

# **Saint Stephen's Parish Council**

## **Standing Committee Guidelines**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **PURPOSE**

Each standing committee and ad hoc committee, hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”, implements the Parish Council’s priorities and goals in its own area of responsibility in the collaborative spirit of working together to accomplish the parish’s 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.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **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. The basic functions of each Committee are:

- a. To identify needs of the parish within its areas of responsibility and in keeping with the parish mission.
- b. To establish priorities among needs and communicate these needs to the Council, discerning with them which needs can realistically be addressed and where various committee collaboration might be effective.
- c. To formulate long-range and short-term goals and objectives.
- d. To research and investigate options to implement goals.
- e. To submit the proposed programs the Council for support.
- f. To communicate with the pastor, pastoral staff and parish about the implementation.
- g. To maintain communication with the parish concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
- h. To maintain communication with the respective archdiocesan offices and agencies for guidelines and resources.
- i. To provide on-going formation of Committee members in its areas of responsibility through workshops, study, spiritual formation, etc.
- j. To determine budget priorities in the area of the Committee’s responsibility and make recommendations to the Council through the Administrative Services Committee.
- k. To periodically evaluate existing programs and activities. In any case where any Committee member interprets an action of a Committee to be outside the limits of its responsibilities, that member shall present such interpretation to the Council liaison or a council officer no later than the meeting of the Council and ask for reconsideration by the Council. Pending reconsideration, the effect of the Committee actions shall be suspended.

## ARTICLE III

### **MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** Ordinarily all Committee members must be baptized, practicing Catholics, as well as registered members of the parish. Exceptions are granted through Council consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of those Council members present, renewable every year. Examples: Ecumenical committee, or Interfaith, or MICAH (Milwaukee Inner City Churches Allied for Hope) group, partnership/collaboration committee with another church or city agency, advisory committee to the Family Life Center. On any of these Committees all members participate equally in decision making. The Family Life Committee is the exception as of this writing. Since this committee serves the broader community its representation reflects that reality.

**Section 2.** The Committee itself and its subcommittees shall recruit committee members actively and continuously.

**Section 3.** The term for Committee members shall be one year, renewable annually. Annual membership lists shall be submitted to the Council secretary.

**Section 4.** Any Committee member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Committee chairperson.

**Section 5.** At any regular meeting a member may be removed for good cause through Committee consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of those Committee members present. 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 Committee member.

**Section 6.** The Council secretary shall be notified of Committee membership and any charges.

**Section 7.** Each new member is to be adequately prepared for membership on the committee by being provided with the opportunities for spiritual growth, appropriate theological formation and the skills and information required for membership on the Committee.

## ARTICLE IV

### **OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The officers of each Committee shall be a chairperson and a secretary. Officers shall be discerned annually by and from the Committee based on their competence, leadership and knowledge of the Committee's responsibilities. Offices shall be filled in the following order: chairperson and secretary.

**Section 2.** Each officer shall serve for a one-year term. Consecutive terms shall be decided through Committee consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of those Committee members present. Ex-officio members of the Council are ineligible to serve as Committee officers.

**Section 3.** The Committee Chairperson:

- a. Is aware of the tasks and responsibilities of the Committee and communicates this to the Committee, Council and parish community.
- b. Organizes/coordinates activities and processes of the Committee; develops and maintains an annual Committee calendar consistent with the Council calendar.
- c. May prepare the meeting agenda for submission to Committee members three days prior to the meeting.
- d. Provides formation/education for Committee members in its areas of responsibility, utilizing the parish staff, community resources and/or offerings on the district and archdiocesan levels.
- e. Conducts meetings by assisting the Committee members to work together effectively and arrive at appropriate decisions through consensus.

- f. Works with the Committee to set goals and priorities in accordance with the Archdiocesan Guidelines, the Parish Mission Statement, and the Committee Mission Statement in their particular areas of responsibility.
- g. Monitors implementation of all Committee decisions.
- h. Establishes a budget based on Committee objectives and communicates budget information to the Administrative Services Committee.
- i. Oversees recruitment and orientation of new Committee members.
- j. Assists the next chairperson in understanding the Committee's history, responsibilities and resources; transfers all Committee material to the new chairperson.
- k. Is encouraged to meet with the Council once a year and report on the committee's activities.
- l. Performs duties consistent with the office as the Council or Committee may direct.

**Section 4.** The Committee Secretary:

- a. 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 Committee members; Council and all other Committees shall be provided with the minutes.
- b. Takes attendance at meetings and records absences.
- c. Maintains the official list of all Committee members and their terms, and keeps this list current with regard to addresses and phone numbers.
- d. Handles correspondence for the Committee including agenda, minutes, notification of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
- e. Performs duties consistent with the office as the chairperson or Committee may direct.

**ARTICLE V**

**MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** Regular Committee meetings shall be held as the Council and the Committee may designate. Each meeting will consist of prayer/formation, decision-making, and planning. A calendar of the year's meeting dates shall be given to the council chairperson, the pastor, and the parish secretary (for the parish calendar).

**Section 2.** An agenda shall be agreed upon in advance by the Committee, based on an understanding of the on-going needs and concerns of the parish, within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities. A written agenda may be presented to Committee members 3 days prior to each meeting.

**Section 3.** Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, Council chairperson, pastor, or a quorum of the Committee. A quorum consists of a majority of the members. Notice of such meetings all be given to all Committee members within a reasonable time prior to the meeting, indicating its time, place, and purpose. No business other than that stated as the purpose, shall be conducted at that meeting.

**Section 4.** Advance notice of the time and place of Committee meetings shall be published in the parish bulletin, and all members of the parish shall be entitled and welcomed to attend as observers. The Committee chairperson may open any meeting to discussion by parish members on such subjects and under such rules as the chairperson may announce.

**ARTICLE VI**

**MANNER OF OPERATION**

Committees' manner of operation shall be communal discernment, which includes prayerful reflection, gathering of information and dialogue. The usual method of reaching decisions shall be through Committee consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be reached by an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of those Committee members present.

**ARTICLE VII**

**AMENDMENTS**

The Council may revise these Committee guidelines by consensus or by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those Council members present.

Date of approval by the Parish Council-----June 8, 2006

Date of approval by the Archdiocese-----

Date of approval by the Parish-----

Date of most recent Amendment:-----

Date of next full review:-----June 2010