

**Parish Council Minutes, St. Nicholas Cathedral  
January 19, 2012**

Present: A. Alaoglu, W. Alesevich, I. Burgener, K. Mitchell, C. Nobles, M. Pietrzykoski, M. Poutiatine, M. Smith, J. Stepanchuk, M. Swezey, S. Tolstoy

Clergy present: Met. Jonah, Rev. V. Shemchuk, Rev. D. Bradley

Following a welcoming buffet supper, the meeting was called to order shortly after 7:00 pm with the opening prayer by His Beatitude, and the swearing in of the new Council members.

Review of the agenda included the addition of a combined report of the Legal and By-laws and Stewardship Committees.

The December minutes were accepted as amended.

**Metropolitan's Report:**

His Beatitude said that he was pleased with the Christmas and Theophany services. The church was full, especially on Old Calendar Christmas. There are many new people coming to the Russian services – “a field ripe for the harvest and needs to be harvested”.

He is acutely aware of the financial difficulty of the parish at present, but is also aware of the need for additional priests here. It would be good to encourage other attached clergy to be more present now until an additional staff priest can be appointed. The new Chancellor, Fr. John Jillions, sees the value of the Metropolitan's office being in Washington and is willing to come once a month to serve.

St. Nicholas is a critically important ministry and the model of a strong mother church bearing fruit in the growth of missions such as Annapolis and Alexandria.

### **Acting Dean's Report:**

Fr. Valery welcomed the new members and thanked everyone for coming in despite all the difficulties that we have gone through.

He reported on a meeting with Mr. Coomb, the neighbor who is staying temporarily in the rectory while the repair work on his house, damaged by the hurricane, is ongoing. He has requested to stay until April 1 when he expects to be able to move back into his house.

Fr. Valery brought up again his proposal that a new motion should be presented to the Council three days in advance by email to give time to think about it and make a good decision.

Motion: all non-emergency motions, as determined by the clergy, should be presented by email three days prior to a Council meeting. Motion carried.

### **Election of officers:**

Vice-president: Ann Aloaglu

Treasurer: Michele Smith

Secretary: Ken Mitchell

### **Committee assignments:**

Budget and Finance – Treasurer, Michele Smith

Personnel – Vice-president, Ann Aloaglu

Stewardship – Marina Poutiatine

Legal and By-laws – Walter Alesevich and Jonathan Russin

Library

Cemetery  
Outreach – Claire Nobels  
Facilities  
Communications – Irina Burgener

Further discussion on more committees was tabled until next month.

### **Church Basement Renovation**

Council President Barbara Rhenish announced that a volunteer has agreed to donate anonymously, \$250 – 300,000. to renovate the whole basement. The Parish Council enthusiastically accepted the donation. Logistics of carrying out the project to be further discussed and decided.

### **Revised 2012 Budget:**

Michele Smith reported that in looking over the financial records of the last five years, 2011 was the first year the parish ended in a positive state. Until 2011, the parish was spending more than it took in. She recommends that at least three months in reserve should always be in place. Many nonprofits have at least six months of operating expenses in reserve.

She noted a spike in income since Metropolitan Jonah has been in residence here. “We are beginning to reach our pre-recession level,” she reported. “We just need to adjust our expenditures”. 129 pledges were received by December 30, 2011. Any decision involving additional clergy should wait 6 months, to determine after Pascha, if the financial projections are correct. The committee met with Metropolitan Jonah, who blessed the revised budget. Motion to approve the revised budget was carried.

### **Sales policies:**

Suzanne Tolstoy brought up an issue of unauthorized sales being made within the church and questioned whether they should be allowed if they deflect from church funding. Permission is given by Fr. Valery for sales that benefit charitable cases in Russia. No action was taken on this issue.

### **Maslenitsa:**

Marina Poutiatine reported that invitations were in the mail for the annual Maslenitsa at the Russian Embassy and that a silent auction was being organized.

### **Youth activities:**

Ken Mitchell brought up a concern for reviving youth programs especially for teenagers. He has spoken with Fr. Steven and Fr. Demetrious of St. Sophia's Cathedral, who are willing to cooperate with St. Nicholas in discussing and implementing new ideas of what could be done. It was agreed to discuss this on the agenda next month with a proposal.

### **Budget and Finance:**

The December report shows that although both income and expenditures are less, the parish is in a better position than it was last year.

The Wachovia stock accounts have been formally closed.

## **Facilities:**

Catherine Vangellow presented a written report, though she has resigned from the Parish Council. Mark Pietrzykoski has been appointed to be Facilities Chair.

## **Legal-Bylaws/Stewardship:**

Walter Alesevich reported three recommendations from the joint committee meeting held on January 17, 2012:

1. From this point forward the number of Parishioners in Good Standing should be used for the purpose of the annual archdiocesan census.
2. The President of the Parish should send a letter to the Diocesan Chancellor using language to the effect:  
On December 10, 2011 St. Nicholas Cathedral forwarded a list of 229 names of parishioners for the census and OCA/diocesan assessment. Since then, our annual pledge drive has concluded and only 138 parishioners have pledged financial support for the church. The disparity between the assessable number of 229 and the revised number of, at most, 138 parishioners in good standing is extraordinarily onerous, given our current financial circumstances. Anticipating the January 31 deadline stipulated by OCA Statute X.6, we are hereby adjusting our 2012 census figures to match the revised number of 138. We will record any additions or deletions (also per Statute X.6) as they occur.  
Sincerely,
3. The Parish Council should appoint persons to render and keep the "books of the Parish" (Bylaws IV.2c) complete and orderly. Those persons should include at least the

Dean, the Treasurer and the Chair of the Stewardship Committee.

Motions for these three recommendations were carried.

The meeting was adjourned with a closing prayer, at approximately 10:30 pm.

The next meeting was scheduled for February 9, 2012