

**MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING May 12, 2020**  
**SAINT MATTHEW ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m. Zoom online meeting

***Attendance:***

Meredythe Hutchinson, Bertie Ninichuck, Jennie Guida, Sharon Smith, Stephany Crisantos, Tonya Adams, Bertie Ninichuck, Remo Ottone, Bob Morano, Susan Morano

Council Members Absent: Oscar Andrade, Rosa Isela Lopez

Secretary (attending): Doris Hand

Non-Council Members Present: Bishop Peter Hickman, Mirella Hickman, Fr. Arturo Querijero, Deacon Tammy Fuqua, Deacon Tony Russo, Mother Diane Smith, Mother Martha Rogers, Mother Jetty van den Berghe, John Deane, Jason Adams

***Opening Prayer and Remarks:***

- Opening Prayer said by Bishop Peter Hickman
- Opening Remarks by Moderator:
  - Observe meeting decorum by raising hand; avoid talking over each other.
  - Future Parish Council meetings would not include “security” feature requiring “sign-in”. Bob will rebuild the meeting features to be more user friendly.

***Decisions:***

- Following members agreed to work together to plan, implement, and satisfy CDC guidelines for reopening Saint Matthew for services: Fr. Arturo, Mother Diane, Deacon Tony, Sharon Smith, and members of Building and Property Maintenance Ministry (Jason Adams, Bob Morano, John Deane, Jennie Guida). (Going forward this group would be identified as the “Reopen Committee”.)
- Mother Diane agreed to forward CDC document listing the twenty-four items that should be in place before a church can reopen for services to “Reopen Committee” members.
- Bob Morano will contact Kathryn Tuma to request mailing of the printed brochure to Clergy Council, Justin Veiga, and other interested members.
- Bishop Peter will compose and mail a pastoral letter to the community. Tonya Adams requested that messages delivered to the community at the close of Sunday Zoom mass include a message for the viewer to complete “contact information” form on our website. We hope Deacon Tony or Matthew Hickman can make this announcement so our viewers understand.
- Stephany Crisantos will send, via email, a Spanish translation of the brochure to Fr. Arturo for review. Susan Morano will email Justin Veiga’s home address to Fr. Arturo, so he can mail a check to cover Spanish version printing. Fr. Arturo will review Stephany’s translation and forward it to Justin. Justin please see that the Spanish Brochure is ordered and get back to us with a tentative delivery date.
- Council members agreed to read By-Laws and provide feedback to Susan and Bob in writing before May 31. See details in “New Business”, # 4.

***Old Business:***

1. **Financial Report** – by Bob Morano
  - Saint Matthews has received an \$9,000 EIDL loan under the CARES act which is now allocated in the P & L as “income”. It is in designated fund. Loans aren’t income; it is cash, but it is also

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indebtedness (a liability). It is our understanding that this loan can be forgiven as long as we spend it on specific expenses, such as payroll, utilities, and mortgage interest. It will help with payroll for one month.

- Bob said that the May Financial Report indicates Saint Matthew is keeping “head above water”.
- We are losing income through mass closures, inability to conduct weddings, and funerals. Comments by Bishop Peter.
- Additional loans are available through CARES Act. Bob plans to apply for additional loans for Saint Matthew and contact other banks. He has not yet checked PayPal. Comments by Jennie Guida, Fr. Arturo, Bob Morano

**2. Food donations/collections for the WSWA**

- May 3 collection was success. Delivery to WSWA required unloading donations on the porch of WSWA building. The collection was substantial and required the entire of Bob’s pick-up truck be and Bea’s Prius to haul it to WSWA. A lot of heavy lifting is required of volunteers. We need help from younger Saint Matthew members and/or men.
- Meredythe volunteered to take lead for organizing and signing-up volunteers for future dates. Meredythe has church directory and will contact people. John Deane and Jennie Guida volunteered for next Sunday, May 17 from noon to 2:00 pm. Stephany Crisantos and her sister Angela also volunteer for next Sunday. Fr. Arturo and his truck will be available after 2:00 pm to help deliver donations if needed.
- Bea Tiritilli is immune compromised and should have a minimal role. Meredythe agreed to discuss Bea’s role with her.
- Sharon Smith suggested distributing brochures to donors during the drive. Bob mentioned that most people dropping off food were Saint Matthew members. However, everyone felt this was a good idea so a supply of brochures should be available for possible newcomers.
- Jennie Guida mentioned we should have the sandwich board sign on the street early, and should get the word out about the Food Drive. (*The May 3<sup>rd</sup> food drive was advertised on website, on Facebook, and in an email blast on Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The sandwich board sign was posted at the driveway at 10:00 am on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.*) Sharon reported that two more sandwich boards are in progress.

