

# **St. John the Baptist Parish Council BYLAWS Plymouth, WI**

## **Article I: NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

Section 1: At each annual selection, one-third of the members shall be selected for a term of three years to fill the vacancies caused by the members whose terms are due to expire.

Section 2: At least 60 days prior to each annual selection of new members, the chairperson shall appoint a selection committee of at least four members, two of whom are Council members. The selection committee's responsibility is to manage all aspects of the selection process including:

- a) **Education of Parishioners:** Parishioners are educated through bulletin and pulpit announcements about the Council and the selection process for at least two weeks. They are asked to give prayerful consideration to nominating parishioners or themselves for the Council.
- b) **Nomination:** Nomination forms are distributed at all liturgies on a designated weekend. Parishioners are invited to write down the names of persons they feel have the essential characteristics of a Council member.
- c) **Notification:** Persons whose names were submitted by parishioners are contacted by selection committee members to inform them of their nomination and of the required orientation. At least 30 days before the date of selection, the selection committee publishes in the parish bulletin, the names of those who have agreed to continue in the nomination process. Additional nominations are acceptable if submitted in writing to the Selection Committee within ten days after this publication.
- d) **Orientation:** The selection committee plans the local orientation session and requires nominees' attendance at a local and/or archdiocesan orientation.
- e) **Acceptance:** Those who feel called to serve as Council members accept nomination and participate on the final slate of nominees. The selection committee ensures that the slate of nominees is representative of the parish community. In no event shall any persons be deemed nominated unless the selection committee receives an expression of willingness to serve. If a member of the selection

committee becomes a nominee, that person ceases to be a selection committee member.

- f) **Final Slate of Nominees:** Nominees submit biographical information and their statement of parish vision to the selection committee for publication in the parish bulletin at least two weeks prior to the selection of new members.
- g) **Facilitation:** The selection committee facilitates the actual selection process and informs the parish of the results.

Section 3: The selection of new members of the Council shall be by election. The Selection Committee provides ballots for all parishioners 18 years of age and older. The Selection Committee administers, supervises, tabulates and keeps records of the selection. A tie vote is resolved by lot.

## **Article II: VACANCIES AND REMOVALS**

Section 1: Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the pastor, with a copy to the chairperson.

Section 2: At any meeting of the Council, any at-large member may be removed for good cause by consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Council. Any member whose removal has been proposed shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the meeting. Good cause includes missing two consecutive meetings without good reason, physical or mental incapacity, or failure to perform duties as a Council member.

Section 3: A vacancy among the at-large members shall be filled by one appointed to serve the remainder of the term. The chairperson will make appointment, with approval of the Council. Consideration should be given to previous nominees.

## **Article III: OFFICERS**

- Section 1: Selection of officers of the Council shall be by election from among and by the Council members present at the annual transition meeting. Offices shall be filled in the following order: chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary.
- Section 2: At the transition meeting following the annual selection of Council members, newly selected members join the existing Council for the purpose of selecting Council officers for the following year.
- Section 3: No Council officer may serve more than three 1 year terms in any one office.
- Section 4: The Chairperson:
1. Is aware of the tasks and responsibilities of the Council and communicates these to the Council, committees and parish community.
  2. Organizes/coordinates activities and processes of the Council. Develops and maintains an annual Council calendar consistent with the parish calendar.
  3. Prepares the meeting agendas in consultation with the pastor and other Council members for publication in the parish bulletin the weekend before the meeting or posted for parishioners to review. Submits the agenda to Council members at least three days before the meeting.
  4. Provides formation/education for Council members, utilizing the parish staff and offerings at the district and archdiocesan levels.
  5. Conducts meetings by assisting the Council members to work together effectively and arrive at appropriate decisions through consensus. Also conducts parish meeting.
  6. Monitors implementation of all Council decisions.
  7. Ensures that a Council budget is established and communicates budget information to the Finance/Administrative Services Committee.
  8. Establishes ad hoc committees and appoints their chairpersons; assigns specific tasks to individuals, delegates responsibilities and encourages cooperation.
  9. If there is no council liaison, is an ex officio member of all standing and ad hoc committees of the Council
  10. Assists the next chairperson in understanding the Council's history, responsibility and resources. Transfers all Council materials to the new chairperson.
  11. Serves as the parish delegate to the district meetings with Archdiocesan Pastoral Council member.
  12. Performs duties consistent with the office as the Council may direct.

