

Finance Council Monthly Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025 – Parish Office Conference Room

Meeting called to order at 4:50 pm with opening prayer by Todd Wentworth.

Present: Leon Breun, Francie Peterson, Janet Schiltgen, Tom Klecker, Fr. Dan Ruprecht, Todd Wentworth, Craig Olson, Angie Dotty, Ron Kirscht.

Absent: Father Matt Kuhn, Mark Maloney

The agenda for this meeting is approved.

The minutes for the January 7th, 2025, meeting stand as written.

Standing Business:

1. Financial Reports given by Todd.
 - a. Statement of Activities – Summary provided by Todd.
 - i. January offerings were \$2k unfavorable to budget. YTD is \$27k unfavorable to budget and \$57k favorable to PY.
 - ii. Father Al investment updated for market activity through December.
 - iii. School – Registration fees \$3,250 from new student registration (typically kindergarten).
 - iv. School – Other donations
 1. 6 Marian apparition paintings have been recorded as a donation and expendable equipment and is a non-cash transaction.
 2. December donation of \$20k was supposed to be a restricted donation for teacher’s apple computers. Discussion on apple computers – Meetings with Troy and the school board have been established to help prevent communication gaps going forward. What looks like a favorable variance YTD is closer to budget when donated computers and paintings are excluded.
 - v. Total Revenue and Support are \$41k favorable (\$32K unfavorable excluding cemetery and market realized and unrealized gains) to budget YTD.
 - vi. Expense explanations
 1. Admin Payroll higher due to payout of accrued vacation balance, overlap of Bookkeeper & Staff Accountant, and ICC/SN employees added. ICC & SN reimburse St. Mary’s for shared employees.
 2. Benevolence – Net profit from Thanksgiving Dinner donated to the Douglas County Food Shelf. Demand for assistance in the community continues, West Central Communities Action is out of money for the month.
 3. IT – AMP in Great Hall went out which caused no sound and needed to be repaired.

4. Faith Formation Payroll higher as it now includes employees from IC & SN. ICC & SN reimburse St. Mary's for shared expenses.
 5. Building Repairs & Maintenance – LED lighting retrofit continues – rebate was received in February.
 6. Equipment repairs and maintenance – hydraulic motor on skid loader went out and had to be replaced.
 7. Ground Maintenance – billing for playground mulch added in August was finally received.
- b. Statement of Financial Position – Mass Fund checking account has been closed and monies moved to our regular checking and Mass Stipends are being paid via check instead of cash.
 - i. Property insurance came in at \$145k; we had to transfer \$150k from Diocesan Savings Pool in February in order to pay this bill. Insurance has not been shopped around for a long time; we have very little influence on how insurance is chosen by the diocese.
 - ii. Cash & Cash Equivalents \$526,642, Restricted Cash & Cash Equivalents \$202,776. Total Cash & Cash Equivalents \$729,118.
 - c. Francie motioned to approve financial reports, Angie seconded, all in favor, motion carried.
2. Father Alexander P. Ludwig Benevolent Fund:
 - a. No current outstanding requests. \$842,702 balance as of January 31.
 3. Facilities:
 - a. Crucifix
 - i. Request for Project Approval #2025-02, new permanent crucifix for the church was presented to the Finance Council. The \$22,350 will be paid primarily from restricted donations already received plus an additional \$1,650 from the main operating checking. By using some of our regular sacrificial offerings, all parishioners can say they helped fund the project.
 1. Janet motioned to approve, Francie seconded, all in favor, motion carried.
 - ii. The request will be sent to Father Matt for his approval and proxy request. Once proxy approval is received from the Bishop and Vicar General, the St. Mary's Corporate Board votes.
 - b. Church Windows
 - i. Met in January with Kevin Becker and HGA Architects. We are waiting for specifications of final recommendation from the architects.
 4. Stewardship
 - a. The Stewardship Council wants to encourage people to attend the McGread Conference in March on the 19-20, in Wichita, KS. Will be requiring key staff members to attend the conference at some point in the future. We will pay for the conference and lodging.
 - b. Legacy Dinner – still putting names together. Should have someone else on Finance Council with Todd to help – meetings will kick off to determine theme and organization of the event – likely October.

5. Parish Outreach
 - a. Have not met as a group, no issues with giving of money. Working heavily with local social service agencies. Harvest Pack scheduled for April 25th. Trying to get a fun way to get people involved to see how many people we can help. Erin Takle and Joe Korkowski are head of the Harvest Pack event.
6. Parish Raffle Ticket – no business till May.
7. St. Mary's of Alexandria Catholic Foundation – \$838k – Steve Joul gave state of the market update; it is given once a year.
 - a. Fr. Al Ludwig Memorial Scholarship Fund – \$459k. College Scholarships available for parishioners going to Catholic College or University. Three applications in already – all are from different schools. Due date is end of day March 1.
8. St. Mary's Catholic School Trust Fund of Alexandria, Minnesota
 - a. No update on Trust Fund
9. Pastoral Council – Leon Breun
 - a. Fish Fry Schedule – voted to have 2, 2, and 2 was original plan. Due to some miscommunication, St. Nicholas will have two, ICC will have one, and St. Mary's will have three.
 - b. Eric Rieberg – has agreed to step up and help Leon this year and take over the Fish Fries next year.

Old/New Business:

1. Board of Education and tuition
 - a. Craig meeting with Dan Kirscht on letters to parents. Craig was recently given an updated one-page letter for families but has not reviewed it yet. A copy of the letter will be given to FC by the end of day 2/19. Todd recommended tuition should come out of budget process and not have the Board of Ed attempt to determine the tuition rates before the budget is created. First budget draft will be presented in May, and if needed, a revised version will be presented at the June finance council meeting. Troy has agreed to wait for a tuition rate as long as the tuition rate doesn't change extremely from past trends, which would not be fair and just to the families.
 - b. Alumni letters will go out later this year. – want to build up relationship before asking for money. Tuition letters are the main priority.
2. Misc admin update
 - a. Money counters have been lined up and a schedule has been made.
 - b. New employees have been getting settled in and everything is going well. Many internal process efficiencies have been identified.
 - c. School Registrations – discussed lower kindergarten enrollment numbers due to demographics and # of 5th graders going into 6th grade.
 - d. Inflationary increases – property insurance has gone up 32%, 30%, 18% over the past 3 years. Health insurance increased 14% 1-1-25 and will go up another 14% next January. Wages have also been increasing to keep up with the demand in the marketplace.

- e. Governor Walz’s budget proposal would cut funding for nonpublic pupil services – which would impact us. There are groups lobbying against this. We communicated information on this in the Feb 8/9 bulletin to keep parishioners informed.
- 3. Communication progress for 2024-25 budget/plan – feedback from Fr. Dan’s sharing
 - a. Father Dan did a wonderful job speaking about the budget in his Homily and received very positive feedback.
 - b. Training Videos for Bylaws are done. Todd will provide more information after having a chance to review.

Next Finance Council Meeting is March 18th, in the Parish Office at 4:45 pm.

Meeting Adjourned 6:28pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Radil