

St. Joseph's Church

Third Organizing Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes for January 21, 2015

Father Jorge Román, Presiding

Parishioners Present: Juan L. Alvarado, ML; Margie Altenbach, ML; Sonja Bush, ML; Thomas Clark, ML; Will Erickson, ML; Araceli Fierro, ML; Olga Fierro, ML; Emilio Gonzalez, JL; Warren Hatfield, ML; America Hernandez, ML; Rosanna Lampariello, ML; Kevin Lynch, ML; Josefina Martinez, JL; Salvador Morales, ML; Ralph Obenberger, LV; Carrie Taylor, B; Tim Taylor, B

Parishioners Absent: David Dore, LV; Helen Shepherd, ML

Please Note: Parishioner's city of residence is identified by the following initials: Mammoth Lakes, ML; June Lake, JL; Lee Vining, LV; Bridgeport, B; and Coleville, C.

Fr. Jorge led the group in prayer at 6:02 p.m. Opening Prayer was read by Kevin Lynch, Meditation by St. Pope John XXIII. Reading from the Act of the Apostles was read by Tim Taylor.

Fr. Jorge stated that we are in the process of electing the Parish Council Members who will represent our Parish community. The parishioners present are a true testament that we are willing to work for the community. He finished his statement by leading the group in the Lord's Prayer.

Dave Dore, Interim Chair was not present. Fr. Jorge asked the Interim Vice-Chair, Emilio Gonzalez, to call the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. Agendas were distributed to all attendees, and Fr. Jorge conducted the meeting in English and Spanish.

Parish Pastoral Council Status by Fr. Jorge:

Presently, we do not have a Parish Council, but we have a Provisional Parish Council with a Provisional Chair, Provisional Vice-Chair, and a Provisional Secretary. In order to have a Parish Council, we need to have a ballot introducing the candidates to the Parish community and hold an election for selecting who will be the members of the Parish Council.

Discussions were held on the following topics. How many people will be on the Parish Council, and how many people will be elected from the ballot?

Originally, Fr. Jorge had proposed three (3) candidates to be elected by the parishioners from the ballot. Ralph Obenberger commented that there should always be an odd number of voting members. Fr. Jorge agreed to have 4 people elected on the ballot and 3 appointed by him, as well as ex officio appointments to include one from Bridgeport and one from Lee Vining. Fr. Jorge then gave a new breakdown of members. The Parish community will elect four (4) voting members, and Fr. Jorge will appoint three (3) voting members and the designated ex officio non-voting members. Per Fr. Jorge, ex officio means a person representing a ministry.

Fr. Jorge stressed that we need to have a manageable number of people on the Parish Council so that we can concentrate on the work to be done.

Further discussion of the election process was initiated by Will Erickson regarding St. Joseph's Constitution. He was seeking clarification on the number of members to make up the Parish Council as specified in the Constitution that was previously distributed. Fr. Jorge went on to explain that he gave us two example Constitutions, one was the Guidelines from the Diocese and other was the Guidelines from Tracy, St. Bernard's Catholic Church.

The Constitution that was read was the example from St. Bernard's Church that Fr. Jorge revised for St. Joseph's Catholic Church, and he stated that it was just an example for our use.

The section on **Membership** was read from the Norms for the Formation of Parish Consultative and Advisory Groups:

Size: The size of the Pastoral Council will depend on the size of the Parish. As the Council shall be representative of the entire Parish, there should be no fewer than seven (7) members.

Candidate Ballot by Margie Altenbach:

Ten (10) parishioners were nominated for the Parish Council, and a draft ballot was prepared and handed out for review. Discussion as to the number of nominees on the ballot was initiated. Carrie Taylor pointed out that people were missing from the ballot, such as David Dore, the Interim Chair. Margie explained that this was a draft ballot and if David submitted his bio that he would be added to the ballot. The question was asked again, "Why were David and Emilio not included on the ballot?" Fr. Jorge explained that David will be added to the ballot and Emilio will be on the Council as an ex officio because of his assigned functions.

Margie read aloud the names of nominees and gave their responses: 10 were nominated from Mammoth and six (6) accepted; one (1) was nominated and accepted and one (1) was placed on ex officio status from Lee Vining; two (2) were nominated from Bridgeport and both accepted; two (2) were nominated from Coleville/Walker and both declined.