**2. Saint Matthew Brochure – Spanish version**

- Susan reported that Justin has not received the payment for printing.
- Stephany said she would send her Spanish brochure to Fr. Arturo.
- Susan will send Justin Veiga’s mailing address to Fr. Arturo, so he can mail Justin a check for printing the Spanish version.
- Justin, please make the necessary arrangements with the printer and get back to us with an estimated completion date.

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**3. Saint Matthew Brochure – English version**

- Members of the clergy did not receive new brochure. Parish Council members received a copy.
- Bob said that he would send a list of clergy and others that should receive a copy of the brochure to Kathryn.
- Meredythe indicated that a “closing quote” was missing from one of the testimonials on the front cover.
- Sharon requested that a few brochures could be made available in “brochure/flyer type” acrylic holders mounted to outside of church entrance.

**4. Cost Cutting Ideas**

- Remo suggested contacting a cost-cutting lender / private lender to request forbearance for our mortgage.
- Fr. Arturo has investigated this option and reports that all back interest / payments can be suspended for three months, but must be paid back after that period.
- Bob reported that Saint Matthew has a privately placed mortgage with an “interest-only” provision. We could pay the interest using the EIDL loan (with perhaps the ‘advance’ payment Saint Matthew received). There is more room for forgiveness with the PPP loan. Chase Bank will not take our call to answer our questions. Bob is trying to work with the listing he received of “smaller banks” from a recent webinar he attended. The goal is to find an alternative bank to take a PPP application.

**5. Revenue Generating Ideas**

- This item was on the agenda; however, no discussion took place during the meeting on this topic.

**6. Saint Matthew banner**

- Justin put this request on “back burner”, but has now moved this request to higher priority.
- There is no pressing need at this time for the banner. In meantime, we will continue to use the sandwich board. Tonya suggested we set it up to advertise our online services; but we must be careful to return it back to the building.

**7. Community Events Banner**

- This is a six-foot banner designed to be used on table / booth to introduce Saint Matthew to public, as in our participation at “Great American Write-In”. The banner is ready and available. Deacon Tammy will bring it to church for viewing next Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Banner has Saint Matthew name, logo, website address.

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*New Business:*

**1. Pastoral Letter to Community**

- a. Jennie Guida suggested Bishop Peter compose a letter to community mentioning the online masses and other online services (Bible Study, Rosary, etc.). It's possible this letter may generate donations. She recommended that the letter be mailed (U.S. Mail), rather than email. He agreed. Jennie offered postage.
- b. Susan and Sharon suggested the brochure be included in envelope with the letter.

**2. Reopening Saint Matthew for in-person services**

- a. Bob mentioned chair arrangement needs to comply with physical distancing. Discussion ensued about how to do the rearrangement in the sacristy and for choir seating. Jason Adams mentioned that removal of one row of chairs would not satisfy the six-foot physical distance mandate.
- b. Fr. Arturo, Mo. Diane, and Mo. Martha talked about importance of following the CDC guidelines on 'church re-opening'.
- c. Jennie Guida suggested postponement of after-service gatherings with snacks, coffee, etc. when we reopen, until such time as it is safe to do so.
- d. Tonya Adams and Mo. Martha mentioned arrangements need to be made for dismissal of children (usually done during 10:30 service) and Youth Group.
- e. Tonya Adams and Jennie Guida discussed sanitization procedures for surfaces before and after services. We need hand sanitizer for attendees located at entrances and in bathrooms. Otherwise one touch by infected member could deposit virus contaminates on door knobs and bathroom fixtures. We must be careful not to give the community a false sense of security, which may happen if cleaning was limited to before/after a service.
- f. It was agreed to form a committee to examine the church and possible seating arrangements and write up a document with all of the changes proposed for when we reopen.

**3. Bishop Peter's Healing Service Wednesday, May 13**

- a. Doris Hand requested that all Parish Council members attend this service.

**4. Parish Council By-Laws Particular to Council Membership**

- a. Susan read By-Laws, Section 1.A, Section 1.B., Section 1.C. and Section 1.2.c and d. and asked council members to review these sections and provide feedback by email before month-end (May 31). Feedback requested:
  1. Are requirements in these sections too strict, appropriate, or too lenient?
  2. Are responsibilities of parish council members reasonable?
  3. Should any responsibilities be added, reduced, or eliminated?
  4. Ideas on how a democratic election process should be conducted for new members.
  5. Personal decision on how long you would like to stay with the 2020 parish council - - for a term beginning January 2020 and ending in one year, ending in two years, or ending in three years.

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- Tonya Adams asked council members to read Article 4 of the Constitution for a definition of “member” (pertinent to qualification for service on the council).

*Closing Remarks and Prayer by Bishop Peter*

Bishop Peter reported that he and Mirella are calling parishioners (three people daily) to keep in touch. He recommended that others do the same.

Father Arturo delivered the closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm