weather, and still not build a shelter.

week's parish retreat and the topic was "Simple Ways to Save the World."

Liturgy: The summer series on Esther and Ruth and Song of Songs is planned. A sub-committee of the Liturgy Committee has been formed to explore ways to attract and keep young people in our parish life. A healing service is planned in conjunction with the Pastoral Care Committee. The goals for 2009/2010 have been set.

Social Action Committee: There is still concern in the Men's Clothing Program about the security of the doors and window that were broken into last year. Only temporary repairs have been done and program members seek better security.

The Park Working Group met on April 28; their next meeting is May 26. There was discussion of enforcing non-hoarding by park residents. Funds are needed for a second Port-a-Potty for the summer months and other needs. A budget for FY 2010 was submitted.

The meeting closed at 9:40pm with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

In the peace of Christ, Graham G. Yearley, secretary of the Parish Council

