

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting

Minutes

14 June 2012

Members in attendance: ***Barbara Rhenish, Walter Alesevich, Marina Poutiatine, Claire Nobles, Mark Pietrzykoski, John Stepanchuk, Ann Alaoglu, Michele Smith, Marilyn Swezey, Irina Burgener, and Ken Mitchell***

Members absent: ***Suzanne Tolstoy, William Corcoran, and Peter Vlasov***

Clergy in attendance: ***Fr. Valery Shemchuk, and Fr. Denis Bradley***

The meeting opened at 7:08 PM

All led the Opening Prayer

The Agenda was reviewed and approved by all members present

The May 2012 PC Minutes were approved with minor grammatical revisions

Acting Dean's Report:

In June we have two major events. Next Saturday visiting us is Metropolitan Kallistos. He will serve a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas and then will give a talk at St. Mark. . For Metropolitan Kalistos the starting time will be at 9:00 AM. However, the flyer sent out states a 10 AM starting time. We will notify the Choir that it will start 9AM. Father Valery will confirm and send out new notices that the Liturgy starts at 9AM.

This Saturday we will have a nun from Vienna, Austria, Sister Vassa, speaking on "Why the need to Study the Liturgy." The program begins at 10 AM starting with a Liturgy.

On July 1st there will be one Liturgy plus there will be a church picnic

Old Business:

Incoming Administrator

Archbishop Tikon of Philadelphia has blessed the coming of Father John Perich to St. Nicholas as Church Administrator for up to six months. Father John will formally receive a letter from Archbishop Tikon to start on July 1, 2012. Father John will be coming to DC before then to begin meeting with the Parish Council. Next Tuesday June 19th, the PC will arrange an informal

dinner as a way to begin with Father John. He had a successful fund raiser at Ft. Meyer two weeks ago and he showed his administrative ability by getting that organized with great enthusiasm.

We need to check with Father John in terms of what he needs in the Rectory in terms of furnishings to get started. The church will try to meet his initial expenses for the beginning.

The Kitchen Renovation

Three firms submitted bid proposals on time. The proposals were objectively reviewed on set criteria. One was eliminated on their price quote and also because of lack of detail. Two firms were then interviewed. We conducted two interviews with each one at substantive length. We gave them questions about approach and dealing with the DC compliance requirements.

Each firm indicated an additional \$150,000 would be needed because of mechanical and reworking due to the age of the church building.

In the end, the Committee selected the MTF firm due to its approach with DC government compliance and they can set up appointments in September with DC government authorities. Additionally they demonstrated substantive past experience working with churches. And their past renovation experience, especially with St. Albans.

However, now it seems that mechanical issues have added cost to our project. The Donor can cover more, but not all of these extra costs. Possibly, only up to \$50,000 more, which, is about about one third of the additional, projected cost. Discussion ensued that the Parish needs to step up and take ownership and conduct additional fundraising; or consider using the long-term endowment. Other options include - take off the ear mark of the Church's \$200,000 Fund.

As part of their effort, MTF wants to conduct a visioning session and collect ideas from parts of St. Nicholas Parish community and let members help set the priorities. This visioning session should help establish consensus view on the priorities.

Michele then asked for the PC to call for a special parish meeting. Possibly, for the end of this July. It is considered important that the PC gain agreement from the Parish members. Again the four options to consider are: a fund raiser, use of the "Ear Marked" fund, use the long term endowment, or go with what we have without additional funds.

At this point Michele brought forward the following two motion, which, received seconds.

Motion #1

That the Parish Council accept the recommendation for the “Kitchen and Basement Renovation” project to hire the MTFA Architects as the designers of the kitchen and basement renovation and to grant authority to the Council President to execute a contract with MTFA for such work.

Motion #2

The Parish Council recommends to convene a “Special Parish Meeting” exclusively to discuss the basement renovation project to be held no later than July 29, 2012.

Both Motion #1 and #2 received unanimous votes from the PC.

Fall Festival 2012

The budget for the Fall Festival was discussed; Michele presented a proposed budget for the festival and asked the council to agree to the proposed budget so that the Festival’s managing team of seven could move forward. The PC agreed. It was also decided to manage to let our parish members know their contributions to the festival would also go to the kitchen project.

