

The Church of St. Mary
Finance Council Minutes
Tuesday, October 29, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Fr. Matthew, Mark Maloney (Trustee-Treasurer), Todd Wentworth (Business Administrator), Leon Breun (pastoral council liaison), Craig Olson, Tom Klecker, Angie Dotty, Janet Schiltgen, Ron Kirscht, and Fr. Dan

ABSENT: Francie Peterson (Trustee – Secretary)

Craig O. called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Todd W. led us in the opening prayer.

The minutes of the September 17, 2024 meeting were approved as presented.

There was one addition to the agenda under Old/New Business “6.0 Hospitality Desk & Hiring Team”

Saint Mary’s School (SMS) GUESTS

- A. Principal Troy Sladek and six (6) Teachers expressed concerns regarding the decision and process for communicating a prior decision to migrate computer technology used at SMS from Apple Computer to Windows based PCs signaling a very strong preference for Apple products for instruction, now and in the future. The discussion provided useful perspective and better mutual understanding. The Teachers left the meeting at 5:28 p.m., Principal Sladek remained through the entirety of the Council meeting.
- B. After the teachers left, there was additional discussion. It was decided we need to form a Technology Transition Team to create a plan to establish and implement a technology conversion process for transitioning to a Windows PC technology platform for SMS.

STANDING BUSINESS

- 1. Financial Reports were presented by Todd.
 - Regular sacrificial offerings for September were \$10K favorable to budget. Year to date, offerings were \$5k unfavorable (-0.9%) to budget, but \$30K favorable (+6.8%) in comparison to last year.
 - Fall Festival Revenue included:
 - Silent Auction with proceeds of \$4,867 that went to Life Connections.
 - KofC Breakfast had \$4,559 in revenue and net proceeds of \$2,915 after related expenses.
 - Significant variances in revenues and expenses were reviewed and discussed.
 - Faith Formation Tuition: Todd W. and Tammy H. will meet and review the outlook now that enrollment is stable. Tuition rate is lower than originally planned for the new Family Formation Program. Significant increase in tuition YTD over prior year is mainly

due to “early bird” discount pricing in place last year that drove increased revenues in May & June of 2023. This discount was not offered this year.

- Related to SMS, we are down 10 students in the school compared to plan, largely due to parents enrolling their kids in another school, without informing St. Mary’s. As a result, tuition revenue is \$24K below the YTD budget, but \$13K favorable to last year. Revenue shortfall to budget is expected to continue through current year, but not continue next year due to current small 6th Grade class vs. large 5th Grade class, and making changes to future tuition commitments.
 - Grants – Private: Previous Financial Council met with Troy and Board of Ed members and communicated the need for coming up with an added \$65K in the current 2024/2025 Budget year. Ideas are being brainstormed, but a definitive plan hasn’t been established.
 - YTD Total Revenue & Support is \$20K unfavorable to Budget (\$54K unfavorable excluding Cemetery). Total Expenses were favorable vs. Budget by \$32K in September and \$44K favorable YTD. AS a result, overall financial results close to our budgeted results.
- Mark M. moved to accept the financial reports as presented, 2nd by Janet. Motion carried.
2. Father Al Ludwig Benevolent Fund was reviewed. There are no current requests. Unrecorded market appreciation in value was \$39,478 in the July-September period.
 3. Facilities Update:
 - The school kitchen cooler-freezer project is complete. Final estimated costs (excluding donations) should be around \$90,008, a few invoices remain outstanding. This represents a net overage of \$4,152 vs. planned costs of \$85,856 (i.e., 4.8% overage) which is not considered material.
 - Church diamond shaped windows – No change – Kevin Becker & Todd W. continue working with HGA architects to identify possible long-term solutions.
 - New permanent crucifix - A letter has been sent to the Diocese to inform them of our plan to hang the crucifix as per the Diocesan Building Commission recommendation. A St. Mary’s Crucifix Update has been posted in the church hallway informing parishioners the planned corpus has been finalized, the cross itself is still being worked on by the Crucifix Subcommittee. Eric Seidel (Director of Facilities) is working on plans to hang the crucifix.
 - The processional crucifix is being reworked to lighten its carrying weight at a subcontractor in St. Paul.
 - We received \$13,616 from insurance in September for rectory roof hail damage this summer. We were also approved for a new roof on the rectory due to the damage but will have to absorb the \$5000 policy deductible.
 4. Stewardship – General discussion about activities we have taken and ideas/options for other actions to sustain our messaging on Stewardship.

5. Parish Outreach – Parrish provided \$6K in hurricane relief.
6. Parish Raffle – Final report on Parrish Raffle was provided at our Sept 17th Council meeting.
7. St. Mary’s Alexandria Catholic Foundation – One (1) SMS student applied for Fr. Al Ludwig Memorial Scholarship.
8. St. Mary’s School Trust Fund – September 30 balances: general trust fund - \$1,328,548, David B. Kirscht STEM Fund - \$31,123, and Flaig Fund - \$16,847.
9. Pastoral Council Update – Leon B. reported that there will be ‘thank-you’ notes sent for recent events held in our parish.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

1. Dialogue with Principal – Discussed several topics related to parish support of SMS, maintaining current single-tier tuition rates, or multiple tuition rates for children of parishioners vs. non-parishioners, as well as families inside the ACC vs. outside the ACC. All of the discussions were brainstorming and/or philosophical in nature – nothing requiring the Council’s action was identified. It was decided it would be suitable and effective to identify a couple members of the Finance Council to interact with Troy S., and the Board of Education ensuring ongoing dialogue between Troy, the Finance Council, and the Board of Ed. Tom Klecker and Craig Olson volunteered to serve as liaisons from the Finance Council to facilitate implanting this concept.
2. Review of financial institution accounts was tabled till November meeting.
3. Communication progress for 2024-25 budget/plan – Council felt communication was progressing according to plan and no additional action items were necessary at this time.
4. At the 9/17/24 meeting, there was a discussion item related to making a QR Code available for convenience for people to make an offering. Use of QR codes would be a good opportunity for younger members, guests, and visitors. One option discussed was to put the QR code in the back of the bulletin where the sponsorships are, no official proposal was made. At the 10/29/24 Council meeting, the Council was informed that the QR code was added to the back of the bulletin – no further action required at this time.
5. Hospitality Desk – We are looking for more people to staff the Hospitality Desk which falls under the oversight of Luke (Director of Liturgy & Music). This is a separate ministry and not the responsibility of Ushers. Todd offered one option might be adding Finance Council members as persons scheduled to share in the rotation of parishioners serving in this role. He invited Council members to consider serving in this role.
6. Todd requested a volunteer from the Council to serve on a “hiring team” for the Staff Accountant position (need to fill by early Jan-25). Ron offered to serve in this capacity.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Kirscht