ACC Finance Council Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2026 5:00 pm Large Meeting Room at HF

Attendance: Fr. Joe Fleming, Maureen Watt, Cy Schaefer, Don Crum, Bob Gallagher, Mike Piper

Fr. Joe opened with a quick prayer.

Fr. Joe asked each person to give a brief description of their experience with financial matters. This information will be included in a short bio that will be put out with the members of the Finance Council.

After a brief discussion, Maureen Watt was selected as the Finance Council Chairperson. Father Joe will work with her to get her name added to the signing authority on our various bank accounts and to remove any old non-active names.

The initial 2026-27 budget was reviewed prior to submission to the Diocese for approval by the Bishop. It was noted that the "Aid to Needy" budget line was $247,000 and questioned why it was so high. Fr Joe wasn't sure and said he would check into it. (Revision: Fr. Joe had asked Deanna to include monies from a worksheet for the proposed Food Bank relocation to our parking lot. The total anticipated amount had been entered and Fr. Joe had Deanna revise it down to $50,000 as a placeholder maximum that we could possible consider donating to the project. Details of this still have to be worked through in the coming months.)

Some council members asked for some further details about the monies we had in various accounts that the budget report didn't reflect. Fr. Joe said he would send out reports to the whole group to review. (Revision: Fr. Joe sent out a copy of the current Balance Sheet and a Profit & Loss Statement for the past fiscal year to date. These reports showed our assets that are invested in checking, savings, CD's, endowments, stocks and other cash equivalents.)

Fr. Joe reported that the budget for next year includes new part time positions for a Music Director and Youth Ministry Director or an equivalent full time

position that encompasses all the responsibilities of both jobs. The position is posted in the Diocesan News Letter and the Youth and Young Adult Ministry staff have been letting people know about the positions at our colleges and universities to see if there may be any interest by Focus Ministry or other staff that work in that field. So far we have had no applications.

We talked briefly about the project to install pews with kneelers in the Holy Family Church. We have one bid of approximately $200,000 from a national vendor and had just received a bid from Montana Correctional Enterprises (MCE) of an equivalent bid that was under $80,000. MCE is presently working on pews for 2 other churches in our Diocese and has done woodworking projects for Immaculate Conception and other churches that were very high quality. Fr. Joe will be working to firm up the specifications on the proposal and make sure all the requirements are accurately captured before asking for the final bid.

We discussed getting automatic door openers for both our churches. Fr. Joe had received bids of approximately $5,000/door in the past but didn't proceed with the project until it could be brought before the Pastoral and Finance Councils. The Pastoral Council was supportive of the project and at the meeting today, the Finance Council agreed that it would be worthwhile to proceed to get the door openers for our aging population that are struggling now getting in and out of church. Fr. Joe will pursue getting new bids for the project and then move forward with getting door openers ordered. We also discussed adding a ramp to the front door of Saint Peter. It was stated that it had been investigated in the past and determined that it couldn't be done. Fr. Joe believes that there may still be a way to do something to add a ramp to the front door of Saint Peter and will continue to investigate options.

Fr. Joe explained our opportunity to participate in the Parish Investment Fund (PIF) through the Foundation for the Diocese of Helena (FDOH). The PIF is an investment fund managed by Schwab that gives participants the opportunity to invest in equities, bonds and money market accounts that are professionally managed to insure that money is only invested in funds that follow Catholic Social Justice investment principles so we don't have money is stocks that provide abortion services or medications. We can invest money in the various accounts by percentages and add or withdraw as needed. The

PIF allows churches to invest in more aggressive entities for long term growth or keep the money in relatively low risk bond and money market accounts.

We also have money in endowments at the FDOH that pay annual dividends that average 4.5%. These funds can be either distributed quarterly or allowed to accumulate. Each year we get to make a decision how we want our endowment distributions to be handled and we decided as a group to go ahead and select letting the endowments continue to accumulate and not take out any dividends this coming year.

We also briefly discussed the FDOH Grants that we are applying for. One would provide $15,000 if we invest an additional $85,000 to fund a $100,000 endowment to pay for future youth evangelization and support programs. This is in essence free money and could provide $4,500 a year in dividends to pay for youth to go to Legendary Lodge and participate in other youth activities.

The second grand was for a sales station at the entrance of Holy Family where we would set up display cases and fill them the all sorts of Catholic items like: Bible, statues, crucifixes, medals, Rosaries, … These could sold before/after Mass on Sunday and available during the week supported by office staff. We are also working on a Logo for our parishes that we could imprint on t-shirts, hoodies, journals, and other items that would provide a way to evangelize and get our name out more into the public when people proudly wear or use the branded items. The parishes will be asked to vote and choose from a set of logos that are being developed now by the Pastoral Council.

Once the Madaline Sugrue bequest is received, the Finance Council will be tasked with how best to invest and use these funds. We will look at all the investment opportunities available to us and place our funds in secure investments that will provide additional revenue streams going forward as well as emergency funds if the need arises.

We will be creating web pages for the Pastoral and Finance Councils. Members of each council will be published on these pages as well as the approved minutes from our meetings and financial reports on how we are doing with our collections and managing our expenses and staying on our planned budget.

Respectfully submitted by Fr. Joseph P Fleming.

Next Meeting: 5:00 PM July 7th.