

St. Nicholas Parish Council
Meeting Minutes
27 June 2013

Members in attendance: Claire Nobles, Walter Alesevich, Sharon Osmolovsky, Nino Burjanadze-Willsea, Paul Moser, Michele Smith, Elena Panomarenko, Suzanne Tolstoy, Marina Poutiatine, Peter Vlasov, Mark Pietrzykoski, John Stepanchuk, and Ken Mitchell

Clergy in attendance: Metropolitan Tikhon (via video conferencing), Fr. George Kokhno, Father Valery Shemchuk,

Visitors: George Nartsissov and Tom Sigler

Meeting started at 7:03PM with a quorum present.

The Metropolitan led an Opening Prayer.

Claire presented the Meeting Agenda.

Suzanne offered to accept the agenda as amended. A second was given. The vote on approving the agenda was approved unanimously.

Claire presented the May 2013 PC Minutes in draft form. Discussion occurred around several of the topics from the previous meeting. It was decided that the PC members needed more time to review the minutes, as the minutes were quite lengthy and complex. It was decided to table approval of the minutes until PC members had time to submit their corrections and views.

Metropolitan Tikhon's address to the Council.

He indicated that many parishioners asked for a clear chain of command for the administration of the Cathedral. He was referring to questions he had received at the recent Parish Annual Meeting. The Metropolitan reiterated the point he had made at the meeting, that he would be serving as the Cathedral's Rector for the time being. He said, Fr. George would be in charge of church administration and that Fr. Valery would take charge of the pastoral affairs for the Cathedral. He will work with the two priests weekly to establish a clear structure and lines of communication as well as all clergy once a month. He still is considering if he will give out his direct contact information so people can get in touch with him, if necessary.

Moving forward with the search for a Cathedral Dean, the Metropolitan said that we still need to look at what we objectively want and require. We still need to examine what we can afford, given the current budget circumstances. He will meet as soon as he can with the Financial Committee and to hear from the Parish Council what is needed to go further — , , . We need to do what is best for the Cathedral, the Metropolitan said.

Mark indicated in the past there were some problems around the decision-making process among the clergy and we need a clear order. The Metropolitan agreed. The Metropolitan concluded by

saying that it is important for members of the parish to talk to each other; and he would do his part by trying not to divide or confuse people.

Fr. George's Report.

Last week we received a blessing from the Metropolitan to start an adult education program in September that will have a speaker once a month. We will utilize local clergy and laity. The Metropolitan will be the first speaker.

Fr. George said that it occurred to him that many people on a daily basis pass by our Cathedral and only see our outside structure and do not know us from the inside. We need to have parishioners who are skilled in public relations and communications to help us develop a better image. Fr. George is now reaching out to some Cathedral attendees to help us with this type of effort.

Fr. Valery's Report.

He welcomed the newly elected members of the Parish Council and thanked those who ended their term. He stressed we have lots of work ahead for all of us this year. He said, we will do our best and he also thanked again the continuing PC members for their work.

New Business

The first new business was the election of the Parish Council Officers. The first office discussed was the position of Vice President. Ken nominated Nino for the VP position. That nomination received a second. No other nominations were offered. The Council voted by acclamation to elect Nino as the Vice President. Marina noted that the VP is also in charge of the Personnel Committee. There is a current issue with an ongoing unemployment compensation claim matter that will need attention.

The second office considered was the Council Secretary. Walter nominated Ken, who had been the previous Council's Secretary, for the position. The nomination received a second. There were no other names nominated. The Council voted unanimously for Ken to fill the position. It was noted by Marina that the Council Secretary is the one responsible for notifying the Parish Membership of the Annual Parish Meeting as well as all the other work that is required before the meeting.

The final office was the Cathedral Treasurer. Nino nominated Michele Smith. A second was given. Michele noted that she is under consideration for a new job that might take her out of this area, so she agreed to serve as long as everyone was aware of this possibility. The Council voted unanimously for Michele.

