

**St. Joseph School Board
Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2009**

Attending Board Members:

Fr Jerome Kish, Sister Dorothy Randall, Rita Stasi, Beth Harbauer, Tom Kelly, Greg Elisha, Stacey Lindemann, Mike Mallon, Kevin Delaplane, Jim Fleming, Matt Fosket, Peter Eschenbach, Cindy Boor, Maggie Sluzas, Kathleen Buck

Members Not In Attendance: Pam Edwards (Excused due to overseas work)

Guests in Attendance:

Michele Geraghty of the Pastoral Council, Father Matthew Nathan

School Board President, Tom Kelly, called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. in the School Library.

I. Prayer

Tom Kelly opened the meeting with a prayer.

II. Old Business

A. Asbestos Abatement Letter

The School Board would like to see completion of the asbestos abatement letter and its submission to the appropriate entity in the state government of Illinois. Beth Harbauer is computing costs of remediation and will be submitting a revised letter shortly. Kathleen Buck will assist Beth on the final letter.

B. Second Century Fund Charter

The School Board would like to see completion of the Second Century Charter, which is in its twelfth draft. Peter Eschenbach and Kevin Delaplane, representing the school board's Finance Committee, met with Father Jerome on October 16 to review the Charter. Father Jerome had two reservations about finalizing the Charter: (1) formalizing a Charter while the Meitler Study on Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Joliet is pending, possibly creating a situation in which changes would need to be made to the Charter in the near future; and (2) the Board had not accepted all the Diocesan recommendations for the Charter. Next step: Peter was to check again with the Diocese on finalizing the Charter.

C. Parish/School Capital Improvement List

The School Board had asked at its September meeting for a proposed list of parish/school capital improvements. Beth Harbauer had reported that after the September meeting, an onsite survey would be made of the school and parish capital needs. In early October, Ron Popernick and several school officials examined the school property, but due to time constraints, they were not able to assess the rest of the parish properties. A structural engineer will go forward in evaluating the remaining areas under review. The current focus is on the roof of the school and the church. Kathleen Buck will assist Beth in reviewing potential insurance claims. Beth will also be following up on whether the parish budget will continue to cover school capital improvements, as has been policy.

D. School Board By-Laws Improvements

The School Board would like to see completion of updates to its By-Laws. To move this project along, Tom Kelly asked that the School Board By-Laws will be

reviewed by Kathleen Buck, Peter Eschenbach, Pam Edwards and Jim Fleming. It was further requested that recommendations be made to the full Board at its November meeting.

E. **School Fundraising Coordination with Development Committee and Parent Forum**

Deferred until November meeting.

II. **New Business**

A. **Parish Sunday Stewardship Drive**

The Parish-Wide Stewardship Drive was kicked off last Sunday. Father Jerome and Beth Harbauer reported that the focus of the drive will be on asking all parishioners to share more of their time, talent and treasure. Highlights of the messages to parishioners will be the many ways Saint Joseph Parish and School serve the community, the percentage of parishioners who contribute, witness talks, Stewardship prayer, and Pastoral requests. Information concerning how the Saint Joseph School families contribute greatly to the parish will be noted. The Saint Joseph School families will receive the same stewardship letter as the rest of the parishioners, but with a cover letter indicating they have already provided their stewardship to the parish, so they do not need to provide stewardship again (unless they want to give more). Jim Fleming will speak to the congregation on his stewardship beliefs at one of the Masses on Sunday, November 1.

B. **Parish Budget Meeting(s)**

As a follow up to a recent Parish Finance Council meeting, Matt Fosket has asked for a school pre-budgetary conference on October 28. Father Jerome, Beth Harbauer, members of the School Board Finance Committee, and members of the Parish Finance Council are invited to attend. In separate but related budget work, the Diocese will host three meetings in December to discuss finances, one of which (likely December 1) will be attended by Father Jerome and other members of the school finance committee (attendance is limited). The parish and school will be provided additional information on the budget after those meetings. The goal is to create a draft of the school budget for the upcoming year, 2010-2011. A draft of the school budget is usually finished in December for the following school year.

School Board Committee Budgets

In a new procedure, each of the School Board sub-committees has been asked to submit a budget for the school year. Going forward, we will do this annually, but earlier in the school year or in the Spring of the prior year. Tom Kelly explained that the purpose of establishing reliable budgets for the Committees is so they can move forward on their projects knowing their budgets and without concern for unanticipated and small expenses. Once all are submitted, the School Finance Committee will review the budgets further, make sure necessary checks and balances are in place, and look to approve final budgets in the near future.

School Board Website Improvement

The school board website is currently being worked on by Matt Fosket and Tom Kelly. It will be discussed at future meetings.

