

## Parish Meetings Package

The materials in this package were designed for the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council. However, any parish group may find the information helpful and is welcome to make use of it.

### **The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)**

<b>Roles in the PPC</b>
<b>President</b> – always the parish priest
<b>Chairperson</b> – to animate and chair the meetings of the PPC (i.e. encourage active participation of all and free expression of views)
<b>Secretary</b> – preferably not a member of the PPC
<b>Agenda</b>
The agenda is to be drawn up by the president and chairperson of the PPC, either at an in-person meeting or by consultation using phone, email, etc. The Secretary may also be present at this meeting, to record the decisions. At the PPC meeting, items may be suggested for addition to the agenda by any council member. Agenda items may be suggested by any council member to the President for subsequent meetings.
Every meeting includes an opening and a closing prayer.
Rule of thumb: at least 1/3 of the time of each meeting is spent in spiritual development/faith formation.
<b>Meetings</b>
There should be one meeting each month, except July and August. The President may call special meetings, either on his own initiative or at the request of one or more council members.
<b>PPC decisions: Authority and procedure</b>
As noted above, the PPC is a consultative voice on decisions regarding pastoral care of a parish and the parish's integration into the pastoral life of a region or a diocese. In addition, "neither the [PPC] nor the [parish priest] has the authority to take decisions that would contradict the common good of the parish or properly established diocesan policies."
The PPC is a consultative body whose decisions are recommendations to the president. That means, the decisions of the PPC must be ratified by its president in order to take effect.
It is desirable that the decisions of the PPC are made by consensus. However, when consensus is not possible, vote-taking may be used. In those cases, the outcome of a vote is recorded in the meeting minutes. The president does <b>not</b> vote.
What constitutes quorum for voting on PPC decisions is established in the PPC constitution.

(The information in quotation marks is taken from *\*The Parish Pastoral Council: Guidelines for the Development of Constitutions*. Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. 1984: Concacan Inc.)

## **The Parish Finance Council (PFC)**

<b>Roles in the PFC</b>
<b>President</b> – always the parish priest
<b>Chairperson</b> – to chair the meetings of the PFC
<b>Secretary</b> – preferably not a member of the PFC
<b>Agenda</b>
President and chairperson coordinate the agenda. Declaration of Conflict of Interest must be a standing item on the agenda.
Every meeting includes an opening and a closing prayer.
Rule of thumb: at least 1/3 of the time of each meeting is spent in spiritual development/faith formation.
<b>Meetings</b>
The PFC should meet between 4 and 8 times per year. The President may call special meetings, either on his own initiative or at the request of one or more council members.
<b>Best practices for reviewing financial information at meetings</b>
The parish priest and the PFC will review the monthly parish financial statements at least quarterly and within ten days of production of the most recent statements.
The PFC and/or the parish priest will ensure the statements are made available to all parishioners the first Sunday after the PFC review. The PFC will include explanatory notes with the statements made available to parishioners if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• there are deviations from the annual budget; and/or,</li><li>• there is new or unanticipated spending or income;</li></ul>
<b>Archdiocesan Financial Policies</b>
**Written permission from the Archbishop is needed for expenditures on any project that exceeds \$5,000. (See Policy 3.4.2)
**Contracts shall be used for all capital/building projects. Contact the Chancery for assistance.
**Parishes are to follow Policy 3.1.2 Pooled Investment Fund with respect to managing their daily operations funds. The PFC is responsible for ensuring the compliance of the parish.

## **Effective Meetings and Recordkeeping for PPC and PFC**

<b>Suggested Ground Rules</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin on time</li><li>• Group members will help chairperson to keep the meeting on topic</li><li>• Avoid “side conversations”</li></ul>

- Seek to understand all perspectives
- Follow through on tasks
- Hold each other accountable
- Always be respectful of one another

### **Record of Meeting and Recommendations (Minutes)**

The Minutes of every PPC and PFC meeting should record what was done at the meeting, not what was said by those present. Minutes should include:

- Date, time and place of the meeting
- Attendance, regrets (prior notice of absence given), and absences
- Recommended actions
- Reports (name of report/committee; name of author and submitter)
- Recommended actions arising from reports
- Delegations and action items
- Adjournment

### **Approval of Minutes**

- The minutes of the previous meeting should be approved before the rest of the meeting's business is discussed.
- Corrections of the minutes should be recorded in those minutes.
- Amendments to the minutes need a motion that is seconded and carried, recorded in the minutes of this meeting. Amendments and corrections must be made to the affected minutes and those minutes then become part of the official record of the PPC/PFC.

### **Directing Discussion**

- The chairperson is responsible for conducting the meeting and directing discussion.
- Use the agenda and ground rules to keep the discussion on topic.
- Where agenda items require it, recommendations for action must be made, debated, and disposed of, in accordance with the principles below.
- The chairperson guides the discussion, facilitates the participation of all council members, and ensures the secretary is taking accurate notes of the necessary information for the minutes.