Claire and other PC members congratulated those who were elected.

Walter gave an overview to what the Council calls Executive Session, to ensure that this prerogative of the Council is used properly. Basically if the Council votes to go into Executive Session, it is to protect privacy of issues and individuals concerned. In Executive Session, notes are not taken or kept as record. Also, all Council members agree that the facts and substance of the discussion is not to be talked about by any member. All people who are not Council

members at the meeting must leave the room during Executive Session, especially if the person is in the room that is the subject of the discussion.

A question arose as to how to replace a Council member who resigns. For example, Claire had to resign her Council seat to become President, thus leaving a vacancy on the Council. In this case the 1st Deputy member (the one receiving the most votes during the election) is the one to replace the leaving PC member. In this case it was Peter.

Fall Bazaar.

Nino said the first kick-off meeting had taken place. We have identified 7 teams with specific tasks and responsibilities.

Nino indicated a budget plan has been put together and they are in process of trying to acquire funds. We will be asking for a license for selling, a permit for having alcohol, and procure banners for advertising. We set a higher budget than last year (food and expenses have gone up from last year). Nino requested that the Council approve her budget, which she provided with expenses set at \$14,985.00. Sharon asked if other permits for things like tents, etc. need to be considered. Nino thought that most of the other types of permits do not apply. Michele indicated we have an issue with the dishwasher and we need to have a food service manager. If we have problems, we will move to a Plan C vendor.

Nino then put forward the following motion for PC approval.

Motion: The Council approves the proposed Fall Bazaar Budget as presented. A second was not required as the motion was put forth by the Chair of the committee -. A vote was taken and the Council was unanimous in support of the motion. Motion passed.

Paul indicated he is doing posters and the website. He will also be working on marketing and advertising materials

Coffee Hour.

Mark asked the question, is everyone entitled to a free bagel during coffee hour? He said this seems to have become the common procedure now at coffee hour. Mark continued asking, do we reimburse the person who supplies coffee and other refreshments? Sharon said the supplier has the option of asking for reimbursement. Mark said, we need to get away from the entitlement idea that everyone can have free bagels. Mark continued, maybe we just buy and supply basics such as milk and juice. Claire said it is not supposed to be a free meal, people are asked to make donations. Suzanne offered that denying somebody something is not good form for a welcoming community. Claire said, maybe we should ask Mark Naydan, who heads the coffee hour program and the Treasurer to investigate what money is given, what reimbursements have been given for requestors, and how much donors are giving. Let us further ask them to propose a solution.

Mark then said, another problem here is when we have a to luncheons where we have a clear selling requirement and we also have the coffee hour. Following the second Liturgy service,

food is sold (because it is lunch time). Mark asked that we continue this discussion at the next PC meeting. John asked that we put up a sign and just push the idea that people need to donate. George Nartsissov asked for clarity on how this would be handled for the July 7th upcoming picnic.

The Metropolitan said we need to offer hospitality to those who are visiting, but we also need to raise funds from this activity. We need to figure out how to do both. Mark said he did not want to have two separate meals. Paul said on days we have a clear luncheon sale, that we do not give away bagels. Michele agreed with the Metropolitan, saying we need to preserve both approaches.

Communications.

Suzanne said we need a better process and review of the content that is distributed on Cathedral communications, especially those on the announce e-mail. We have raised money for a bone marrow transplant victim – who is now cured, partially due to the generosity of our parishioners who provided funds for his medical treatments. She also said that there are Orthodox-related cultural activities that occur around the area that we should be communicating to our members. Other OCA parishes may have need or help that we may provide. How can we help make this happen? We used to have some of this and we need to get the ball rolling again.

Fr. George said that we need a new image, including a new logo, new website, possibly utilize a Facebook page, and other new upgrades. We need a communication committee to support this type of effort. Claire asked if any one would volunteer for the chair of the communication committee.

