

**St. Thomas Aquinas Church  
Pastoral Council Meeting - MINUTES  
Tuesday, November 17, 2020, 7:00 pm  
Zoom Meeting**

**Present:** Emily Beaudry, Dawn Bratsch-Prince (secretary), Fr. Kyle Digmann, Kobe Eischeid, Ann Gansemer-Topf, Scott Law (vice-chair), Ronnie Lindeman (chair), K'Lynn Lynn, John Moss, Lizzie Tecklenburg, and Francis Todey.

**Guests:** Ray Murray, Paula Friedrich, Bob Bourne, and Warren Franke.

**Welcome.** Meeting was called to order at 7:03.

- **Opening prayer** was led by Scott Law (“Slow me down Lord”).
- **Reflection on Mission Statement:** Members reflected on how our mission is carried out in our community.  
*Gathered in the Holy Spirit, a diverse and vibrant community,  
Transformed by Jesus Christ in the Catholic Tradition, and  
Sent to be the Presence of God in Ames, ISU, and the World*

**Business**

- **Building and Grounds (B&G) Committee Report** (Warren Franke)
  - **Annual Report.** It has been a busy year, and major project has been Clerestory Window repair.
  - **Student Lounge re-do update.** Scott Blum and Anca Snyder are leading the committee and making progress. The project costs are estimated to range from \$50-100K. B&G needs parishioner input/feedback on the project plans. The plans will need to be sent out for bids by contractors. After Pastoral Council discussion, the decision was made for B&G to share an overview of the plans (including visuals) with the parish and ask for specific feedback. With that feedback, the plans will be sent out for bid. The goal is to have this project completed in the summer 2021.
  - **Parking Ramp repairs:** The parking ramp requires regular maintenance (every 5-8 years) of the deck’s joints. The cost will be approximately \$25K (B&G is waiting on quotes through the bid process). The funds for this regular maintenance can’t come from the capital improvement funds. B&G encouraged Pastoral and Finance Councils to think ahead to identify a funding source.
  - **Columbarium Expansion.** B&G does not support the current proposal to add another columbarium in the prayer garden. The primary reasons are that the prayer garden is supposed to be a green space (per the original donor) for informal gatherings and prayer, and B&G is concerned about turning it into a cemetery; the pace of sale of the niches has slowed and B&G believes the new columbarium would remain fairly empty; and STA is landlocked and should the parish ever need to expand its building into the prayer garden area, it would be problematic to move

cremains. There was productive discussion among those present, including members of the Columbarium committee. The Pastoral Council will consider all of the input received and make a decision at an upcoming meeting.

### **Finance Council Report (John Moss)**

- Parish income is 8% over budget while expenses are 20% under budget. However, excluding the coronavirus CARE funding, income is under budget. Although expenses are down, we are struggling with an income level that is less than typical.
- **Finance Council Norms & Revision** Finance Council Charter is in the process of revision to reflect changes in practice. Questions were asked about subcommittees that once reported to Finance Council but that no longer exist. Francis will look into the history of the Personnel Committee and what it did in the past. It was mentioned that personnel really isn't the purview of the Finance Council but such a committee or function could report to Pastoral Council. Council members will reread the Finance Council Charter revisions and come prepared to discuss and vote on the revisions at our next meeting.
- **Budget Planning Cycle**  
John Moss walked us through a budgeting milestone chart that Finance Council has developed. At our January 2021 meeting Pastoral Council needs to be prepared to provide input on income limits (that is, the total budget), and to identify any new priorities as well as items to delete. We will aim to finalize the budget by voting at our April or May meeting.
- **Student Members' Report:** Student members shared input on what's going well and what struggles they are experiencing with the pandemic, both in their classes and in the parish. Students are pleased with Come Awake and TNL, carried out in person and with safety measures taken. The in-person events are **very** important and meaningful to our students. They look forward to the SEEK Conference put on by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students which will happen (virtually) in Ames this February.
- **Renew Employee Handbook:** Scott and Dawn have received the STA Employee Handbook from Bobby and plan to tackle it following the end of the academic semester.

### **Pastor's Report (Fr. Kyle)**

- **Parish Databases:** The parish currently uses multiple data systems to handle the business of the parish, i.e., Parish Data Systems on the parish side and Raiser's Edge to track donor giving. We also use numerous other databases with online giving, event registration, etc. Parishioner John Moore is leading the effort to identify one data system that STA can use to streamline data input, reduce error, and provide greater access and ease of use across parish functions. He has interviewed the staff, is talking with other parishes/data experts, and plans to have some demos of the best system solutions in the near future.
- Pastoral Council members discussed needs and wants from our parishioners. We will continue to discuss actions we might take.

- Following Eric Evans resignation as part-time music minister and campus minister, Fr. Kyle plans to rebalance staffing. He will hire someone full time to lead music and liturgy ministry and Shari Reilly will return to serving full-time as campus minister. Fr. will create a search committee for the music/liturgy ministry search.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM.**

**Next meetings and prayer leaders:**

December 8, Ann Gansemer-Topf

January 12, John Moss

February 9, Kobe Eishied

March 9, Lizzie Tecklenburg

April 13, Emily Beaudry

May 11, K'Lynn Lynn

June 8, Dawn Bratsch-Prince