- Section 5: The vice-chairperson
1. Conducts meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
  2. Becomes chairperson in the event of vacancy.
  3. Performs duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or the Council may direct.
- Section 6: The secretary:
1. Oversees the accurate recording of the minutes of each meeting and sees to it that the minutes and the agenda are made available to the Council members, committee chairpersons, and the parish. Provides a condensed report of the meeting for publication in the parish bulletin.
  2. Take attendance at meetings and records absences. Maintains the official list of all Council and standing committee officers and members and their terms, the list of all ad hoc committee chairpersons and members and keeps these lists current with regard to addresses and phone numbers. Completes the archdiocesan registry form following each annual selection and keeps this list current by informing the archdiocese of all changes.
  3. Maintains the official list of all Council and standing committee officers and members and their terms, the list of all ad hoc committee chairpersons and members and keeps these lists current with regard to addresses and phone numbers.
  4. Updates the Archdiocesan Extranet whenever a change in membership on Council occurs. This is done on-line. The Council secretary works with the parish web administrator to keep the archdiocesan registry current.
  5. Reports to the Council all communication. Handles correspondence for the Council, including agendas, minutes, notification of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
  6. Performs such duties consistent with office as the chairperson or Council may direct.

## **Article IV: MEETINGS**

- Section 1: Regular meetings of the Council shall be held at such time, place and date as the Council may designate. Prayer shall be an integral part of the meeting.
- Section 2: The agenda shall be developed in advance of the meeting based upon the proposals from committees, liaison reports, the Parish Council annual calendar, strategic/mission goals, ongoing needs and concerns of the

parish. Parishioners may submit items for consideration to any Council member one week before the meeting.

- Section 3: Advance notice of the time and place of the meetings of the Council shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be entitled and welcome to attend as observers. The Council may open any meeting to discussion by parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the Council may announce.
- Section 4: Special Meetings. Notice of special meetings shall be given to all members within a reasonable time before the meeting, stating its time, place and purpose. No other business than that stated, as the purpose shall be conducted at that meeting.
- Section 5: Closed Session. When a question arises at a council meeting that relates to a person's right to privacy, the council may request the absence of visitors for that portion of the meeting. The content of the closed session is not part of the formal minutes of the meeting and is not made public.
- Section 6: Absence. Notification of intended absence should be given to the Council Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Secretary before the meeting.

## **Article V: STANDING COMMITTEES**

- Section 1: Purpose: Each standing committee implements the Council's priorities and goals in its own areas of responsibility in the collaborative spirit of working together to accomplish the parish's stated mission. All committee work leads to building a faith community, proclaiming the Word of God, calling people to prayer and motivating people to serve others.
- Section 2: Scope. All committees are accountable to the Council. Committees make decisions in their areas of responsibility following the principle of subsidiary, which means making decisions at the most appropriate level in the parish committee structure.
- Section 3: Functions. The basic functions of each council standing committee are to:
1. Identify needs of the parish within its areas of responsibility and in keeping with the parish mission.
  2. Establish priorities among the needs and communicate how these needs can realistically be addressed and where inter-committee collaboration might be effective.
  3. Formulate long-range and short-term goals and objectives.

4. Research and investigate options to implement goals.
5. Submit the proposed programs to the Council for support.
6. Communicate with the pastor and pastoral staff about the implementation.
7. Maintain communication with the parish concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
8. Maintain communication with the respective archdiocesan offices and agencies for guidelines and resources.
9. Provide on-going formation of committee members in its areas of responsibility through workshops, study, spiritual formation, etc.
10. Determine budget priorities in the area of the committee's responsibility and make recommendations to the Council through the *Finance/Administrative Services Committee*.
11. Periodically evaluate existing programs and activities.
12. Provide the council with regular, oral or written reports of the work of their committees.

Section 4: The descriptions of the individual standing committees of the Council are:

**Prayer and Worship:** This committee exists to nourish and give direction to the liturgical aspects of parish life; to provide opportunities for parishioners to deepen their faith through a variety of prayer experiences and liturgical celebration, particularly the Sunday liturgy; to identify the spiritual growth needs of parishioners; to maintain ongoing programs of education and training for liturgical ministers. (The committee shall use recommendations of the Archdiocesan Office of Worship.)

