

GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

FINANCE COUNCIL CHARTER

The Parish

Good Shepherd Catholic Church exists to continue the mission of Jesus. Together, its pastor and parishioners grow to the fullness of their Christian calling, through communal worship, individual prayer, lifelong faith formation, stewardship of gifts and talents, outreach, fellowship, and hospitality.

The Pastor

The pastor is obliged to make provision so that the word of God is proclaimed in its entirety to those living in the parish; he is to work so that the Christian faithful are nourished through the devout celebration of the sacraments; with generous love he is to help the sick, particularly those close to death; with particular diligence he is to seek out the poor, the afflicted, the lonely. He is to work so that spouses and parents are supported in fulfilling their proper duties and is to foster the growth of Christian life in the family. A pastor is to recognize and promote the proper part which the lay members of the Christian faithful have the mission of the Church; in all juridic affairs the pastor represents the parish according to the norm of law; and he is to take care that the resources of the parish are administered according to the norm of law. (See Code of Canon Law, canons 528, 529, 532.)

Parishioners

Through baptism, all are reborn in Christ, are incorporated into the Church, and share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal mission of Christ. Each person is called to take responsibility for the mission of the Church in the world. Lay persons who excel in necessary knowledge, prudence and integrity are qualified to assist the pastors as experts and advisors, even in councils according to the norm of law (Canon 228).

Introduction

Canon 537 introduces the Parish Finance Council as a mandated body having an advisory and consultative role with the pastor. Each parish is to have a finance council regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council, the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish resources with due regard for the prescription of Canon 532.

Purpose of the Finance Council

The Finance Council (hereafter referred to as the Council) serves as a consultative and advisory resource to the Pastor and as such shall advise and make recommendations to the Pastor on all matters about the financial management of the Parish. (Canon 536.§2). The relationship between the Pastor and the Council should be collaborative and support the mission of the parish. In this context members are encouraged to seek the views of other parishioners on important matters and the pastor is strongly encouraged to give due consideration to the advice and recommendations of the Council. While the Parish Finance Council does not have decision-making authority, consultation is at the heart of the decision-making process – sharing information, listening, contributing to the discussion, and promoting consensus. The Council shall meet at least quarterly.

The principal duties of the Council are to assist in creating and monitoring:

Annual Capital and Operating Budget

- Assist in establishing timelines for development and implementation of the annual capital and operating budget. The pastor is responsible for the actual coordination/preparation of all parish budgets. The pastor is encouraged to elicit the assistance of the parish business manager to prepare the parish budget and the advice of the Finance Council.
- Determine if the parish budget is prepared in accordance with the accounting chart of accounts and reporting formats required by the Diocese.
- Review the annual parish and consolidated capital and operating budgets; and make recommendations to the pastor for changes as appropriate.

Financial Records and Reporting

April 18, 2018

- Review financial statements, including annual reports, to help determine that diocesan policies regarding fiscal and accounting procedures are being followed, and verify that cash balances have been reconciled.
- Review and monitor the Budget and make recommendations to the Pastor concerning any adjustments that are necessary to stay within the Budget.
- Review income and expense reports quarterly.
- Review the annual financial report to the Diocese prior to submission to help determine the accuracy and completeness; and, that the report is submitted by the prescribed due date.
- Assist in preparing/presenting/communicating an annual financial report (Balance Sheet and Statement of Activity) to parishioners concerning the parish's financial status.
- Monitor payments of all loans and diocesan assessments to determine that all payments are accurate and paid on a timely basis.
- Monitor parish contribution trends.

Strategic Planning

- Assist in developing, implementing and funding a long term parish capital improvement plan.
- Assist in developing a financial program for the care and maintenance of parish facilities.
- Advise the pastor on significant expenditures before making a purchase or lease commitment.

Internal Controls

- Review/audit the financial reports for parish general operations, to determine that proper accounting practices and internal control procedures have been implemented and are being followed.
- When a change of pastor or parochial administrator occurs, assist with providing the new pastor or administrator a complete report of the parish's financial condition.

Membership

In addition to the Pastor, the Finance Council will consist of at least five members appointed by the Pastor. The Pastoral Associate, and the Director of Finance are ex-officio members of the Council. The Chair of the Council will be an ex-officio member of the Parish Pastoral Council.

The Finance Council Leadership shall consist of a Chair and Secretary. Discernment and judgment of the Pastor will determine selection and rotation of leadership. The Finance Council Chair shall consult with the Pastor, Pastoral Associate and Director of Finance to plan meetings; publish an agenda; prepare background materials and facilitate meetings.

The Finance Council Secretary shall: maintain complete and accurate records of meetings and activities and identify and distribute materials to members prior to meetings.

Any Good Shepherd Parishioner is eligible to serve on the Finance Council. Members serve in a fiduciary capacity and, as such, need the ability to study, analyze, and examine financial matters and to make sound recommendations. Members should have empathy for the poor and the capacity to balance legitimate needs with available resources and should be able to listen to differing opinions, integrate various points of view and discern with others what is best for the Parish. Members should be open to the workings of the Holy Spirit for guidance.

Terms of Office

Council members shall serve a three-year term, which will begin on 1 September of the year they are appointed. Members will be eligible to serve no more than two consecutive terms.