

**Our Lady on the River Minutes  
Informational Meeting Regarding Merger and Budget  
Wednesday, June 17, 2009**

**PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Fr. Jim Lopez	Matt Fett III (Pres.)
Fr. Matt Ellis	David Schwehofer (V-Pres.)
Sr. Mary Ann Ankoviak, CSJ	Catherine Nutter (Sec.)

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT PRESENT**

Lory McGlennen, Office of Parish Life and Services  
Mike Evoy, Parish Support Services, Finance Department  
Patty Hojnacki, Parish Support Services, Finance Department  
Bernadette Sugrue, Associate Superintendent

**PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS EXCUSED**

Paul Ivan	Bev Simon	Stephanie Spencer
-----------	-----------	-------------------

**STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Tony Antkowiak	Tom Cyr	Mike Rector
Richard Bober	Jack Randolph	Bob Zweng

**STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION MEMBERS EXCUSED**

Bob Goldenbogen	Victor McDonald	John Vance
Nick Licari	Bill Roland	

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Judy Beauvais	Mary Patrick	Celeste Salvador
Pam LaBelle	Barbara Persyn	David Salvador
Charles Ongena	Norman Rhodes	Margie Smith

**OPENING** Fr. Jim opened the meeting in prayer at 6:40 PM.

**Presentation of Information by AOD Representatives**

Mike Evoy passed out a template of the 2009-2010 OLR Budget Review completed as of June 10, 2009. This template is a conservative estimate of the parish's financial situation for the coming year if no changes are made in the way in which things are run. The projection for next year shows a budget deficit of almost \$194,000. (This past year 2008-2009 operated with a deficit of \$83,000.)

Mike explained that the budget is broken into four units of expenses: church, Christian education, elementary school, and latch key. The church and latch key sections are projected to have a surplus, but not enough to off-set the losses in the Christian education and elementary school units. (The school falls short of meeting its financial needs by 29% of its operational costs. When this situation occurs, the parish has to make up the difference.)

The template also shows totals as of May 31, 2009, for the parish's savings (approximately \$900,000 earning 3% interest), loans from the AOD (approximately \$460,000 at 5.5% interest), and unpaid bills (nearly \$70,000).

Mike Evoy and Patty Hojnacki included a list of suggestions that the parish administration should consider under a section labeled “Comments.” Although this section is broken into the categories of “Church” and “School,” Mike made it very clear that the Finance Department representatives were not at the meeting to make any recommendations regarding the elementary school; those kinds of suggestions would come from someone in the Education Department. Any questions asked about the school were referred to Bernadette Sugrue.

Regarding CSA: A CSA surplus is not figured into the budget—any money given to CSA above our target goal comes back to our parish without the 6% tax. If our parish does not meet the CSA goal, the deficit is covered by our Sunday offerings. CSA goals *can* be appealed if the parish leadership thinks the target is too high. Fr. Jim commented that yesterday he sent in an appeal to the AOD regarding our CSA goal being too high.

### **Outcome of the Meeting**

Although some time was spent revisiting the topics of the May meeting (i.e. entering into a full financial merger without Holy Cross’s debt being eliminated and the feelings of frustration ensuing from that), Mike Evoy presented the religious and lay leadership of Our Lady on the River Parish with two goals:

**1. Communicate the Situation to the Parishioners:** The AOD representatives can assist in this aspect so that the parishioners are not overwhelmed by multiple pages of financial numbers; it is important that everyone be aware of the parish’s current status.

**2. Take Steps to Correct the Situation Now:** The parish’s financial situation is not dire by any means; it has potential income. However, certain operational and budgetary expenses need to be changed immediately. The more time that passes after July 1<sup>st</sup>, the more likely the projected deficit from the budget report will come to be.

The main action that the parish leadership needs to take right now is to form a “Transitional Team.” This team should be made up of 3 or 4 individuals (stewardship commission with perhaps a parish council representative). The team members are responsible for doing all the “legwork” when it comes to finding parts of the expenses that can be streamlined or eliminated. The AOD representatives can provide a list of “best practices”—steps that other parishes have taken to save money. (These might include adjustments in staffing, office hours, site management, etc. The team would make sure services aren’t being duplicated.) The transitional team must keep in mind the mission of the parish as well as what it means to be a good steward. The AOD representatives will be available to help as much as is necessary.

### **Fr. Lopez’ Comments:**

Fr. Jim thanked all the AOD representatives for coming to the meeting. Their presence reminded him that he has the assistance and support of the AOD. He thanked all the parish members present for attending the meeting and helping him lead the parish. Fr. Jim said he’d notify those whom he intends to invite to be on the transitional team very soon, and that the team would start meeting by next week.

**CLOSING** Fr. Jim adjourned the meeting in prayer at 8:10.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Catherine Nutter  
Parish Council Secretary

<p><b>NEXT MEETING:</b> <b>Monday, September 14, 2009</b> <b>Algonac Site (St. Catherine Church)</b> <b>6:30 PM in the Chapel</b></p>
---