

Incarnation Parish Council

Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2008

Present: Tim Benson, George Buckland, Joe Casey (Secretary), Terri Gannon, Suzanne Holland, Msgr. Peter Joyce, John Mirenda, Father Michael Romano, Ann Spross (Vice President), Sharon Tombleson and John Zupko (President). *Not attending:* Chad & Michelle Brunner

Next meeting: TBD (see note in New Business)

I. Opening Prayer

Father Michael Romano opened the meeting by leading attendees in a prayer.

II. Call to order/Roll Call

President John Zupko called the meeting to order and asked for a Roll Call of those present.

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 9, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved.

IV. Pastor's Report

(Note: Monsignor Joyce was slightly delayed by another obligation. While the order of the discussion varied slightly from the agenda, these minutes reflect the order of the agenda).

Monsignor reported that the Diocesan College of Consultors has approved the conceptual plans for the Incarnation building project up to the largest capacity option presented. This will give Incarnation the flexibility to pursue appropriate space as needs and resources allow. Monsignor reported that Father Ken Johnston was present for the presentation, and Monsignor noted that the work/report of the Parish Mapping Process Committee played a key role in making the case for the approval. The approval included the planned space for the proposed chapel, though the space may not be used for that specific purpose due to its proximity to the church.

Due diligence must be done to address Township Zoning and environmental issues before construction can begin. There is a potential wetlands issue with the proposed site that requires further assessment.

There was good news on soil reports from the Shadow Place property where the tank was removed prior to the sale. The sampling indicated there was no leakage/environmental impact from the tank. The cost of the site work/testing is expected to decrease by an estimated \$10,000 from the original estimates because of the findings.

Father Johnston has committed to Monsignor that his intention is to keep Incarnation on the forward path we've been following and not to allow the progress to be disrupted. Everything about the transition has gone smoothly to date.

V. Committee Reports

A. Communications Committee

- a. John Zupko extended thanks on behalf of Council to John Mirenda and the members of the Communications Committee, including Christine

Toal and Pat Quigley, for their work on the transition from Shadow Place; the newsletter; and the website. The first newsletter established a high standard for the committee's efforts.

- b. John Mirenda reported that the committee is planning to meet in January and plans to provide usage statistics to help recognize the first anniversary of the launch of the website.
- c. The traffic on the website continues to grow with over 70 hits per day. Monsignor noted that the site reached the top listing for Google searches for the term "Incarnation Parish," surpassing a Florida church in the search engine's index. Finding ways to make the site more interactive, such as crossover activities, quizzes etc. with the bulletin are among the ideas being considered.
- d. John credited Michael Trotta for providing ideas and content for the site; and Pat Quigley for her leadership in creating the newsletter.
- e. A supply of Incarnation pens has been ordered that will be used as premium items to reward volunteers and help promote the Parish.
- f. 8 ½" x 11" prints of the Shadow Place Church rendering were prepared and will be used as a thank you for the Ministry Appreciation event in January. The bookmarks with the rendering also proved very popular.

B. Automated Contributions

- a. Tim Benson reported that the implementation of the Parish Pay program is now live and the number of families participating continues to grow, surpassing the minimum number of participants needed to waive any fees to Incarnation.
- b. Suggestions for promoting the program included working with the Knights of Columbus to raise awareness during their monthly breakfast; making an agenda item for a potential financial planning presentation the Parish might provide for families; and providing information at upcoming Hospitality Sunday events.

