

Parish Council Meeting 11/2/2017

Attendees: Bob Biwer, Kevin Martian, Nate Swenson, Pam Treib, Steve Moore, Ryan Caya, Cheryl Hansen, Msgr. Chad Gion

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

New Business:

- Possible Emergency Shelter
 - o This meeting was called as an emergency parish council meeting. Spirit of Life (SOL) was asked to function as an emergency shelter for the homeless for the next one - two months (November & December).
 - o Currently the Missouri Valley Coalition for Homeless People has no plan in place for an emergency shelter for the homeless during the winter months due to the closing and sale of the Ruth Meier's emergency homeless shelter.
 - o A booklet of guidelines was shared with all meeting attendees. The guidelines explain how a facility (Churches as hosts) should function as an emergency homeless shelter, expectations/requirements of guests staying at the shelter, and volunteer information.
 - o SOL was not asked to serve any other functions other than to provide the shelter from 9:00 pm - 7:00 am for the duration of this temporary time frame. SOL is not required to provide any services, volunteers, material efforts, etc., United Way will coordinate all efforts needed to staff the shelter each evening and provide beds, bedding, food, etc. All volunteer efforts for staffing will be coordinated through the United Way, not SOL.
 - o Background checks are required for those staying at the shelter. The guests who need to use the shelter that are in Bismarck will be bused over around 9:00 pm. No loitering around the church premise prior to 9:00 pm will be allowed. There will be a different admittance procedure for the guests who are currently in Mandan, not needing to be bused over from Bismarck.
 - o The Bismarck Police Department (BPD) and Mandan Police Department (MPD) are both aware of this need and the possibility of SOL being used as a temporary shelter. Both departments are onboard for immediate support.
 - o Concerns were mentioned throughout the meeting in regards to children and religious education on Wednesday evenings, late night Adorers for Adoration, and other events that could possibly be disrupted. It is agreed that these all need to be carefully monitored and no disruptions should occur if SOL does function as a temporary shelter.
 - o Questions were asked how guests are handled if they have weapons, drugs, alcohol, etc. The guidelines mention none are permitted, but to call law enforcement of any infractions. Guests are possibly checked prior to getting on the bus before arrival, but that is not confirmed.
 - o The shelter may serve men, women and families. If so, various arrangements must be made to separate families, but keep all the guests in a specific area in the old Church area.
 - o A motion was made by Nate Swenson for Msgr. Gion to move forward and discuss with the Bishop that the Parish Council supports SOL being used as a temporary emergency shelter to aid the United Way with their efforts of assisting the homeless in the Bismarck/Mandan area. Steve Moore seconded, all were in favor.

- The following items need to be addressed:
 - Msgr. Gion will mention the topic at Mass, if approved by the Bishop. This is a short, temporary timeframe of a two month deadline. The homeless coalition should evolve it elsewhere after the two months.
 - A letter of support from local law enforcement stating how they will assist due to any emergent needs to be requested and shared with parishioners.
 - The Parish Council will be of support of this effort, specifically making the guidelines available for parishioners and they will be posted on the website.
- Bob requested a group photo be taken for an upcoming parish newsletter
- Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm

Respectfully submitted by Ryan Caya.