

December 13, 2012

Members in Attendance:

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

Members absent:

Waltar Alesevich and Peter Vlasov

Clergy in Attendance:

Fr. George Kokhno and Fr. Valery Shemchuk

The Meeting commenced at 7:15PM having determined a quorum was present

It began with an opening prayer led by Father George.

The Agenda was reviewed. Claire asked for a motion of approval. There was a second. The PC approved the agenda with unanimous consent.

The minutes for October meeting were reviewed, having been postponed from the November meeting. Likewise the minutes for the November meeting were reviewed. Marina moved to approve the minutes. There was a second given. All members of the PC approved the minutes.

Clergy Reports:

Fr. George reported that the priests are focusing on improving the Liturgy experience during the services. The clergy are working to have good communications with the choir. Also the altar area has been thoroughly cleaned up as well as the church in general. The priests are also working on improving the sound system. A professional sound system technician has come in to make recommendations and improve the system. The current set of sound equipment has been sent back. Our technician may give us a price on what needs to *be* fixed or improved. In regards to improving communications, the priests are providing more frequent announcements, taking advantage of the internet. Also more videos of the various services are being posted to our web page.

The Sunday school is now a major priority for us. The office is working on getting out the pledge(s) letters for 2013. The church has now made available pledge forms on the internet at our home page site. Notices have been sent for our church's Christmas cards. The outreach committee is also promoting the need for volunteers at Christ House. The clergy is interested in receiving any feedback from the parish on how pastoral work can be improved or performed better. Our focus is providing help for those in need.

St. Nicholas Parish members were glad to have Metropolitan Kallistos Ware from the U.K. and Fr. Justin from the Sinai visiting us over the last few weeks. These visits help give us visibility

working relationships among the four priests. Fr. Valery indicated he is now making more visits to the faithful who are in need of visits, especially those who are sick. Recently he has been to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and Olney, Maryland. The person in Olney is now paralyzed and unable to attend church on a regular basis. Also the woman in Gettysburg is now too elderly to attend the Liturgy.

Father Valery said he is now making more routine visits to hospitals. He received a call from a chaplain who needs a priest who could speak Russian. A service member's father had a stroke and died and hence, the family needed prayer and care. He also makes regular visits to a woman who is incarcerated in an adult detention center for three years and he brings her some books. She has no visitors except from her lawyer and priest.

Father Valery said the church is now better staffed to focus on the pastoral care and Liturgical services. We received an icon from a neighbor who stayed in our rectory. The icon came from Jerusalem. It is of St. Moses. We had the icon restored and framed. Thanks to Marilyn Swezey who paid for the restoration.

On Saturday, 15 December 2012, our parish will celebrate St. Nicholas Day for children. We will continue our book sale. So far, we have made about \$1,000 dollars, which will go towards the basement renovation. More books will be coming for sale. We need to set aside a good time frame for selling. We might try to do this on Sundays after the Divine Liturgy to keep the book sale going. Finally, please submit any names that you know of people who are home-bound and in need of pastoral visits.

Michele thanked Fr. Valery who has led us through very tough times. She went on to thank all the Clergy in handling our many issues in the recent past.

Old Business:

Renovation

Michele reported that we have met with the architects to approve the schematic drawings. The architects have now made the detail drawings to do the renovation. The documents have been sent to the DC regulatory commission for all approvals. We might have to delay the start of the project due to not having a Certificate of Occupancy. This delay may delay the start for a week or two. If we do not find this certificate of occupancy, there may be a longer delay. The architects hope we get building permits and begin construction in January 2013.

The contract for final construction comes in at about \$331,327.00. The committee voted to add some more to the cabinetry part of the project. We may also need to add a fire alarm, so the costs could possibly go up slightly.

After the Sunday, 16 December 2012 special parish meeting to vote on accepting the execution of the overall project, we will sign the final contract on Monday, 17 December 2012. [On

Mark outlined the plan for the old equipment disposal. Mark has listed the existing kitchen equipment with suggested prices on Craig's List. He is already receiving people who are interested in seeing the equipment. At this point, Barbara made the following motion:

Motion: The Parish Council recommends that Mark be allowed to dispose of the Cathedral's old kitchen equipment in the basement through a sale to achieve the best possible price. The motion received a second. The Vote passed unanimously.

Enthronement

Fr. Eric Tosi, the OCA's Secretary, met on 4 December 2012 with Marina Poutiatine, Claire Nobles, Suzanne Tolstoy, Fr. Valery, and Father George concerning the upcoming enthronement for Metropolitan Tikhon here at the Cathedral. St. Nicholas clergy made it very clear that our parish could not provide anything in terms of financial support for the program. It was agreed that most of the program would be financed and administered by the OCA, with St. Nicholas helping with logistics and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and the evening before Vespers. Marina has been appointed the local coordinator for this effort. All bills for the program were agreed to be paid by the OCA. St. Nicholas will help coordinate local volunteers to help with logistics of meetings, the banquet and help with the VIPs. We will be asking for volunteers. There will also be a need for buses to be organized for VIPs and drivers for the VIPs. We also need to ensure curbside parking space around the Cathedral--temporary 'no parking' permits must be requested from the DC government. We have located an underwriter to pay for the program printing. There is to be a Press Release to go out this coming weekend about the Enthronement plans. The cost for a ticket to the Enthronement Banquet is set at \$100.00 per person, which will be at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in DC. It is possible that St. Matthew Parish in Columbia will help us do the gift bags for the VIPs.

New Business

Sunday School and Youth Programs.