New Business:

Sunday School and Youth Programs

Ken mentioned that St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral had received the blessings of the GOAA to work with St. Nicholas to develop some joint programs for youth and young people attending the two cathedrals. A meeting has been set up in the coming week with priests from both cathedrals to discuss some ideas.

Unsupervised children on the Cathedral grounds

Our gardens have become an attractive nuisance to young children climbing trees and tearing up the gardens. Numerous reports have indicated these children were unsupervised. It is not good policy to have children move about unsupervised outdoors.

Mark called for some ground rules requiring adult supervision of children when they are outdoors and in the gardens. John suggested announcements be broadcast emphasizing the issue connected to the safety of the youth – therefore parents need to attend the children on this basis. Additional discussion indicated that maybe monitors should be used. It was decided that the best choice for now is to make announcements about this situation.

Committee Reports:

Budget and Finance

Michelle has sent out the budget report. She noted that giving is now starting to drop as we move further into summer, which has been also similar to past trends in the summer. Revenues, however, have stayed relatively high even with loss of members.

We may soon find donor fatigue has started. Mark raised the issue again of one service, There is at least one third less giving when this occurs.

There is also over budget expenses in the personnel budget line, but this is due mainly to a FICA miscalculation. We are still waiting on the census. We have over spent on flowers this year. Walter pointed out we collected a significant amount on Pascha flowers. Mark pointed out we could reduce cost by finding a cheaper vendor for flowers. Michele will reexamine the flower donations along with the Book Keeper.

Claire mentioned that the Parish will be facing the need to raise money for the new incoming Priest. How will this be accomplished? For now, this is not a significant issue. Michele noted we are restructuring our church office personnel which will achieve some savings.

William and Father Denis reviewed that we have received almost 60 applicants for the new office manager job and there are about 12 good candidates.

The issue was raised about when to select new staff and Father Denis said the new priest should be involved.

Michele said the salary for the new position should be "ball parked" in the mid \$40,000 range, she ball parked we should save around \$30,00 by restructuring and are wise about it.

Stewardship

Marina sent out the latest stewardship document for comment. She has a concern that we are not sure whether or not the requirement confession/communion by an OCA priest or any priest, as to who their confessor should be. The OCA statute says you have to go to a confession annually. She asked if this issue, which is #1 in her new document should remain in the rules. Father Valery said take this item out of the document.

Second the document needs to be translated into Russian. Barbara suggested we try to translate this into Russian. Walter said the language is so nuanced it will be hard to translated.

Marina suggested we tell those who need this material in Russian language.

Marina then put forward the following motion.

Motion #3

The Council approves the Stewardship Document, with the exception of removing Item #1 in the document. There was a second to the motion.

All Council members voted in favor of the motion.

Personnel

Ann said there were 93 resumes and 53 are promising. The add will continue for the rest of the month "on line" in the Washington Post. Ann said the time of the present staff is to end in two weeks. So we do need to get moving. Hopefully the new church administrator will be able to get on board in order to be involved with the hiring process. Barbara asked the personnel committee to start reviewing and further narrow down candidates to those who we want to interview and start Looking At references.

Facilities

Mark indicated \$600 had been spent on items for the gardens. We received mostly donations from specific people. So far he had not yet had time to call for contractors to repair the sidewalks. Also the Church's maintenance contract is up for renewal. It was decided to send the contracts to Walter for review.

The question was raised, does anything need to be done at the Rectory before Father John arrives? Father Valery said the kitchen needs work.

Legal and By-Laws

Walter had submitted report. The redeeding of the Rectory has been accomplished through our attorney. We are now waiting for the City's decision.

The Closing Prayer was offered by everyone.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05PM

Next Meeting 19 July 2012 7PM

Meeting Addendum:

The Council President submitted by electronic mail the following information and motion to the PC.

Personnel matters. On June 27 Barbara wrote: Although we voted earlier to terminate the current office staff by 1 July, we did not anticipate how long it would take to go through over 100 applicants or that the on-line announcement would last the entire month of June. Therefore, I am putting forward the motion below to extend Zene until we have a new office manager. Please vote by 6pm Friday or you will be counted as a no vote under Robert's Rules.

Motion: I move to extend the full-time employment of Zenebech M. Tesfaye on the St. Nicholas Cathedral office staff, for 30 days beyond the 1 July 2012 termination date previously set by the Parish Council.

The PC voted 12 in favor of the motion. One PC member did not vote – indicating no. Therefore the motion was approved.

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