C. Parish Mapping

- a. George Buckland reported that more families are becoming active in the Parish and we're approaching a milestone of 3,000. Council needs to consider if we're meeting the needs of the growing diversity represented by the new parishioners and how we can avoid leaving anyone behind. George suggested looking at the ways Incarnation welcomes new families.
- b. Two key follow up items still need to be addressed. 1) The Council discussed creating a Time Capsule in earlier discussions about the new building project. Appropriate items need to be identified for inclusion that include both items that reflect the Parish as it looks today, and how we project it may look at a future date based on the mapping. 2) We should revisit an earlier discussion about highlighting new parishioners in the newsletter and on the website. John Zupko asked that Council members consider taking a lead in coordinating the Time Capsule project and letting him know if interested. **(ACTION)**
- c. At this point in the process, monthly mapping isn't necessary. It is recommended that mapping take place at six month intervals, or when significant milestones are reached (e.g. reaching 3,000 families).
- d. George also recommended looking inside the numbers deeper to analyze who is represented by the growth (e.g. young families may mean needed expansion of the crying room space available, etc.)

VI. Old Business

- a. The Sound System was analyzed by three potential vendors to determine ways to address inconsistent sound levels/acoustics and provide estimates to replace the existing sound board.
- b. Due to the range in estimates and the cost involved, a decision on the expense will be deferred until Father Johnston is transitioned into the Pastor role.

VII. New Business

- A. Vibrant Parish Report: Michael Trotta provided Council with a report on ways that the Music Ministry is supporting Incarnation's efforts to meet the criteria for a Vibrant Parish as outlined in the Gathering Gods Gifts initiative. This effort is in support of, and compliments, the Bishop's goal of developing Vibrant Parishes and supports the six Pastoral Priorities. Michael addressed how a Vision Document is making a difference for the Music Ministry in creating a path to follow and documenting achievements toward the vision. Michael reported that increased participation through the addition of specific choirs is helping the Ministry better meet the needs of the parish and producing some surprising results (for example, the turnout for the Men's Choir exceeded the turnout for the Women's Choir, which is unusual). Michael also expressed that the involvement of the Liturgy Committee, Pastor and Religious has led to a broader involvement and is better serving the needs of a diverse parish. A copy of the report is appended to the minutes of the December 11, 2008 Council meeting. A brief look at the first goal demonstrates how the vision document is having an impact. The Goal is the vision; the Objective provides the means to measure success and the Action Plan is the direction or "how" to achieve the vision. There are also broader goals being addressed within the plan, such as providing education, increasing diversity and increasing participation that address vibrancy measures. George raised a question regarding returning discussion of how best to meet the criteria for a vibrant Parish to each Council agenda. Focus on the sale of the church and the transition has somewhat distracted attention from this element. John Zupko agreed with George and indicated that discussion of vibrant Parish issues will be addressed on future agendas.
(ACTION).
- B. The bylaws call for elections in 2009, with nominations in February, elections in March and installation of Council members in April. A nomination committee will be identified in January. John Zupko asked for recommendations for candidates to serve on the nominating committee.
(ACTION). John also asked current Council members who do not intend to serve at the end of this term to state their intentions before the nominations process begins. **(ACTION)**. John noted that three Council members must be elected per the bylaws and a process for determining which current Council members will be placed on the ballot if all current Council members elect to serve another term. John indicated that a few parishioners have also asked about serving. Monsignor Joyce encouraged Council to find a way to hold the election emphasizing educating parishioners about the candidates over campaigning for the positions.
- C. The economy is impacting parishioners. Incarnation is blessed to have a discretionary fund and a Parish Pantry program to offer some assistance to those who need help, in addition to the ongoing work of the St. Vincent DePaul Society. A representative of the Society will be asked to present at a

future Council meeting to help Council better understand their work, and explore ways Council can help. **(ACTION)**

- D. Council made a decision to postpone our originally scheduled Parish Council meeting of January 8 until the Executive Committee has an opportunity to meet with Father Johnston and understand his feelings for the Parish Council before any Council meetings proceed.
- E. There will be a welcoming reception for Father Johnston after the Masses on January 18th.
- F. There will be a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, 12/23 from 1 – 7 p.m. in the hall. All are encouraged to participate and/or help get the word out.

VIII. Adjourn

- A. Monsignor Joyce led attendees in a closing prayer.
- B. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.