

**Minutes: Sacred Heart Pastoral Council -  
September 8, 2019**

**Members present:** Rob Cassleman, Fr. Steve Dublinski, Lorraine Farrand, Aurora Horstkamp, Jim Lincoln, Kevin Owens (Chair), Eric Patera, Mary Schweitzer, Charlotte Snekvik and. Also present: Mary Sutherland, Parish Secretary.

**New Business:**

**Introduction of members:** Members introduced themselves to new member Rob Cassleman.

**Overview of Pastoral Council:** Kevin passed around a graphic showing who the parish boards and commissions report to. The Bishop of Spokane is at the top. Our pastor reports to him. The Finance Council, Pastoral Council, Pastoral Staff and Support Staff are all on the same level and report to the pastor. The Finance & Administration Commission has a special connection to the Finance Council but also reports to the Pastoral Council. The Faith Formation Commission, Liturgy & Worship Commission and Community Outreach Commissions all report to the Pastoral Council. They are asked to give brief reports twice a year.

**Upcoming Pastoral Council Retreat – Saturday, September 28, 9 am – 3 pm:** The council is supposed to be the visionary group for the parish. What will the parish be like in five years, ten years, etc.? Mary Sutherland will send notes from the two most recent parish visioning experiences, the Parish Evaluation Project in 2008, and Know, Love & Serve in 2014, to the members to look at before the retreat. Fr. Steve will attend the priest's meeting September 10 – 12. They will discuss what the diocese will look like after 15 priests retire over the next five years. Just two Spokane Diocese candidates for the priesthood are in the seminary at this point.

**Building committee:** The committee is still looking at what it would take to address the problems at the current facility. The list keeps growing. They have also been looking at property. The house next door on Ash Street is not for sale at any price, and some land is only for lease.

The committee discovered that the owner of a large tract of land north of Wawawai Road and south of Casey Court is ready to develop. They approached the landowner with a proposal to buy 10 to 20 acres of the land to build a church, classrooms, offices, and eventually a rectory. The owner was planning to put high-end housing on all of the property, but thinks that a church will add value to the neighborhood. He is not willing to have low income housing in the area. He will sell us ten acres of flat land toward the east end of the property. It will be accessible without driving through any neighborhoods. The landowner will split the cost of the entrance road with us. Easements will cut the useable area to about seven acres. The \$500,000 the parish received from an anonymous donor (to use for potential purchase of the house next door) is almost enough to purchase the land. If it turns out we are unable to build, the land will still be a good investment. The city says that 70% of Pullman's growth over the next ten years will be in that part of town.

The landowner wants to start developing immediately. We are asking for a 120 day period for a feasibility study. We will pay a couple thousand dollars earnest money. The money will be returned if either party pulls out of the deal during the 120 days. During that time the building committee will consult with the parish, diocese, architect, city, etc. We need a good idea of the cost of building on the land and whether we can raise it. The diocese requires that 70% of the total building cost be on hand, and 100% pledged before construction begins.

The building committee also wants to hire an expert to look at the current church to get a better idea of what exactly it would cost to renovate, add parking, build upward, and make it work to stay here. A majority of parishioners responding to the June 2018 building survey wanted to know if we could possibly stay, but if it was too expensive were willing to move.

Fr. Steve looked at the Mass attendance numbers for Sacred Heart. Attendance declined by one third over the last 30 years. Over the past five years it wobbled around; it is up a little this last year, but not much. Nationally the number of Catholics is increasing, but Mass attendance is decreasing. We need to welcome the Spanish speaking community. If we have a lot of space we can start smaller and expand if needed.

**Safety Committee update:** The council received the minutes from the safety committee meeting. The committee meets again on September 18.

**Pastoral Council Elections:** Kevin has reached the limit as chair of the council. Char Snekvik was the vice chair, and was nominated and then elected as chair for the pastoral council. Eric Patera was elected as vice chair.

**Next meeting:** Sunday, October 13, 9:45 am.

Submitted by **Mary Sutherland**.