

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting
Recorded Minutes
23 January 2014

Members Present: Claire Nobles, Walter Alesevich, Sharon Osmolovsky, Elena Panomarenko, Mark Pietrzykoski, John Stepanchuk, Suzanne Tolstoy, Paul Moser, and Ken Mitchell -- Nino Burjanadze-Willsea, Marina Poutiatine, and Michele Smith joined via conference call

Members absent: Peter Vlasov

Clergy in attendance: Father George Kokhno and Father Valery Shemchuk

Visitors: From the American-Russian Educational Center - Dr. Nathalie Larionov-McGregor and Inna Hart; parishioner Mark Naydan also was in attendance

The meeting began at 7:00 PM with a quorum being present.

Mark P. led everyone in the Opening Prayer.

Approval of the Agenda.

Mark P. made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. The Council voted unanimously to approve the presented agenda.

Approval of the December 2013 Meeting minutes.

In order to save time, it was decided to table the December 2013 Meeting Minutes.

Presentation by Nathalie McGregor about Summer Camp Proposal.

Dr. Nathalie McGregor of the America-Russian Educational Center has made a written proposal to the Cathedral for use of its Annex during the coming summer months for their summer program. In addition, she is making a verbal presentation to the PC to further explain their proposal. Of note is that Nathalie now feels her Center and St. Nicholas could become part of a broader community of people who wish to maintain the viable aspects of Russian culture, history and the Orthodox religion. The Center offers a variety of programs including their proposed summer program at St. Nicholas, for children ages 3 to 17 years old on Russian culture, language, history and the arts. They have offered their summer program for several years at different venues, but now believe that working with St. Nicholas can benefit both the Cathedral and the Center. She also said that her Center sees having the program at St. Nicholas as accomplishing multiple advantages and they may even give this summer program the name of the "St. Nicholas Summer Camp for spiritual, culture, and language development."

Requirements of the school. Nathalie said they have a minimum set of requirements. They will bring their own computers. The Council Room is perfect for their training purposes. They will use other outside facilities for such activities as swimming, museums, and field trips for culture training. The summer camp is ten weeks with a different program each year. Last year they had 20 students that grew to 25. As far as food is concerned, they will bring their food mostly

prepared. The hours of the program are from 8 AM to 5 PM daily. Ages of the kids will range from 5 years to 11. The expected attendance for this year is around 20 kids and 2 adults - plus a driver and a food provider. They are willing to comply with all Cathedral rules. They will bring their own equipment, but will need storage space for equipment. The time frame is from June 16 to August 22. They see the Cathedral as being a comfortable environment for their students.

The PC was receptive to the proposal, but several issues need to be either determined or worked out. So the PC indicated that it would get back to Center after the Legal and Bylaws Committee checks out the legal issues and with our insurance company over potential issues or risks. The agreement will require some delicacy in terms of final financial agreement as well.

The PC's main point is protecting the Cathedral against legal liability. The proposed compensation is approximately \$3,675, based upon payments that were made last year. Suzanne T. asked how it will impact the daily work of the Cathedral staff and how much risk will be assumed? The priests indicated they thought they could work around the program while it is in the Annex. The risks are yet to be determined.

Discussion took place about the pros and cons of allowing this activity on Cathedral property. It was noted by several members that there are several advantages to have this program at the Cathedral besides strictly financial. The families of the student participants may become interested in the Cathedral as a place to visit and worship in the future.

Claire N. asked for a way forward. What steps do we need take in order to give them an answer? One item brought up was to ask for past references. The Council recognized the need to give an answer as soon as possible, but we need to look at a broader focus for renting out facilities in the future. Mark P. asked for everyone to consider the proposal and pursue the answers to the raised questions. Fr. George asked if we could consider this as a pilot project to answer some of the questions. Marina P. asked if the adults working with the camp would be required to sign the Sexual Misconduct Policy contracts and if they would need to be screened by St. Nicholas according to the OCA policies.

Father George Kokhno's Report.

In consideration of the time, Father George offered no report.

Father Valery Shemchuk's Report.

In consideration of the time, Father Valery offered no report.

Parish Council President's Report.

Claire N. asked with the coming of Sister Vassa this Saturday, we need to have good representation from the PC members. She also asked that we have some food ordered or prepared for the event. Sister Vassa will speak also on Sunday. However, the Saturday night lecture will be the bigger speaking event and we are advertising it this way.

Old Business

Strategic Planning Working Group Update.

