

St. Joseph Pastoral Parish Council

Meeting Minutes, 19 November 2018

1. The meeting was called to order with prayer at 6:02 p.m. Fr. Paul Moreau was present, along with members Dee Elliott, Cesar Escalante, Kevin James, George Johnson, Julie Kuehler, James McGinnis, Reino Mejia, Jose Perlera, Stephanie Smith, Evelyn Tejada, and Ben Williams, and ex officio members Lynn Langston and Theresa Napoli.
2. Minutes from the October meeting were approved as presented.
3. Stephanie Smith has agreed to rejoin/stay on PPC in order to bring it back up to 12 members.
4. Council Member Notes:

- a. Jose posed the question of what we as a parish can do on behalf of the homeless. Serve meals? Provide other services? Fr. Paul noted that Athens-Clarke County has many services; we would need to examine what already exists. Theresa expressed concern as children are on the property all the time, so services would probably need to be provided off-site.

St. Joseph Charities is currently providing holiday assistance to around 45 families; their building could accommodate other outreach such as a food pantry, soup kitchen, or shower facilities, depending on what is most needed. Perhaps what is already being done—what St. Joseph Charities is spending and how many they are helping—could be reported and publicized week by week.

Food or backpacks or blessing bags could also be brought to where people are, such as the shacks along exit 8 of the Loop. Perhaps the homeless themselves could be asked what they most need? Approaching them would require caution though; some are homeless because they are hiding from authorities, others can be dangerous for other reasons. Making use of existing community expertise would be wise. St. Joseph Charities is part of the broader Athens Compassionate Network, which maintains a database to help track who's being helped where.

- b. Lynn reported that the disability ministry effort is being ramped up; families have not been stepping forward much though. Shame is a factor; some are also not sure their child is up for it.
- c. George asked for the PPC's permission to move forward with a town hall meeting on various sorts of emergency planning. He has had a meeting with a SWAT officer, has met

with ushers, and had a “Stop the Bleed” meeting; at the town hall there could be presentations on “see something, say something” and “Stop the Bleed”. Fr. Paul noted that the Archdiocese has produced an excellent video, which could be shown to those interested. One major point of education for people would be to encourage them to seek out and use the nearest emergency exits in an emergency (the tendency is for people to head back to the main entrance instead). The PPC was in favor of George continuing with these efforts.

- d. Ben asked about a broken-down van that has been on the property; Fr. Paul is aware of it and the situation is being worked on. He expressed a need for more events with families in mind. Fr. Paul noted that FEST events have not always had the expected attendance; perhaps different types of events could be placed on the schedule that would draw different groups of people in the parish.
- e. Dee reported that people have been asking why they have to buy a ticket to the parish Christmas party; they are confusing the new ticketed Gala with the existing Christmas party, which will still take place (a week before the Gala) and still be free and open to all. For the party on December 7th, the parish will be providing ham and turkey like last year (with adjustments to the serving process to keep it from running out so fast). Families will be asked to bring side dishes as before; the Knights have been asked to provide beverages (with donations collected for beer and wine). There will be no silent auction at the party this year. Cesar asked about music for the Christmas party; he will get in touch with a person who played well-received music last year.
- f. The Saturday Extraordinary Minister meeting was problematic; there was confusion and resistance to change. Julie noted that at the meeting, it was mentioned that people aren't noticing or showing respect when the Blessed Sacrament is brought out to the tabernacle in front of the gymnasium. Fr. Paul generally brings it out covered, which doesn't call for particular ceremony; people should be reverent anyway as they prepare for Mass to start.
- g. Theresa reported that an Annual Fund for the school is being reinstated; PPC members are asked to participate (any level would be fine). The broken basketball goal on the property needs to be disposed of.
- h. Kevin recommended that the schedule of second collections be placed online to help parishioners plan their contributions (especially online donors); regularly recurring ones could also be noted. He will e-mail Jane to ask about it.

5. Pastor's Report

Fr. Paul reiterated that open, frank discussion has been great to see and he encourages more of it. The only subjects that should be avoided are those where Parish Council cannot do anything productive about a situation. He clarified that while the PPC is advisory, and the Pastor does not have to follow its advice, if the PPC were to strongly object to something they would have the ability to go to the Archbishop.

Communion will be offered under single species only for the next few weeks as the flu bug goes around. The rectory is scheduled to be finished the last week of December, though weather looks to be causing delays; we are looking into making an adequate power source available in the adjacent field for events. Everyone is encouraged to help with presentation around the property; for instance, when a sign is crooked, stop and straighten it. Also the "future church" sign could use cleaning.

The elderly could use more social events during the day rather than at night, particularly in the winter when it gets dark earlier. A parishioner remarked on a need for more to be done for Veterans' Day; he has been encouraged to organize some things going forward. That is the sort of culture we are trying to encourage—come up with an idea, and be prepared to go forward with it when Father agrees, rather than just complain.

December 10th is the new closing date for Prince Avenue. The additional 11 acres at Epps Bridge will need to be transferred in the new year once certain details have been taken care of; the 25-year site plan is waiting on that.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m. The next PPC meeting will be on Monday, January 21st at 6:00 p.m. in room 255.