



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Council #12510
To All Brother Knights
Plan and Budget
September 17, 2011

Brothers,

During our most recent business meeting there was a motion voted upon and passed to approve the 2011-2012 Council Plan and Budget. You will find it posted on the website <http://tinyurl.com/3kvh4sk> . Please take some time to read it and feel free to make comments.

There was a good deal of discussion with many valuable comments. This is a central topic for us so I wanted to review a few issues for everyone's benefit. Here is a short history of the process with our intentions and my perspective on where we are.

History

Several years ago two processes started and have matured in parallel actions. Our Council had grown to a size that we needed more structure and we also wanted to insure that we stay true to the central focus of our charter which is to benefit widows and orphans. With lots of new blood coming into the group we also wanted to create a unity with our heritage locally. All of this needed to be addressed in the context of a volunteer organization filled with busy people devoting part time efforts to our cause.

At that time a Charity Task Force was created to address these dual topics. We had been approached by more and more requests to donate time and money but questioned how to evaluate decisions. The good news was that we had been identified as an effective group. The challenge was how to manage the process. Father O'Keeffe additionally asked us to address situations where widows were left with lots of new decisions but no historic understanding of issues. From this specific request the seminar series "Planning Before the Hour of Our Death" was created. The other product of the task force was a policy and request form for presentation of charity requests to the officers of the Council. As part of the process, the officers would review and filter requests and then present viable choices to the full membership at the monthly business meetings.

Over the past two years we have been fortunate enough to create several very successful events that generated significant donations to charities. The charity requests have grown from the \$500 category to the \$5,000 level. Last year we formulated a Finance Committee to insure that finances did not get away from us. The committee was tasked with responsibility and authority to approve a budget and make major directional recommendations for the Council. The finance committee recommendations were then brought to the business meeting for discussion and vote. A Fundraising Committee was also formed to create functions to improve the financial status of the Council because we foresaw a near term possibility of being short of funds to meet commitments. Both of

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these groups have been very effective and successful. This year's budget is slightly over \$100,000.

As part of the fundraising process, the volunteers directing the functions felt that having target charities would make it easier to gain sponsorship and requested approval from the Finance Committee to name these sponsors and target amounts of donations. An immediate timing challenge arose because the activities needed to move forward but business meetings are only monthly and Finance meets only quarterly so much of the process took place through emails. The activity planning also required a wide variety of decisions that would have overwhelmed any business meeting and slowed all processes. To this point it has functioned acceptably but has become somewhat of a management challenge.

Current Process

The current Plan and Budget was developed by the officer slate with each Program Director proposing their sectional plan and budget. As Grand Knight, I applied my overarching theme and goals as well as a new event theme. My two main objectives are to involve more Knights and Youth into all our activities and to create a much higher awareness of the Council and what we do outside the parish in the surrounding community. As part of this movement I have associated with the Zbowl event in Zionsville to promote the community during next year's Super Bowl activity.

The Plan and Budget as proposed was submitted to the Finance Committee and was reviewed, edited and approved for vote. When the officers met to prepare for the business meeting Worthy Financial Secretary Bernie Bruno shared with the group that he had learned a few things at the recent Supreme Convention. One issue was that if a budget is voted on and approved at a business meeting, it is not required that the individual parts be approved at future meetings. Although this had not been our initial intention, I felt it was necessary to disclose this at the business meeting as part of the discussion. The criticism has been made, correctly, that the plan should have been available for review for a longer period of time prior to an approval vote. I apologize for that but the year is moving along and we need to continue and improve the process next time.

Process Going Forward

My goal is to balance transparency, individual participation and management practicality. Although the Plan and Budget are now officially approved, they are still open to amendment and change by vote. We as officers and committee members will preview upcoming events at business meetings and be open for all input at that time. Any items you wish to review after your examination of the posted Plan and Budget will be addressed again.

I have also asked Tom Weintraut to Chair the [Charity Committee](#) which has become dormant. My request is that he review all of our charity activities to insure they are in line with our charter and the best use of our efforts. We have become a significant donor and with that comes a responsibility to know we are helping the right things and not naively supporting causes that go against our beliefs. Please give Tom your input and desires. This is an opportunity for everyone to participate.



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The second issue to address is the process next year. The transition between officers from one year to the next being in the middle of the summer creates challenges in itself. This was evident with the Parish Festival and the Plan and Budget process. This Spring I will ask the [Finance Committee to meet monthly](#) from June through August as a forum for the incoming Grand Knight, officers and Event Chairmen to develop the coming year Plan and Budget. The Deputy Grand Knight will be invited to all conversations and asked for his future direction advice.

I apologize for this long message, but this topic is so vibrant and important it needs to be understood by all our wonderful and dedicated members. Thank you all for your support and time. May God Bless us all.

Ed L. DeWitt
Grand Knight
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