Ken M. indicated that the Working Group had completed their initial effort and that he, Ken M., was preparing a document to reflect the Group's thinking and ideas. The next step would include

the Working Group to recommend a focused set of priorities based on the groups' work. The next step to follow would then be for the Independent and Clergy Review team to review the document and suggest further refinement of the ideas or additional ideas. Ken M. recommended at that point, the PC call a meeting of all interested parishioners to review the ideas. This should be conducted as an informal meeting to allow free flow of ideas and thoughts, so the PC can gauge reactions. He also noted the Metropolitan has been briefed on the Group's work by the Core Team.

Approval of Plaque in Memory of Father Dmitry Grigorieff.

The Council decided to table this approval and asked Claire N. to submit it to a vote by electronic mail in order to save time.

Plans for Maslenitsa

Suzanne T. said that word of mouth has now gone out about the event and her team is now receiving reservations for tables. Hopefully, invitations will be sent out by the end of next week. We have nice quality items coming in for the silent auction, she noted. And the entertainment is now arranged. In all, things are moving along in a good way.

New Business

Discretionary Fund.

Marina P. said in May of last year (2013) a report and guidelines for the fund were developed in a draft. She continued to say that the PC had agreed that an outside Orthodox auditor would perform an audit.

Marina P. mentioned that we have raised over \$4,000 in 2013 for the Discretionary Fund. This fund is now asking for \$5,000 from the Benevolent Fund to support need requests and suggested that until the Guidelines are written no additional funds from the Benevolent Fund would be given. There seems to be some confusion about decision-making and rules around the Discretionary funds.

Claire N. said Fr. Denis Bradley took the books for the Discretionary Fund last year after the above discussion and then returned them to Fr. George in June (2013). Father George decided not to touch the funds or the books until an agreement is reached on how the funds are to be administered. Fr. John Vitko had been considered to be a good outside auditor for this purpose. It was unclear if anything had been done regarding this idea.

Fr. George said he had spoken to Fr. John Perich, the former Cathedral Administrator, by phone in June (2013), and he, Fr. John, stated that Fr. Denis had all books, all the receipts, and all the materials regarding the Discretionary Fund. Fr. George stated that Fr. John P. also looked at the Discretionary Fund materials and saw nothing done wrong or incorrect about the records. Fr. Valery said that Fr. Denis told him that he had reviewed the Discretionary Fund records and saw no problems.

Marina P. said we should ask Fr. Denis for confirmation of what review he did conduct on the Discretionary Fund. She again said, we do need an outside auditor to review this fund's management.

Fr. George said he had checked with the Cathedral legal counsel, Mr. J. Russin, and he found there were no special OCA guidelines on managing a Discretionary Fund. Each parish does it in its own particular way. Fr. George indicated he has been asking for specific guidelines – but also important is how we actually use and distribute these funds. He also said that either Fr. John V. or Protodeacon Peter Danilchick are good, potential candidates to perform the outside audit. But, now we need guidelines from our attorneys or the Finance & Budget Committee so we can open and operate the funds.

Marina P. said that Michele S. has a copy of the document she, Marina P. and others had produced regarding the guidelines. Michele S. said that the issue is to which group – the lawyers or the Finance committee -- is going to complete the work.

Marina P. then asked for guidelines to be approved and to reopen the fund. Then conduct the audit. Fr. George still insisted that the audit has been done.

Claire said this had been discussed before and at this point we do not seem to be getting anywhere with the discussion.

Michele S. said we had a recent case of which fund (Discretionary or Benevolent) should be used for needed help requests. Michele S. also asked which committee should finalize the guidelines and make decisions. It was decided that the draft guidelines should go to the Financial & Budget Committee, after Michele S. develops a revised draft. Hopefully, this should be ready for the February meeting. Mark P. said it is necessary to protect peoples' reputation in this process and we should all pull together.

Annual Meeting.

Claire N. indicated that she wants to call the Annual All Parish Meeting for early March – possibly on the 9th. Sharon O. asked if the meeting should require the internal audits for 2012 and 2013. Claire N. said that she knew the work of the audit committee is underway for 2012.

Marina P. said we are going to have to do audits of the last two years – those being for years 2012 and 2013. There was some discussion concerning which year the current set of auditors was conducting the audit on. Part of the confusion was due to the fact we had postponed the 2013 Annual Meeting until mid-year, which upset the normal cycle for the audit work. The current auditors thought they were to focus on 2012.

The answer at this point seemed to be that the current audit committee conducts the audit for fiscal year 2012. We would then elect new auditors for 2013.

Use of the Kitchen for Commercial Projects.

This item was tabled for now.