**Christian Formation:** The primary role of this committee is to help the parish develop an understanding of its responsibility for promoting the educational mission of the Church. The committee makes recommendations to the Council regarding the total educational program of the parish; religious education for adults and children, youth ministry and special education consistent with the rules and recommendations of the Christian Formation Department of the Archdiocese.

**Human Concerns/Communication:** The purpose of this committee is to listen to the needs of the people in the parish and the wider community, including families and the elderly; to develop consciousness of the major social problems in the community and work with community groups to help solve them; to raise awareness of parishioners on issues relating to justice and peace on local, national and international levels. Approaches to human needs can be direct service, advocacy and empowerment. Every Christian is called to service; and the committee should involve others in actively accepting the responsibility of their baptism and to support those in the parish community who are already involved in service whether church-centered, or in some other area. This committee shall promote the

parish in a positive manner through communications; create among the people a feeling of truly belonging to the parish; develop an atmosphere of trust; keep parishioners informed of the activities and the programs of the parish, and to conduct a periodic census/survey of parish needs.

**Finance/Administrative:** The purpose of this committee is to establish and supervise a stewardship program for the parish, giving all parishioners an opportunity to share time, talent and treasure to serve the mission of the Church in the parish; and to make recommendations to the Council concerning all aspects of parish financial and budget matters. This committee does not decide priorities for the parish – that is the responsibility of the Council itself. The Administrative Services Committee works closely with and is supportive of all other committees. The pastor, lay trustees and business manager shall be members of this committee.

**Buildings and Grounds:** The concerns of this committee cover the physical conditions of the parish property, its maintenance and upkeep. It is helpful if members of this committee are knowledgeable in areas of construction, building trades, and maintenance.

**Board of Education (Also known as the School Board):** The St. John the Baptist Board of Education oversees the comprehensive Christian education for the youth of the school. The Board of Education makes policy recommendations to the Parish Council and provides communication between the parish community, the Church community and the Archdiocese. The Board of Education consists of seven (7) elected members, and three (3) *ex officio* members: the Pastor, the school Principal, and a member of the Home and School Board of Directors. Election of the Board of Education members is held each April in conjunction with the Parish Council election. One third of the membership is elected each year.

**Executive/Long-Term Planning Committee:** The responsibilities of this committee shall be to plan the agenda for each Council meeting in keeping with the reports submitted by each standing committee as well as the needs and concerns of the parish; to coordinate committee activities; to act with Council authority for any emergency which may occur between Council meetings, and to call a general parish meeting at least once a year. Also, this committee is to determine by careful and continuing research, the long-range needs of the parish community, and recommend priorities to the Council, in light of the mission of the Church in the Archdiocese, and the pastoral nature of the Parish Council ministry.

**Article VI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

The council may amend the bylaws by consensus or a two-thirds vote of the members at two consecutive meetings of the council.

Date of Approval by the Archdiocese: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Most Recent Amendment: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Next Full Review: \_\_\_\_\_

To: SJB Parish Council Members  
From: Joanne Schulz  
Subject: SJB Parish Council Constitution and Bylaws  
Date: October 28, 2004

I recently received a request from the Milwaukee Archdiocese requesting a copy of our Parish Council's Constitution and Bylaws. In their letter, they indicated that they were periodically reviewing each parish's documents and that Archbishop Dolan wished to review and approve the documents.

The Archdiocese has set up a template for each parish to follow for the constitution and bylaws, and ask that each parish conform to this template. In my review of these templates, I noticed that there were some changes in the order of the various articles as well as some minor wording changes.

Attached are rough drafts of each of the documents. These drafts reflect some of the changes the Archdiocese office is requesting. I have attempted to highlight the changes and variations with notes throughout the documents.

Please review the attached and plan to discuss some of the changes highlighted at the November meeting. If you wish to discuss any of these changes with me prior to the meeting, please don't hesitate to call. You can reach me at 892-2336.

If you wish to review the current Parish Council Constitution and Bylaws, please refer to Section 4 of your Parish Council Manual.