

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting
Recorded Minutes
22 May 2014

Members in attendance: Claire Nobles, Mark Pietrzykoski, Ken Mitchell, Paul Moser, , Michele Smith, Peter Vlasov, and Ivan Andonov (Deputy)

Members absent: Sharon Osmolovsky, Suzanne Tolstoy, Elena Panomarenko, Nino Burjanadze, and Walter Alesevich (Deputy)

Clergy in attendance: Fr. George and Fr. Valery

Guest: Marina Poutiatine

The Meeting began at 7:04 PM with a quorum being present.

Everyone participated in the Opening Prayer.

Approval of Agenda

Claire N. asked for an approval of the presented agenda. Paul M. moved to approve the meeting agenda. A second was offered. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

Approve of February Meeting Minutes

Claire N. asked for a motion to approve the February Meeting Minutes, which, had been tabled from the previous month. Ken M. indicated that he had received changes and corrections from the PC members and had incorporated all the changes. Paul M. then moved to approve the minutes. A second was offered. The PC voted all in favor of approval.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Paul M. moved to approve as amended. A second was offered. The PC again voted all in favor of approving the March Minutes.

Father George Kokhno's Report

Fr. George said he had nothing specific to report and would be making comments later in the meeting on various agenda items.

Father Valery Shemchuk's Report

Fr. Valery said he wanted to thank everyone here, the other members of the Council and other parishioners, who did so much to help on the services over Pascha -- especially all the flowers that were brought to the Cathedral. Father also said that Ivan A. did a great job with the lights he put on the roof. Mark P. said we made many people happy and brought joy to their lives. Also noted at this point was that, Rida Luelsdorff, one of our long time parishioners, has made a significant donation of fine furniture (worth about \$18,000 in value) for refurbishing of the Rectory. This furniture will be made available to the Rectory for as long as the Metropolitan uses it as his DC residence.

Old Business

Strategic Planning Working Group.

Ken M. stated that it seemed at this point, it might be a more valuable use of time to try and identify some focus areas in the Cathedral and try to work on improvements. He said that based on his feedback from the discussions held with parishioners, there was a mixture of motivation and interest among most of our members. He identified one of the many areas of need, which, is to rebuild some of the capabilities lost through members leaving over recent years. We further need to find approaches to interest and recruit volunteers for current activities.

Mark P. suggested we try to ask people to serve on the various activity committees as a means to interest new volunteers. More to the point, we need to try and identify specific areas where people can help and would want to participate.

Update on Maslenitsa.

Marina P. said she is still missing information on the final reconciliation of the revenue and net outcomes for the event. There is a \$2,000. difference that might be an outstanding credit that needs to be accounted. There is about a \$5,000 plus for the Benevolent Fund. In the big picture of things, we will likely do as well as we did at the last year.

New Business

Setting the Date for Fall Festival.

We still are looking for a chair.

Discussion about Security Improvements.

Claire N. indicated she had sent out a letter to the PC concerning Cathedral security. It was two months ago we agreed to change all the locks at the Cathedral. Having had the locks change, it so happened that a few day after that, one of the master keys turned up missing. So we had to rethink what to do to secure those places that might be vulnerable. It was suggested by our locksmith we consider the idea of deploying security cameras and a recording system on the Cathedral campus. A complete camera security system would be around \$500.00 to purchase. We have already had a series of theft, which, now further motivates us to do something.

Ivan A. said, the currently considered cameras work on an analog platform, but it is a good system. The down side is that it uses cable connections and will be difficult to install. Digital/wireless systems are more expensive. The big issue is where to mount the outside cameras – so we could cover all doors. Ivan is recommending purchasing two systems with 8 cameras each. Yet, to have them professionally installed will be expensive as vendors charge per camera. We could do it ourselves, but would still cost us around \$800 to do the installation, as we will need materials. Claire N. suggested we set up a committee to research and come back with recommendations. Ivan A. said he would put together some recommendations and then meet with Fr. George and Claire N.