Fr. Valery and Michele indicated that a class has been started for our teens that are of senior high school age that is now meeting on Sundays at around 12 noon.

Ken Mitchell indicated that St. Sophia Greek Cathedral will host a talk by Fr. Maximus, one of our attached priests, on his overseas missionary work. St. Nicholas teens will be invited to attend and it will be a chance for the teens of the two Cathedrals to meet.

Pledges

Marina stated that so far 30 pledges have been submitted. At this point the pledge campaign is running similar to last year's. Last year we received a total of 125 pledges. [This year so far it is 30 that have been received to date.] Last year we received many pledges after the due date of January 1st. Pledges after Jan. 1st will not be eligible to vote at church meetings or to hold

that people know they need to meet the deadline. Fr. George said he will mention from the ambo and send out announcements. It was suggested that we might want to be more sensitive with the senior members as they have some issues with getting in the pledges in correct form or they may need more clarification. Of the 30 pledges, amounts are comparable to last year in terms of dollars, though some have submitted lower amounts than last year. It was suggested that we have the clergy follow up on those who are giving less due to difficulties. Parishioners may also be sending us messages by giving less.

Diocesan Assembly

The Metropolitan needs to receive council meeting minutes and budget before he will approve individuals to stand for Parish Council positions.

At the diocesan assembly on 8 December 2012, Michele did a solid job presenting the case on the \$37,000 reimbursement that St. Nicholas is seeking from the Washington Diocese for expenses the Cathedral paid out for the former Metropolitan. For St. Nicholas, this is a very sensitive issue to try and obtain money for the former Metropolitan's expenses. It was noted that the OCA Chancellor, Fr. Jillions, would assist with this issue at Syosset. Father John Perich said a committee should be formed to handle this situation.

The Washington Diocese's budget and proportional giving was to be implemented this coming year. However, several parishes had questions about how the diocesan treasurer determined the proportions each parish is assigned. The date for the switch to a proportional giving system still has not been determined by the OCA's Metropolitan Council. Our approach to budgeting was adopted by the Diocesan Council. There is supposed to be a meeting in the near future with all parish treasurers to determine how to develop uniform budgets and how to implement the proportional giving system. The Metropolitan expressed his desire to be fully as engaged as our bishop and to build up the dioceses and be involved in building the diocese with good relations

Gift for Gerich Work at Cemetery

Lana Gerich has been taking care of the cemetery graves and makes wreaths for each grave. Because of her effort and work for the Cathedral should acknowledge her with some type of gift. She should have an official recognition from the church – both a gift and a letter (maybe a Gramota) from the bishop and present this on 23 December 2012. We should also do a separate recognition for her husband.

Claire will get a new guest book for the Cathedral.

Benevolent Fund

Marina specified the fund was able to help two very needy people over the past month. One of the needs was to help a person with health insurance payments. The fund gave out \$3,683.00 to provide assistance for these two in the last month.

Committee reports

At 8:30PM Barbara request a motion be put forward to have the PC go into an Executive Session, which lasted until 9:15PM. The PC gave unanimous consent to go into Executive Session.

At 9:00PM Fr. George requested that the PC vote to extend the PC meeting past 9PM. The PC gave unanimous consent to extend the PC meeting.

Personnel

Issues discussed in Executive Session.

Budget and Finance

No report due to not being prepared because office bookkeeping is behind. Michele presented a verbal update to last month's report. She noted some highlights including: the church ended with a surplus, which will move to the Reserve account. We will likely have some big capital expenses this coming year such as the repairs to sidewalks, stone work and bell tower among other items. The bank report needs to be reconciled, however, we netted about \$7,000.

We have lost two checks totaling over \$1000.00 from the basement renovation donations. They were lost due to incorrect handling procedures and tracking. To correct the problem we have now instituted a new procedure to handle checks that are received by the church and how to handle the lost checks.

Michele raised the issue of whether the Accounting Policies she and the committee have developed can be passed by the PC. Henceforth, these policies will be reviewed annually. These policies discuss the handling of all church funds and reporting requirements. At this point Michele put forward a motion:

Motion: The Parish Council adopt and implement the Finance Policy and Procedures developed by the Finance and Budget Committee and these polices and procedures go into effect on January 1, 2013. The motion received a second. The Council unanimously voted in favor of the motion.

Fr. Father Valery suggested we consider raising the prices of our church lots in Rock Creek Park. Our current prices are far below the going market rate. Tabled until we have more information.

Facilities

Fr. Valery reported that the church has received a call for one of our parishioners and her office offers to paint one facility once a year. Fr. Valery suggests that some rooms in the annex, rectory, and church need to be painted.

Extra furniture has become available to the Cathedral, which will be used in the rectory. We

Barbara suggested it was time for the committee to review the Cathedral's By-laws. Maria requested the committee membership be validated before we revise or update.

Some of our parishioners have questioned the actual reasons as to why the annual meeting was postponed. All questions need to be directly addressed to the clergy.

Marilyn presented a beautiful book about the Cathedral's Icons. This is one she has been working on developing for several years. An abbreviated version might be ready for sale by the Cathedral at the upcoming Enthronement. The book illustrated much of the iconography that is presented on the Cathedral's walls. There is a chart of the iconography and an introduction about the iconography along with pictures. It explains why the iconography is important. She will investigate how much it will cost to print and have copies available for sale. Fr. Valery will investigate if we can get some of the preparation costs underwritten.

Meeting ended at 9:55PM

All offered the closing prayers.

Next PC meeting was for 18 January 2013

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest in Charge of the Cathedral

Date