

St. Francis Parish Council Minutes
Regular Meeting; online via Zoom
Tuesday, August 11, 2020

Fred Bermudez, excused
Ed Condon, present
Francine Freitas, present
Jo Gonsalves, present
Darrin Greer, vice chair, present
Margaret Healy, excused
Linda Hill, present
Melba Hinojosa, present
Sue Kenney, present

Patrick Mahan, excused
Emer McKenna, present
Kent Meyers, present
Gary Myrick, present
Fr. Desmond O'Reilly, present
Bob Reid, chair, present
Janet Vitt, secretary, present

Also attending was J.D. Warrick of the parish staff.

Chair Bob Reid opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m., and Sue Kenney led a prayer.

The minutes of the June 9, 2020, regular council meeting were reviewed and upon motion by Sue Kenney, seconded by Jo Gonsalves, were approved unanimously. They will be posted on the parish website.

Pastor's Report:

- Public Masses inside the church again have been stopped, but two Sunday Masses will be celebrated in the courtyard of the Parish Center, at 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., weather-permitting. Physical distancing will be observed, and masks will be worn by all. The 9:30 Mass will continue to be streamed and recorded.
- The parish Gala committee chair has been given the go-ahead to explore options about joining with the school for its March 27 fundraiser.
- The Parish has donated a total of \$5,000 to three local food banks, to Loaves & Fishes, to Mercy Peddlers and to the Catholic AIDs Ministry of the diocese. The funds are equivalent to what the parish was spending for a month's security for the Steps Ministry guests.
- Amanda Evans has left her fulltime position as Parish Business Manager, but she is staying on for a short term to do the bookkeeping.

Chair's Report:

- Working Group Report – The group will meet for its third meeting on August 18 when guest speaker Jenny Jordan of Sacramento STEPS Forward will describe some of the needs she sees in the city regarding help for homeless. Future meetings will hear from other guest speakers to do the same thing.
- Parish Communication Project – The Parish Council is an appropriate body to communicate with the parish members to assess their needs during the pandemic and to update their contact information. A committee will be established before the next Parish Council meeting. Meanwhile Fr. Des and J.D. Warrick will talk about how to clean up the existing list of persons known to no longer be parish members.

Ivan Irga – St. Francis Elementary School Principal. Mr. Irga briefed the council on preparations to begin the elementary school year. The diocese will make one application to the state for the 17 Catholic elementary schools in Sacramento county seeking a waiver to allow for in-person learning. To do that the schools have to be in compliance with the state's Covid-19 guidelines for elementary schools. Before the application can be submitted, protocols outlined by the diocese have to be in place to allow safe distancing for students. St. Francis Elementary is ready to start with distance learning but is preparing the diocesan protocols to be ready if/when the state gives approval for in-person learning. The top priority is the safety and health of the children and staff. The school is ready to start classes in August with distance learning and will begin on Aug. 17 to meet outdoors with one k-6 class at a time to let students and teachers reacquaint themselves. Seventh- and eighth-graders will be taught through distance learning. Special efforts are being made for the students in kindergarten through third grade for their social and mental health welfare.

Staff Liaison report - JD Warrick

- From Beth White, director of liturgy:
 - Fr. Des baptized four children on August 1. Each child was accompanied by parents and godparents only and the ceremony was streamed to other family members or friends. The next baptism ceremony will be October 10.
 - One wedding was celebrated with 10 persons in the church, including the bride and groom, who decided they wanted to receive the sacrament and have a big party after it was safe to do so.

- Religious education will be done through distance learning this coming year. It likely won't start until October.
- From Manny Dabay, the parish Custodian and Facilities Assistant:
 - The outside walls of the church and parish center are being power-washed.
 - The condensation pans in the air handler of the church air-conditioning system were corroded and thus replaced under contract.
 - A platform has been installed for the new painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe so that it won't damage the wall. The artist is the daughter-in-law of parish members Peggy Briggs and Doug Thompson

Special Gala 2021

Janet Vitt reported that Clayton Whitehead, Chair of the Gala Planning Committee, will meet with Abby Pereira of the school staff toward the end of August to discuss the school's plans for its gala on March 27, 2021, in the Golden One Arena and the possibility of the church blending its gala with that of the school. The church gala committee had tentatively identified March 13 for our 13th event. The Golden One Center has been offered for free to the school on March 27 in recognition of the school's 125th anniversary. The two dates are too close for either's benefit, but the generous offer from the arena is date-specific. The parish gala committee is open to exploring whether the two fundraising nights should be combined, or whether the church gala should be postponed to another time of the year. The council should know that the Gala Committee is still dealing with issues from the 2020 event that were complicated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Parish Directory

Francine Freitas reported that she feels the project will not proceed. She sent a letter to the photographer two weeks ago saying the council assumes the project has been abandoned by the photographer and asking that he give the parish the digital photos so that the parish can self-publish a book. No answer has been received.

Committee Reports

- Buildings & Grounds – Janet Vitt (a couple of items in addition to what J.D. Warrick reported as staff liaison.)
 - Manny Dabay has been busy with a lot of routine maintenance as he attends to small repairs now that could lead to larger problems if left untended.
 - Patrick Corcoran of the Finance Council reviewed a needs assessment from a few years ago that suggests our building will be in need of new stucco in the next couple of years. He would like to begin getting an inspection and bids so that the Finance Council has some notion of the cost of such a project and to update the understanding of the condition of the exterior surfacing and damage that may be related to cracked and thinning stucco.

- Liaison to Finance Council - Janet Vitt
 - The Finance Council closed out the books for the 2019-20 fiscal year, which ended June 30. The parish closed in the black, having used federal PPP money to pay staff salaries. It also tapped some funds from legacy accounts that for the past few years have not been tapped. The funds were from interest on those legacy accounts, NOT from drawing down on the principal.
 - The Finance Council is still working on the 2020-21 budget, which has been complicated by factors related to the pandemic. At present, it is likely that the parish again will tap interest funds from the legacy accounts to minimize the cuts needed for parish spending on programs that benefit the poor. The diocese has extended its deadline for submitting the budget to its offices. The Finance Council is taking an August break and will continue its work on the 2020-21 budget in September.
 - Beth Mullen, a member of the Finance Council, was interviewed by the Catholic Herald. During that interview, Beth explained the many ways the parish has historically served the poor and how it has continued to do so even during the pandemic. She doesn't know when it was to be published in the Catholic Herald.
- Faith Formation - Kent Meyer and Emer McKenna – The parish hopes to conduct First Communion and First Reconciliation in autumn.

The next council meeting will be at 6 p.m., Tuesday, September 8, 2020, most likely by Zoom. The Chair will let council members know the details.

Kent Meyers and Melba Hinojosa will provide the opening and closing prayers, respectively.

There being no more business, Emer McKenna led the Council in a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Vitt, secretary