Church Directory.

This item was tabled until later.

Church Survey.

Claire N. indicated that Michele S. would be conducting an opinion survey of the parish in the near future.

Coffee Hour.

Mark Naydan discussed an issue he was dealing with on the coffee hour. Mark N. said we need about 13 people to effectively provide the coffee hour; basically enough people to do this twice a quarter. He said we have lost four people recently. Mark N. felt that we might need to see about asking for more volunteers. So far he has been able to sign up one new volunteer. Mark feels his rotation plan has been a good system that has not burdened anyone in particular who is offering service. It is a good way to meet people in the church, he noted.

Mark then offered some alternatives that could help alleviate the issue. He said we might ask people to do 3 rotations of service a quarter –which is a lot - it is 12 times per year. We could also not have coffee hour once a month - limit food on one or more Sundays a month.

Elena P. suggested once a quarter we do a potluck meal where everyone brings something. Mark P. said we are also making some good money on coffee hour, especially when there is a real menu selection. Sharon O. suggested Mark P. create a meal once a month and see if we might also raise some revenue from this effort.

Mark N. also asked if we could do a late Pascha meal/Breakfast after the Sunday morning service and vespers on Pascha. Mark N. said this had been done in the recent past and it was a big success. The Council agreed to this.

Claire N. said to consider redistributing the workload to a formula such as - one coffee, one bagel, and one juice.

As a solution, Mark P. said he would work with Mark N. to come up with a schedule to have a meal once a month. Claire N. also noted, the coffee hour is important to the life of the church and maybe we can find some additional volunteers.

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance.

Michele S. said that the Cathedral had a good month in December in terms of gift giving. She said she still needed to do a lot of fund transfer work on the ledgers for the end of December for the final updates.

As of December 31, 2013, the account balance in the Operating Fund stands at \$120,213.25 with an additional \$157,614.51 in reserve, bringing the total to \$277,827.76. Michel S. indicated that a fair amount of money would also go to the reserve from late pledge payments.

The remaining fund balances are as follows:

Facilities - \$284,690.36

Gift Corner - \$86,614.73

Long Term Endowment - \$57,145.51

Benevolent - \$113,667.02

Shandor Memorial (Education) - \$2,453.78

Stewardship—Update.

Marina P. provided the following information for the Council as her report.

2013 pledge report:

Total pledges received: 139

Received on time: 127

Pledges paid in full with form: 18

New pledges: 37

Total amount pledged: \$176,056

Additional monetary pledges ranged from \$1 - \$14,000

Pledges paid in full with form: 23

Pledges fulfilled: 95

Gave more than pledged: 61 (for a total of \$38,894 extra)

Exactly what pledged: 34

Gave less than pledged: 42 (for a total of \$23,839 loss)

Gave less than dues owed: 2

Non pledged contributors: 283 (for a total of \$115,358)

Couples: 29

Died: 1

Discretionary Fund: \$4,375

New Annex: \$3,399 Inform parish this fund is closed and any money contributed to this fund will be put into the Capital Repairs Fund

Shandor: \$1,165

2014 pledges:

Total pledges received: 141

Received on time: 130

- Received Jan 2: 6 (She would like permission to include these as on time as the postmarks were before Jan. 1)
- Received 1/5 – 1/12: 5 (She would like permission to include these as on time as they are people who have submitted pledges consistently for the last number of years)
- New pledges: 35
- Pledged wrong amount for dues (\$290/\$580): 55
- Pledge form with name & partial address, \$20 but no pledge: 1

- Pledged only dues of \$190:
- Pledged dues but no additional amount: 3
- Total amount pledged: \$192,181
- Additional monetary pledges ranged from \$2 - \$13,000
- Pledges paid in full with form: 24
- Couples: 31

We recently received a large amount of money from a parishioner and have been asked to make sure this is listed as a contribution and not donation (by family lawyer) in the year-end tax statement.

Marina checked with Tom Sigler to try and figure out whether or not donation is the proper wording for our tax letter or should we use contribution instead. They both agreed that as this was raised by an attorney, the cathedral does not want such issues in the future.

"Contributions" is the term used on US federal individual income tax forms (1040 Schedule A), as well as on corporation and partnership tax forms to report both cash (cash, checks and credit card proceeds) and non-cash (fair market value of goods and/or services) amounts provided to charity AND for which the charity did NOT provide any goods or services.

Depending upon the funds source, "donation", "gift" and "grant" are used by charities when providing funds, goods and/or services to other charities.

