

Saint Joseph Parish Shelbyville, Indiana
Parish Council Constitution
(revised 10/23/07)

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be: St. Joseph Parish Council, Shelbyville, Indiana, hereinafter know as the Parish Council.

Section 2. The Mission Statement of the Parish Council shall be that of St. Joseph Parish.

As an active Roman Catholic presence in Shelby County since 1868, St. Joseph Parish proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the 21st century through the celebration of the Mass and the Sacraments. With a spirit of fellowship, our mission is to provide a place for prayer, faith formation, education, and community service for people of all ages, in all states of life.

Section 3. Its purpose shall be:

1. To serve as an advisory body to the Pastor.
2. To be a voice by which the feelings and needs of parishioners concerning parish welfare might be made known to the Pastor.
3. To prayerfully discern the immediate and long term needs of the parish community and establish clear and concise goals and objectives based on the parish mission statement and the emerging needs of the parish community.
4. To identify the gifts and talents of the members of the parish community and call them forth to service.
5. To coordinate, encourage and promote every apostolic activity within the parish community through the various parish ministries that report to the parish council.
6. To collaborate with the Pastor in formulating and implementing policies consistent with our faith, civil and church law and the policies of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.
7. To approve the appointment of individuals chosen to represent the parish to organizations outside the parish.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Every person 18 years or older who is a Catholic in good-standing with the church and is a registered member of St. Joseph's Parish for a minimum of one (1) year is eligible to be a member of the Parish Council with approval of the Pastor.

Section 2. The Parish Council shall consist of nine (9) voting members, seven (7) elected and two (2) appointed by the Pastor according to Article X.

Section 3. Only one (1) member from the same household may serve on the Parish Council at the same time.

Section 4. A parish member may not serve on the Parish Council if a member of his or her immediate family is an employee of St. Joseph's Parish.

Section 5. If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Parish Council, the Pastor may canvass for or appoint a volunteer replacement.

Article III. Terms of Office

Section 1. The term of office of all members to the Parish Council shall be three (3) years. Members will serve one (1), three (3) year term and must wait at least one (1) year before being re-elected or reappointed.

Section 2. The term of office shall begin with the July meeting.

Section 3. The terms of office shall be staggered with three (3) members joining the council each year. The first and second years, two (2) members shall be elected and one (1) shall be appointed. The third year, three (3) members will be elected.

Section 4. The staggering of all terms shall start with the 2008 elections. Three (3) members shall stand for election or appointment along with any other nominated parishioner in 2008. In 2009, three (3) members not elected or appointed in 2008 or in the third year of their term shall stand for election or appointment along with other nominated parishioners.

Article IV. Officers: Elections

Section 1. Three (3) officers shall be elected at the July meeting:

Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary. Together with the Pastor, they will make up the Parish Council Executive Committee. (See Article V. Officers: Duties)

Section 2. No first year member can be elected as an officer. A first year member shall be defined as being newly elected or newly appointed.

Section 3. Term of office shall be one (1) year. An open nomination system will be used. A member may nominate him/herself.

Section 4. A quorum vote of the Council shall decide the elections of officers.

Article V. Officers: Duties

Section 1. The Chairperson shall have the following duties:

- a. Call and preside at all meetings of the council and executive committee.
- b. Be responsible for initiating nominations of newly elected members of parish council.
- c. Call and preside over the first meeting of the succeeding council until the new chairperson has been installed.
- d. Meet and prepare, in consultations with the executive committee, an agenda, and distribute it one week prior to the regular council meeting.

Section 2. The Vice Chairperson shall have the following duties:

- a. To chair meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
- b. To assist the Chairperson in overseeing Council's activities.
- c. To succeed the Chairperson in case of resignation or disqualification.
- d. Serve as a liaison to one (1) of the Parish Commissions. (See Article VII. Parish Commissions).
- e. To attend Executive Committee meetings.

Section 3. The Secretary shall have the following duties:

- a. To maintain written records of minutes of all Parish Council meetings.
- b. To maintain an attendance record of all Parish Council members.
- c. To maintain a current record of the names, addresses, e-mail addresses and telephones numbers of all Parish Council members, including dates of election or appointment and terms and offices held.

- d. To distribute prior to Parish Council meetings the agenda of the forthcoming meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting to Parish Council members and to post same to the Parish website.
- e. To attend Executive Committee meetings.

Article VI. Members: Duties

Section 1. All members shall assist in the decision making process.
(See Article IX)

Section 2. Each non-officer member and the Vice Chairperson shall be appointed as a Liaison to one (1) of the seven (7) Parish Commissions. (See Article VII)

Section 3. Council liaisons shall communicate with, obtain the minutes of or submit a written report from their respective Parish Commission to the Parish Council monthly. The reports shall outline progress on all goals, activities and concerns of the Commission and its Committees.

Section 4. The reports shall be distributed to all Parish Council members prior to the regular Parish Council meeting through the Parish Council Secretary.

Section 5. Liaisons shall attend the scheduled meetings of their assigned commission at least quarterly.

Article VII. Parish Commissions: Definition and Duties

Section 1. A commission assists the Pastoral Council in the mission of the parish through planning, policy development and the coordination of activities within a specific area of the parish's ministries.

Section 2. Each commission may have three (3) officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

Section 3. Each Commission shall develop its own mission statement and, if applicable, by-laws that compliment the Parish Council and Archdiocesan directives.

Section 4. The Commissions may be composed of various committees to assist them in their function.

Section 5. Special ad hoc committees may be established from time

to time by agreement of Parish Council membership to meet specific objectives. Such ad hoc committees may be established as defined by the Parish Council.

