

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting

Minutes

26 April 2012

Member in attendance: Barbara Rhenish, Walter Alesevich, Marina Poutiatine, Claire Nobles, Mark Pietrzykoski, Suzanne Tolstoy, John Stepanchuk, Ann Alaoglu, William Corcoran, Marilyn Swezey, Michele Smith, and Ken Mitchell

Members absent: Irina Burgener and Peter Vlasov

Clergy in attendance: Fr. Valery Shemchuk and Father Denis Bradley

The Council Meeting began at 7:05 PM

Father Valery delivered the opening prayer

All members approved the Agenda.

The January and March 2012 Council Meeting Minutes were reviewed and accepted with minor corrections.

Acting Dean's Report:

Father Valery noted this last month during Lent was a busy time for the church, but very uplifting and with good spirit. The Lent period went very well for the church. He said that In May there will be two single liturgy services on May 13 and on the Memorial Day weekend. Concerns were raised by Council members that these changes would affect Sunday school plans and church attendance. Council members expressed the need to broadcast to the Parish ahead of time these schedule changes.

Father Valery indicated that the church was able to keep up all normal scheduled Lent services because of the help from Father Denis's and Father Deacon Blagoje's willingness to pitch in. Morning liturgies were well attended, the evening Liturgies also, but slightly less attended here. He also noted there is a full schedule of many upcoming baptisms and weddings. Father Valery also said he has made required visits to hospital and prisons to attend those in need. There are many incoming priestly requests and again Father Denis has been a big help, given all this big demand. Father Valery said that he, however, was glad to do the work.

Old Business:

Kitchen and Downstairs Hall Renovation.

The first phase has started, which is to select an engineering and architecture firm. Three different bidders have begun making evaluations. The designs will be reviewed by mid-September. The earliest construction could begin is in October of this year. Of course some time will be required to get all relevant city permits. Possibly extra time maybe required on the RFP, allowing the architects time to fine tune. Council members wondered if the “go ahead” decision on the final plans decision should go to the council for approval? The answer was yes, but it can be done by electronic vote at the appointed time.

Two of the firms said that “ball park figures” for construction costs could be in the range of \$200,000 to \$250,000. We may need additional funds beyond the planned donation. It may be possible to seek additional funds. Maybe the Parish asks for donations from parishioners to contribute small amounts for items such as appliances. Construction will take three months. This could impact the Christmas time.

2011 Audit.

There are five meetings scheduled

Rectory and the DC Taxes.

Barbara indicated that it has reached the point the church needs an attorney to help with this issue. DC is still insisting on having the title deed of the rectory changed to the Cathedral’s corporation name. We have until May 12 to comply or face heavy penalties and back taxes to the District. The church had misfiled for tax exemption under the wrong set of laws. Arthur Konopka is the proposed attorney. The deed title of the rectory is not in the proper form and thus we are accused of applying under the wrong title for the rectory tax status.

The amount of taxes due to the District Government is \$28,000.

Motion Proposed by Barbara:

The Parish Council hires the Arthur Konopka law firm to represent St. Nicholas with the tax-exempt status issue with the District Government. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Maslenitsa

\$27,375,90 was collected from the gala festival. There may be some additional money to come.

New Business:

Fall Festival 2012

Several parishioners had asked about having the fall bazaar. With renovation time line, we could still hold the bazaar. Possibly use the funds from festival to support the renovation.

It was then suggested that the festival be managed by a five-person group as it is too big a job for one person to head. The Council decided tentatively to establish the weekend after Columbus Day as the time for the festival as has been past tradition.

Committee Reports:

Budget and Finance.

Michele will present the complete summary of the month's expenses a little later. The Quick Books system is down at the point of this meeting. She will electronically distributed the analysis part when it is ready. But a brief summary is presented this evening. The Budget is on track and target as planed. We sent a letter revising membership count and revise assessment. The Washington Diocese has said no to the revision. We have been able to keep our expenses low.

William Corcoran stated a concern that bill income is dropping even though we are keeping expenses low and in line. Several Council members concurred that we are still losing membership.

Stewardship.

An issue still remains about pledging. Some parish members who pledged last year, did not pledge this year. But these people are still giving donations by checks. Checks are coming in from those who have not agreed to pledge.

Facilities.

The Annex's first floor bathroom is fixed. The roof also has been fixed. The steps and stones need to be replaced and resealed (this has been looked at by the original stone mason) around the Bell Tower. There are other multiple numbers of sidewalks around the Cathedral needing repaired or replaced and resealing.

Legal and By-Laws.

Walter has spoken with U.S. Customs and we still are uncertain if we must pay duty and/or taxes on the statue shipment. The current tax bill is \$91.00. Customs is divided on if we have paid or not. The original importer is out of business. It was their view this is a storage issue.

On the Verizon issue, we can not produce a contract and they are frustrated we have not paid. Check with Bob Burgener who helped to install this at the Metropolitan's house.

Outreach.

Claire reported that the Pajama Program collected 22 sets of pajamas, nightshirts, and books.

The Christ House effort continues to go well.

Michele noticed at our Morning Easter Service a fair amount of new people in attendance and thought we should have more promotional materials for people to learn about us. Easter Morning should be looked at as a good outreach time for the church.

Council went into Executive Session at 8:05PM

Council came out of Executive Session at 9:30PM

Father Denis gave the Closing Prayer

Next Meeting set for 17 May 2012 7PM

The Council meeting was adjourned at 9:35PM