Collection Counting.

Paul M. indicated that he has concerns over the new process of the money counting. These concerns regard how we are transitioning to the new process, while at the same time phasing out the person who has the institutional knowledge about the entire collection counting process. Mark P. said the new process was quite chaotic in some ways and without clear direction about how to handle many of the specifics.

Claire N. said after the last Council meeting, Walter A. and Marina P. asked for more information on the collection counting process and what would be considered the necessary changes. Claire continued by saying that we brought in an outside, commercial banker who expressed many critical concerns about the counting and money management practices in use at the Cathedral. The banker emphasized the need to put in place better established or best practices as soon as possible. Paul M. said there is still a need to rely on those with historical knowledge during the transition period.

Zene Tesfaye has indicated she has mastered the process and is willing to help train PC members. Claire N. noted we have bought a check scanner that will speed up the counting process. Michele S. said Zene T. will deposit the checks through a scanning processor directly to the bank and therefore the counting will only need to count cash accumulated money.

Claire N. thanked Paul M. for bringing up this issue for discussion and clarification.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance.

Michele S. said the Basement Renovation contractor had sent back a letter that said the funds were sufficient to complete the specific work to finish the Gift Corner.

Michele S. then discussed the Treasurer's report. She first discussed the fund balances as of April 30, 2014.

Un-Earmarked Funds

Operating Fund Balance is \$57,012

Reserve Fund Balance is \$255,422

Total Operation Fund is \$312,435

Earmarked Funds

Basement Renovation Fund balance is \$18,847

Major Repair Fund balance is \$65,207

Property Acquisitions Fund balance is \$200,666

Total Facilities Fund Balance is \$284,720

Gift Corner Fund balance is \$89,034

Long Term Endowment Fund balance is \$57,155

Clergy Discretionary Fund balance is \$2,054

Benevolent Fund balance is \$118,821

Shandor Memorial Fund balance is \$1,629

Total Benevolent and Education Funds balances are \$122,504

Total of All Funds are \$865,848

Michel S. made some additional comments relative to this month's report.

- Indicated that the closure of the "new annex fund" is now reflected in this fund balance
- Comparing income and expenses between this year's budget and the current actual income and expenses, we are doing well; meaning the two are very close together at this point. This is due to the conservative approach used to prepare this year's budget
- Looking at the year over year comparison (this year to last year) unrestricted pledges are down about \$11,000 this year, as compared to 2013 at this time period – this point should be noted
- Expenditures have increased, in comparison to last year; in particular we are again paying our OCA dues, which, we had suspended in order to allow catch up credit the OCA owed us. There are more expenses also in facilities management, including purchases for the audiovisual system.

Stewardship.

No report

Personnel.

No report

Outreach.

No report

Facilities.

Mark P. said he is working on the landscaping for the Rectory and the Cathedral grounds. The work at the Rectory includes building a stonewall to embellish the front lawn area and flower gardens for fresh blooms.

Ivan A. indicated he had purchased a new amplifier system for the Cathedral, which, has the capability to filter out the clipping noise and other static sounds making the overall sound clearer. He has also installed a new sound device for the church hall that will create an echo sound affect, making the sound more theater like.

Legal and By-Laws.

Claire N. said, we continue to mange the civil case against the church concerning the trailer rental issue. She said we are looking for a "pro bono" lawyer who can help us with the case. The next hearing in court is on September 15th of this year. She also said there would be a Committee meeting on June 2nd to work on revising the bylaws and to review the St Nicholas standing rules. The Committee had its last meeting on May 2nd.

Paul M. offered a motion for adjournment. A second was offered. The PC voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 PM

Closing Prayer

Everyone sang the closing prayer

Next Meeting: is set for 26 June 2014, 7PM

These minutes have been prepared and submitted on June 24, 2014 by Council Secretary Ken Mitchell.

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest of the Cathedral

Date