### **Principles for Recommendations for Action and Debates**

- All members of the PPC/PFC can make recommendations for action.
- The secretary records the words of the recommendations for action.
- Only one member at a time should be speaking during discussion of a recommendation, after being "recognized" by the chairperson. All members have the right to speak to all recommendations. No one may speak a second time until all members who wish to speak have done so a first time.
- If the recommendation is not adopted by consensus, it may be disposed of with a vote, that should be recorded in the minutes, e.g. the recommendation has been referred to a

committee for further study; debate on the recommendation has been postponed until the next meeting (with reasons provided).

### **Best practices for recording decisions in minutes of PPC and PFC meetings**

The principal purposes of meeting minutes is to create a record of the decisions made and the next steps planned, and to identify and track action items. The PPC and the PFC should each have a recording secretary who is responsible for note taking at the meeting and preparing the minutes for review and acceptance at the next meeting.

Minutes of meetings will include:

- the names of those present and absent. The names of those who gave notice of their absence can be recorded as “Regrets”.
- the time the meeting was called to order and by whom.
- details about the review of the minutes of the previous meeting, including any corrections or amendments.
- decisions made about each agenda action item (old business, ongoing business)
- a record of all motions and whether they were accepted or rejected
- any new business items discussed at the meeting
- the time the meeting was adjourned and by whom.
- The signature of the parish priest (or the chairperson of the PPC or PFC) and the signature of the secretary who wrote the minutes, after the minutes have been reviewed and accepted.

## Appendix – Agenda Templates

*Name of Parish*  
**Parish Pastoral Council Meeting**  
[day], [date] at [time]  
[location], [town], Alberta

### Agenda:

1. Call to Order & Opening Prayer
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the [date] meeting
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Spiritual development/Faith formation
5. Business arising from the Minutes / Old business
6. On-going business/Standing items
7. New business
8. Closing Prayer & Adjournment

Next meeting date: [date, time, place]

*Name of Parish*  
**Parish Finance Council Meeting**  
[day], [date] at [time]  
[location], [town], Alberta

### Agenda:

1. Call to Order & Opening Prayer
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the [date] meeting
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Spiritual development/Faith formation
5. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest
6. Business arising from the Minutes / Old business
7. On-going business/Standing items
  - a) Review of parish monthly financial statements
8. New business
9. Closing Prayer & Adjournment

Next meeting date: [date, time, place]

## Appendix – Templates for Minutes

*Name of Parish*  
*Minutes of the Parish Pastoral Council Meeting*  
held on [day], [date] at [time]  
[location], [town], Alberta

**Present:** [List of members in attendance]

**Regrets:** [List of members who notified Father or the chairperson of absence]

**Absent:** [List of members absent without notice.]

**1. Call to order & opening prayer**

[Chairperson] called the meeting to order at ## p.m. [Name] led the meeting in an opening prayer.

**2. Adoption of the Minutes of the [date] meeting**

[Secretary] read out the minutes of the [date meeting]. [Name] moved the minutes be adopted as read. [Name] seconded the motion. Carried.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

Items were added under Old business and New business. Agenda was adopted as amended.

**4. Spiritual development/Faith formation**

Continued study of the document, The Church in the Modern World.

**5. Business arising from the Minutes / Old business**

**a) [Item name]**

Discussion of how best to... PPC recommended [action].

**6. On-going business/Standing items**

**7. New business**

**8. Closing prayer & adjournment**

[Name] led the meeting in a closing prayer. [Chairperson] adjourned the meeting at ## p.m.

Priest's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting secretary's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Parish*  
*Parish Finance Council Meeting*  
held on [day], [date] at [time]  
[location], [town], Alberta

**Present:** [List of members in attendance]

**Regrets:** [List of members who notified Father or the chairperson of absence]

**Absent:** [List of members absent without notice.]

**1. Call to order & opening prayer**

[Chairperson] called the meeting to order at ## p.m. [Name] led the meeting in an opening prayer.

**2. Adoption of the Minutes of the [date] meeting**

[Secretary] read out the minutes of the [date meeting]. [Name] moved the minutes be adopted as read. [Name] seconded the motion. Carried.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

Items were added under Old business and New Business. Agenda was adopted as amended.

**4. Spiritual development/Faith formation**

Continued study of the document, The Church in the Modern World.

**5. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

[Name] declared a conflict of interest in the agenda item [name or number here]. OR No Declarations of Conflicts of Interest were made.

**6. Business arising from the Minutes / Old business**

**a) [Item name]**

Discussion of how best to...PPC recommended [action].

**7. On-going business/Standing items**

**a) Review of monthly parish financial statements**

[Name] distributed the parish financial statements for [list of months]. [Describe results of review, e.g. The statements were accepted as presented; or, corrections were requested for [month] statement(s); etc.]

**8. New business**

**9. Closing prayer & adjournment**

[Name] led the meeting in a closing prayer. [Chairperson] adjourned the meeting at ## p.m.

Priest's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting secretary's signature: \_\_\_\_\_