Section 6. The following Parish Commissions and their respective purposes shall be created as defined by the St. Joseph Pastoral Council Constitution:

- a. The Finance Commission
- b. The Faith Formation Commission
- c. The School Commission
- d. The Administration Commission
- e. The Spiritual Life Commission
- f. The Planning Commission
- g. The Parish Life And Outreach Commission

Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Parish Council shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. No meetings will be held in the month of December unless deemed necessary. Regular meeting dates can be changed if Parish Council deems it necessary.

Section 2. The Chairperson or Pastor may call other meetings of the Parish Council upon written or verbal notice being given to all members of the Parish Council at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3. Parish Council meetings shall be open to all members of the Parish. The Parish Council reserves the right to meet in executive session.

Section 4. Concerns, proposals or requests by any parishioner may be submitted in writing to the Council through the Parish Office made to the attention of the Executive Committee at least one (1) week in advance of the regular Council meeting. Disposition of the proposal follows the normal procedure for new business for the Parish Council.

Article IX. Decision Making Process

Section 1. The decision making process of the Pastoral Council shall be one of consensus after discussion.

Section 2. If consensus is not reached, a quorum vote shall be

enough to make a favorable decision, provided at least five members are present.

Section 3. By Church law, the Pastor alone is responsible and accountable to the Bishop for the Parish; therefore, all decisions and actions of the council must be ratified by the Pastor.

a. The Pastor's ratification automatically will be presumed upon their knowledge of said decisions or actions unless otherwise indicated to the council within ten (10) days. Withholding ratification normally would involve the following evidence that the action is contrary to:

1. Faith or morals.
2. General Church laws.
3. Archdiocesan policy as established by the Archbishop and the duly recognized boards and commissions with which he shares responsibility.
4. The pastoral and administrative needs of the parishioners.
5. The general good of the parish.

Article X. Elections and Nominations

Section 1. The nominating committee will be formed during the January meeting. Two retiring members of the Pastoral Council and two-second year members will compose the nominating committee.

Section 2. The nominating committee is responsible for preparing ballots, verifying the nominee's eligibility as defined by Article II, conducting the election and tabulating votes.

Section 3. Parish Council elections will be held annually during the first two weeks of June.

Section 4. The election process shall take seven (7) Sundays, which will allow the election itself to take place on the seventh Sunday. The election process may be adjusted to compensate for the Church calendar. The procedures for election are as follows:

a. First Sunday- bulletin announcement. All items in "Subsection a" are to be published in the Sunday bulletin.

1. A list shall be published of the current members of the Parish Council.

2. A schedule of the meeting days (days of the month), as well as a list of important events that members would be expected to attend

shall be published.

3. Exclusions to membership on the Parish Council are as follows:

? Only one member from the same household may serve on the Parish Council at the same time.

? A parish member may not serve on the Parish Council if a member of his or her immediate family is an employee of St. Joseph Parish.

b. Second and Third Sunday- Nominating Process

1. Nominations of parish members for the elections shall be taken.

2. No parish member's name shall be placed on a ballot until that member has been asked personally to be a candidate, and has given his or her permission.

3. A list of nominees shall be compiled and approved by the Pastor.

4. It shall be the Nominating Committee's duty to inform the nominees to the council and invite them to attend an information session concerning the duties of council members.

c. Fourth and Fifth Week- Information session

1. All nominees must attend an information session to be held after the third Sunday of the nomination process.

2. The purpose of the information session shall be a meeting of prayer and discussion to thoroughly acquaint nominees for the parish council with the duties and responsibilities of council membership and to answer any questions the nominees may have.

3. Current Parish Council members shall conduct the information session, with the assistance and guidance of the Pastor.

4. At this information session, if a nominee decides to decline the nomination, he or she shall be given the opportunity to decline his or her nomination without pressure or embarrassment. Those who decide to retain the nomination will be asked to formally accept the nomination in writing within seven (7) days after the information session, thus signifying that they would willingly accept council membership and become a candidate for election.

5. Every effort should be made to allow all nominees an opportunity to attend information session.

d. Sixth Sunday- Biographies

1. At the information session, each candidate shall be asked to complete a biography. The biography may be obtained at a different time if necessary.

2. The information contained in the biography should include: name (maiden name, if applicable), spouse, children, address, type of work, number of years the candidate has been a parish member, and other positions and ministries in which the candidate has served in the parish.

3. The biographies shall be attached to the sixth Sunday's bulletin.

e. Seventh Sunday- Election

1. The nominating committee shall prepare ballots for the election.

2. Ballots shall be distributed at the appropriate time and voting conducted.

3. Those registered members of the parish 18 years of age or older are entitled to vote.

4. The nominating committee shall tabulate the vote and report the results as described in Article X. Section 2.

Section 5. The newly elected council members shall assume their offices at the first regular meeting in July.

Section 6. Upon request, the past council officers and commission liaisons shall act as advisors to the parish council.

Article XI. Amendments and Revisions

Section 1. This constitution may be amended and/or revised at any regular or special meeting of the Parish Council.

Section 2. Amendments and revisions must be presented in writing

to all members of the Parish Council at least ten (10) days prior to any meeting. Any amendment or revision submitted to the Parish Council shall be discussed at the meeting at which it is presented but not formally accepted until the next regular meeting. (For ratification see Article IX, section 3.)

Section 3. At least five (5) members must be present.

Article XII. Adoption

Section 1. This constitution shall be in effect when approved by the decision making process defined in Article IX.