Depending upon the funds source, "bequest" and "contribution" and "gift" are the terms used on estate and trust tax returns to report both cash (cash checks and credit card proceeds) and non-cash (fair market value of goods and services) amounts provided to charity -- AND for which the charity did NOT provide any goods or services.

We have always referred to people who give money as donors and the money as donations. Last year's year-end letter stated we were sending their charitable giving record to assist in preparing their income tax return.

As Chair of the Stewardship Committee and one of the parties responsible for the year-end tax letter, Marina would like to propose the following motion:

Motion: Effective January 1, 2014, on all tax reporting and related correspondence, Saint Nicholas Cathedral shall use: "contribution" to identify the cash, checks, and credit card proceeds that Saint Nicholas Cathedral receives from an individual or entity other than another charity, an estate or a trust AND for which Saint Nicholas Cathedral did NOT provide any goods or services; "contribution of goods" and "contribution of services" to identify the fair market value of goods and/or services that Saint Nicholas Cathedral receives from an

individual or entity other than another charity, an estate or trust AND for which Saint Nicholas Cathedral did NOT provide any goods or services; "contribution"; "donation", "gift"; or "grant" when these specific words are used by another charity recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service to identify the cash, checks, credit card proceeds as well as the fair market value of goods and/or services that Saint Nicholas Cathedral receives from another charity recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service; "bequest"; "contribution"; or "gift" when these specific words are used by an estate's executor(s) or trust's trustee(s) to identify the cash, checks, and credit card proceeds that Saint Nicholas Cathedral receives from an estate or trust AND for which Saint Nicholas Cathedral did NOT provide any goods or services; "contribution of goods" and "contribution of services" when these phrases are used by an estate's executor(s) or trust's trustee(s) to identify the fair market value of goods and/or services that Saint Nicholas Cathedral receives from an estate or trust AND for which Saint Nicholas Cathedral did NOT provide any goods or services. Walter A. moved the motion be adopted as presented. A second was offered. The Council voted unanimously in favor of the motion – therefore the motion was approved.

Michele S. said she has contacted those parishioners who received errors in the original mailing of the 2014 pledge requests and said she will help anyone make adjustments if they choose. Also, Mark P. asked Marina P. to put together a chart on all the statistics on pledging issues she has concerns about.

Personnel regarding employment of Zenebech Tesfaye.

Nino B. said she has sent out a letter to Zene regarding her employment for fiscal year 2014. Zene would now work a schedule of Monday through Friday, from 10AM to 5PM.

Facilities.

Mark P. announced the Committee would be meeting very shortly. Mark P. then went on to indicate he had been working on or completing the following items: tree removal in the Rectory backyard, “Elfa” shelving in dish storage room, picture molding in the church hall, refurbishing the stairwell down to the church hall, refurbishing of the Gift Corner display cases, replacing the lights in the stairwells, undertaking Rectory yard improvements. Mark P. said he still has on his list to do: paint the coat rack in the stairwell, provide fencing for compost pile, work on the perennial cutting garden, figure out the bell ringing system, trim the trees and cleanup the gardens around the Cathedral. He also noted he needs an image of the snow blower and the Georgians still have our grill rack, that needs to be returned.

Legal and By-Laws.

Walter A. said there was no specific report; the clergy was informed regarding concerns relating to the Center.

Claire N. passed out a pin of St. Nicholas for PC members to wear at the Cathedral to identify them as PC members.

Everyone moved the meeting adjourned at 9:15PM.

The Closing Prayer was offered by Father George.

Next Meeting: 20 February 2014, 7PM

Addendum:

On January 29, 2014, Claire N. asked PC members to review the following wording below of the plaque for Father Dmitry and let everyone know how they liked it. Marina Poutiatine came up with this simplified version. If they liked the current wording, they could vote online rather than waiting for the next Parish Council meeting.

Motion: The following wording is to be placed on the memorial plaque for the late Dean and Pastor of the Cathedral.

*In Memory of
Archpriest Dmitry Grigorieff
Beloved Pastor and Dean of St. Nicholas Cathedral
1986 - 1998*

*Fr. Dmitry's selfless devotion to the cathedral brought English
language to the liturgy
and the completion of the iconography of the interior walls.
May his memory be eternal.*

Subsequently, 11 PC members indicated they agreed and accepted the wording above. The motion thus is presumed to pass with 11 affirmative votes.

These minutes have been prepared and submitted on February 18, 2014 by Council Secretary Ken Mitchell. These minutes were sensed revised based on Council Member input and resubmitted on March 18, 2014.

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest in Charge of the Cathedral

Date