Meitler Consultants Strategic Plan for Joliet Catholic Schools

Tom Kelly and Kevin Delaplane briefly discussed their review of the current draft of the Meitler Group's Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of

Joliet, which was just received from the Diocese two weeks ago. It appears that Saint Joseph School is doing very well on many areas the consultants feel are important, such as marketing, development, finance, and enrollment. There will be a Diocesan meeting on November 24 at which Meitler will present recommendations for Catholic schools in Dupage County. Father Jerome, Sister Dorothy, Rita Stasi, and three or four members of the School Board will attend (attendance is limited). After the recommendations are given, Meitler and the Diocese will be looking for feedback from parishes and schools, including Saint Joe's.

III. Committee Reports

A. Pre-School

Matt Fosket reported that the Saint Joe Pre-School proposal was sent in early September to the Diocese for review at the September 19 meeting of the Diocesan School Board. The Diocese responded to our Pre-School proposal in early October with a few questions. The Diocese's main concern was whether we would have a strong enough enrollment given the downturn in pre-school age children in the Downers Grove area. Matt Fosket immediately addressed those concerns in writing, letting the Diocese know that Saint Joseph will remain flexible in its cost structure, and that a part-time teacher would be possible to keep costs low. It was anticipated that the Diocese would be making its decision tonight, October 21, at its October meeting, and that SJS would be notified tomorrow of Diocesan approval. Tom Kelly noted that we have lost a few weeks waiting for the Diocesan approval. We will have to move quickly in November and December to market our pre-school, because other pre-schools in town have already started their marketing and recruiting efforts.

B. Enrollment

Peter Eschenbach reported for the Enrollment Committee. He stated that the Enrollment Committee's marketing needs were covered by the Marketing Committee's budget for enrollment activities. Peter also reported that looking at new students for the upcoming year, there are currently 33 siblings of current students potentially heading to the SJS kindergarten in 2010. It was also explained that a special effort to recruit children heading to middle school will be started shortly. The Enrollment Committee will also re-examine our school marketing messages, making sure we strike the right balance between academics, Catholic identity, and other topics.

C. Marketing

Greg Elisha reported on the recent Marketing Committee's recent work, including its support for the Tailgate Trot and budget to support marketing activities for the school. Kelly Roth has put together a final marketing budget for the 2009-2010 school year and submitted it to the school board. The marketing committee also recently reviewed: e-directory security issues, upcoming open house, Trivia night, Grand Raffle, golf outing. They will also review marketing directly to parents in the future.

D. Development

Cindy Boor reported on the Development Committee which will be holding its next meeting on October 21st. It is believed that the Tailgate Trot will make a profit of \$13,000, well over its goal.

E. Centennial

Deferred until November 16th meeting.

F. Alumni

Beth Harbauer is researching database management software for alumni names

and will meet with other committee representatives to assess other school database needs. She shared a projected Alumni budget. Kathleen Buck explained that a meeting of alumni will take place on October 25th and plans for the Alumni Mass, Alumni All-Class Reunion, and potential Alumni Association will be discussed.

G. **Finance**

Deferred until November 16th meeting.

IV. **Pastoral Council Update**

Michele Geraghty of the Pastoral Council discussed their 2009-2010 strategic plan and how it is focused on addressing the parishioner needs that were identified last year. These needs include but are not limited to: attracting the 900+ parishioners who do not attend regular church services; providing adult education; meeting the needs of families facing difficulties; and welcoming divorced parishioners. The Council meets every second Monday of the month.

V. **Pastor, President and Principal Comments**

Principal Rita Stasi gave feedback on attendance in the newly implemented Holiday Care program. That program seems to be working well so far. She also provided the Board details on RtI, which is a program designed to meet the different learning modes of different students. Many benefits of the program were discussed. Tom Kelly asked that Mrs. Stasi communicate RtI to the parents as soon as possible, not waiting for the Town Hall meeting next year.

President Sr. Dorothy further explained the history of the RtI concept and how it has been implemented and changed over the years at Saint Joe's. Children learn in different ways and this program will address their needs. She also shared what a wonderful job the Centennial Committee was doing with the Centennial Elder Service Project and the great feedback she was receiving from many elders in the community.

Pastor Father Jerome deferred his comments until the November meeting. (It was late, and Tom Kelly blessed him for that.)

VI. The minutes from the September 21st, 2009, School Board Meeting were presented, discussed and approved. Going forward, meeting minutes will be distributed, edited, and approved online by the School Board to speed up the process of posting them on the school web site.

VII. **Next Meeting Date - Monday, November 16, 2009. School Library**

VIII. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kathleen Buck, co-secretary of the Saint Joseph School Board.