

Parish Council Minutes – Meeting held on November 27, 2018

Members present: Dave Baker, John Bridges, Patti Dobiecki, Darci Duncan, Jen McDowell, David Montano, John Olberding, Father Chris Orndorff, Janet Reff, and Amy Rod

Opening prayer: Father Chris

Agenda Items:

- 1. Safe Environment Clearance and Training** – Dave Baker brought a handout with questions/answers (please see that handout attached to the minutes) and a report from Danielle Eckhoff regarding Safe Environment clearance and training. The parish training will be held December 4 from 6:30 – 7:30 in the Community Center. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Discussion was held about problems and concerns with the process since it has changed to on-line and through the diocese. The transition has had issues and Danielle has been working diligently to help with Corpus Christi problems. The importance of keeping accurate records of members in good standing and notifying volunteers who are coming due for clearance was discussed. Danielle will continue to encourage and guide anyone seeking assistance through the process. She will also continue to work with the diocese to make this process timelier.
- 2. Safety & Security** - John Olberding attended the Safety & Security meeting and reported the following to the council: There will be training on February 10th at 11:00 AM at no charge for parishioners. John also said that the Safety and Security Plan that was submitted by Corpus Christi and approved is now being shared throughout the diocese and can be used as a template for other parishes.
- 3. 2019 Annual Catholic Appeal** - This year Corpus Christi will be holding the Annual Catholic Appeal beginning in January/February. Father Chris asked the Parish Council to help coordinate and promote the Appeal. He shared that the goal is to increase the number participating. John Bridges will represent our council and attend a noon meeting at Our Mother of Sorrows on Tuesday, Dec. 11 regarding the Annual Catholic Appeal and report back to the council.

4. **Financial Peace University** – John Olberding gave a short report that the current class had graduated a couple weeks ago. He felt it was a successful class with 5 families participating. If there is enough interest, there will be another class beginning next February.

5. **Change of Date** - Because the next meeting date falls on Christmas Day, the December meeting will be changed to **Tuesday, December 11th at 6:00 PM.**

6. **2019 CC State of the Parish Mtg and celebration** – This item will be discussed at the December meeting.

Suggestion Box Items:

The council discussed an unsigned letter received regarding the present crisis in the church. We respect the fact that there are many concerns and feelings around this recent and past issue with the church and how it is handled. The Bishop has released his message which addresses the crisis. As a parish we are doing our best to prevent future problems with the Safe Environment training and clearance program.

Open Comments

- *Patti and Amy both gave high marks to the Knights for the recent Car Show.
- *Amy reminded everyone about the Christmas Party on Sunday, Dec. 2nd at 5:30 and the New Year's Eve party after mass at 11:30.
- *Jen brought up a potential fundraiser being offered where tickets are sold for dress rehearsals for plays. She was wondering what group might want to do this fundraiser. It was deferred to Father Chris.

Agenda Items for the December meeting:

1. Discuss possible new members for the next council.
2. Discuss the town hall meeting and celebration for Corpus Christi turning 20!

Please note the change in date and time:

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 6:00 PM in the Community Center

Next in line for opening prayer: Jen McDowell

Safe Environment Questions / Answers

Question #1. What are the Safe Environment volunteer requirements (fingerprinting, background checks, credit checks, and training etc.?)

- What is the duration of clearance?
- What is the notification of clearance expiration if any (volunteer's responsibility or a friendly reminder 90 days out?)
- Is there an alternate means to get clearance approval (school, military, and government). What paperwork is required?
- Is there an alternate way to get fingerprinted and credit checks outside the church?

Answer #1

Low Risk Volunteers are those who are not ministry leaders, trainers, deal with money, or have access alone to our vulnerable population. Examples of these may include lectors, quilt ministry members, KOC (non-money handling) etc. This is the largest category of volunteers in Corpus Christi's Safe Environment Program.

- Requirements include: one telephone interview with the Compliance Officer, one reference check completed by the Compliance Officer, and the yearly completion of the Annual Safe Environment Training. No background, credit, or drivers license record checks are completed for the Low Risk category of volunteers.
- This clearance is for 1 year.
- Recent changes to the electronic database storage of the parish's Safe Environment records as dictated by the Human Resources staff at the Diocese of Tucson have created some confusion as to how low risk volunteer categorizations are renewed. I have requested a telephone call with the staff member in charge of renewal applications and will update you in a separate email on this item**

High Risk Volunteers are parishioners who are alone ministering to our vulnerable populations, handle any type of financial transactions or financial oversight of the parish, are ministry leaders/trainers, or are staff members.