Fr. Jorge asked if there were any more corrections to the draft ballot before it was approved so that we could chose an election date. Fr. Jorge suggested holding the election on a Sunday that would allow time after the homily for the ballots to be distributed and allow parishioners time to vote.

America Hernandez asked if we could send out a mailing to our registered parishioners. Margie responded that a mailing would be too costly, and it would be better to distribute the copies at every Mass as Fr. Jorge mentioned earlier.

Kevin asked what are the skills or assets being sought for these positions. Fr. Jorge explained a spirit of giving, a spirit of willing to give advice, and a spirit of peace. Primarily, Council Members should give suggestions to resolve problems instead of creating problems.

Fr. Jorge stated that what he needs from the Parish Council is guidance in finding common solutions for the betterment of the community. "This is what I am looking for, 'Guidance.'" The Parish Council should not be a controversial group, but a group that will present possible solutions and will give guidance for these solutions.

It was strongly suggested that the top of the ballot include the following statement from the Summary of the Parish Pastoral Council Mission and Bylaws:

The Pastoral Council is the principal group under the authority of the Pastor that considers and proposes practical recommendations concerning the pastoral works in St. Joseph's Parish. The Pastoral Council functions in a consultative manner.

Instructions were included to vote for a set number of candidates, e.g., "Vote for Only 4 candidates."

Ballot Publication:

Margie suggested that the ballot be placed on the Church Website to allow time for the parishioners to acquaint themselves with the qualifications of each candidate before the upcoming election.

Sonja Bush agreed to add the ballot onto the Website in both languages once the ballot was approved.

Sonja suggested that we add the Summary of the Parish Pastoral Council Mission and Bylaws along with the ballot to the Website. Fr. Jorge plans to place the ballot in the bulletin and should include the Council Mission statement.

Election Process:

Fr. Jorge mentioned that Margie distributed the Summary of the Parish Council Mission and Bylaws. Extra copies were handed out at the meeting.

There was discussion regarding the terms of office. Kevin asked "if somebody is elected for a three-year term could they be appointed by the priest for a year, and then re-elected." If so, theoretically, they could be on the council forever. Fr. Jorge clarified that after serving a term for elected members, a break of one year is required before a member of the Council may be eligible for re-election.

America Hernandez asked if this election was for the officers. Fr. Jorge said that election of officers will be later when the Council is established.

Schedule for Publicizing Parish Council Election:

Ballot Loaded onto Website: January 23, 2015

Announcement in Bulletin to View Ballot on Website starting: January 24-25, 2015

Ballot Available on Website with Council Mission Statement:

from January 24 through February 8, 2015

Ballot Included in Church Bulletin: February 1, 2015

Who can vote?

Discussion of who can vote for Parish Council Members was raised. Father Jorge explained that anyone is welcome to vote.

Member Representation and Appointments:

Tim expressed that all members will come out of Mammoth. Carrie stated that Tim's concern is that the missions will be under represented. Fr. Jorge explained that we will have an ex officio from Bridgeport and an ex officio from Lee Vining.

Will asked if the ballots are going to be sent out to the other mission churches. Margie replied that we have representatives from each mission and each church will conduct the voting.

Per Fr. Jorge, we are one Parish with two Missions. It is not necessary to have a voting member for every mission and ministry. The Council Members represent the whole Parish Community.

Election of Officers:

Margie explained the process for electing the officers as stated in the sample Constitution. The parishioners select the people they want to represent them. The parishioners do not elect the officers. After the parishioners elect the Parish Council Members, the Parish Council is formed and then the officers are chosen. We need representation from every church with the ability to vote so that we can have a democratic process within the church.

Election Day and Ballot Handling:

Election Day: February 7-8, 2015

Voting at each Mass after the Homily in all three (3) churches

Ballots will be folded, collected, and placed in a plastic bag that will be sealed with the name of the church and the Mass time. It will be the same process as used for handling the offerings. Sealed ballots will be transported to the next meeting on February 10, 2015, to be counted before every one in attendance.

Once we have the body: 4 elected, 3 appointed, and designated ex officio members appointed, the First Parish Pastoral Council Meeting will take place.

Per Fr. Jorge, another meeting will need to take place to elect the Parish Council Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

Next Meeting and Ballot Counting:

It was agreed upon that the counting of the ballots take place on:

February 10, 2015, at 6:00 p.m., at St. Joseph's Church.

Fr. Jorge asked Juan Alvarado to lead the closing prayer. Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.