- Requirements include: one telephone interview with the Compliance Officer, all three reference checks completed by the Compliance Officer, yearly completion of the Annual Safe Environment Training, background check, and if the High Risk Volunteer will be dealing with anything financial then a credit check is completed.
- Background checks are currently fingerprinted by the Safe Environment Officer free of charge to the volunteer using an ink card system. Current availability is by appointment only and I can accommodate most times/days of the week. The volunteer may also get the ink card fingerprints done at another facility (Sheriff's

station, fingerprinting facility) however the cost for this would be the volunteer's responsibility. Alternate forms for background checks which are accepted by the Diocese (Corpus Christi does not have any room for control on this) are DPS fingerprint cards. I am going to get clarification on military clearance requirements when I speak with the HR staff. **

- Credit Checks require a signed form which requires the volunteer's social security number. This form is kept in a locked cabinet at the parish office until it is mailed to the Diocese.
- Once completed, the Safe Environment Officer compiles the volunteer application, 3 reference check notes, fingerprint card and if applicable, credit check authorization, in a file and mails to the Diocese of Tucson HR department to process. Both the background and credit checks are completed by the Diocese as mandated by the Diocesan HR department. The cost of these checks is then billed to the parish on a monthly basis-the billing is sent to John Salapski and cc'd to me for review. Since the parish pays for these high level volunteer checks I ensure the volunteer is aware and sincere in their volunteering commitment.
- This clearance is for 5 years

Question #2. What is the Vetting Notification approval/disapproval (status) for both the member and Ministry Lead?

- What is the normal timeline for vetting?

Answer #2

Application Process Timeline

Low Risk applications are estimated to take 2-4 weeks to process. This is contingent on the work flow of the Safe Environment office and the availability of the reference contacts.

High Risk applications are estimated to take 2-6 weeks to process. This timeline is solely an estimate as the processing of the application has a significant burden on the Diocese to process.

Notification of Conclusion of Application

The following process was approved by Fr. Chris and implemented in August:

- New parishioner completed application in office and identifies some ministries that they would like to be involved in.
- New parishioner application gets routed to the Safe Environment Officer (S.E.O.) for processing.
- SEO calls the parishioner for small interview, explains application process, and tells the person that they have to apply online to become a volunteer. Appointment times for help with this is offered.

- The “ball” is in the new parishioner’s court at this point.
- Upon receipt of Newton (Diocesan mandated software for applications for open positions at parishes) online application to be a volunteer, the appropriate reference checks are completed, subsequent notes are uploaded into Newton, fingerprint or credit check authorizations are completed and mailed into the Diocese.
- After the application has been reviewed a letter of approval is sent by the Diocese to the SEO via email.
- If approved, an email with the Diocesan approval memo is sent by the SEO to the applicant with a CC to the ministry lead letting them know the dates of their volunteer term and that the ministry lead will reach out to contact about volunteering specifics.
- If denied, a call is placed to the applicant by the SEO discussing the matter.

Question #3. What is the process if the volunteer doesn’t have computer / internet access?

- How is the process documented (CCCC / Diocese).....so we don’t have lost documentation in the future?

Answer #3.

My general work days are part time Monday and Fridays. I am also willing to work around the applicant’s schedule to meet them at the parish office to use one of our computers.

Upon taking over the position I identified a reasonable to do list which I ran by both Kara and Fr. Chris. An internal audit and organizational project was outlined and approved. This is to begin after the Annual Training and will include going through each Volunteer file to list on a cover sheet the file’s document progression (new application, processing dates, approval dates etc.) and to identify those that need renewal.

Through the service agreement that each parish was mandated to have with the Diocese it is stipulated that the Diocese maintains files on the checks that it completes. In the last year they have changed many processes. These are rarely beta tested and often have many problems upon roll out. This was most prominent when Carmen was transitioning out of the position. So I can say that I will be implementing protocols that will reduce the unreliability of the documentation of the Diocese and will maintain the parish’s paperwork in house as Carmen had been doing. I look forward to reporting to Fr. Chris that the files will be clearly updated and audited by the first few months of the new year.