Claire said, we need to review and discuss Committee Chairs. She suggested, we should do this at the next meeting.

Possible summary of Annual Parish Meeting on Announce.

Sharon said we need a one-time notice about the Annual Parish Meeting just for transparency. Ken will make a summary based on his notes from the Annual Parish Meeting.

Letters of Appreciation.

Claire wants a letter sent to each outgoing council member and the outgoing Parish President.

Distribution of St Nicholas Mission and Operations Statement.

Ken passed out a paper he put together that describes the current mission and operations of the Cathedral. He asked for comments and feedback on the paper, as it will be useful as a starting point for the Council and Parishioners to begin thinking about priorities, improvements and changes needed for the Cathedral in these areas.

The Metropolitan wants to meet with small groups to discuss some of these topics. The Metropolitan liked the idea of getting the whole community thinking about this. Michele has offered to do cooking for the small groups that will meet with the Metropolitan. A softcopy version will be sent to everyone.

Old Business

Maslenitsa.

Suzanne and Marina reported that \$30,242.00 - per church was earned this year for the Maslenitsa. Claire said everyone on the team should be congratulated. Fr. George said that he has already sent to the Russian Ambassador a request for the program for next year, 2014.

Discretionary Fund.

Marina discussed where we are with the Cathedral audit process. She said, we need to find an OCA clergyman whom we can depend on to support this task, preferably one in the Washington Archdiocese. She asked about working with the attorney to set up the guidelines. Michele said, the guidelines are not in the procedures yet. Also, in the OCA each parish does it differently. Marina said, Tom Sigler and she had already researched the IRS guidelines on this topic. Michele said, the Budget and Finance Committee needs to meet and look over the information and decide.

Rectory Taxes.

Claire said that Mr. Brian Thompson, an attorney, is looking into this matter and wants to meet about our appeal on tax relief. We will need to provide more info to the District as to why we need tax relief; we owe some \$20,000.00 on taxes and penalties. Suzanne said, we need to show we are using our money for good deeds and not just ourselves.

Alleged Missing Items from the Rectory.

Marina said she had updated the PC on this matter earlier by e-mail. But she indicated again that four of the major art pieces remaining on the lost list, have been returned to her and they are safely in her home at this point and will be delivered to the cathedral upon her return.

Safety Deposit Box.

Claire stated that our Wells Fargo box has been emptied by the former PC President, Barbara Rhenish. Barbara has secured the documents and they are now in the Church Annex. Do we need to keep the box for a cost of \$85.00 per year? Sharon asked if we want to surrender the box. We originally needed a security box as storage for backup files and materials. Walter said we still need a security box and can utilize the BB&T bank. Several PC members agreed we still need a box. It was decided arrange with BB&T for this box, for a cheaper cost. We will return the key we have back to the Wells Fargo Bank and close out the previous box.

The Church Officers will need to meet with the BB&T bank representatives at some point. That would be our President, VP, and Treasurer who would be able to sign check -.

Office Log Book.

Marina said there is now an official logbook for checks that are submitted to the Cathedral. All checks coming into the office must now be logged in and recorded. This is a very good tracking system for incoming money. She told a story where recently a check was mailed to the church office but was not logged in and the sender was upset because we had no idea the check was received. - This check was opened and not put on the books. It was only through the luck of Walter, who found the check in the safe and deposited it. We cannot have situations like this

occur again. It is important the logbook is used for all incoming checks. The logbook should be used correctly.

Committee Reports

Fundraising.

Claire asked the Metropolitan if we could do more outside fundraising and if the Metropolitan knew donors he could contact? The Metropolitan gave permission for the Cathedral to conduct as appropriate, outside fundraising. He was not sure about what donors may be available.

Marina said, outside dollars for church projects are generally hard to find, especially now.

Stewardship.

No report.

Personnel.

No reports

Budget and Finance.

Tom Sigler provided the report.

Major Highlights for May 2013

- As of May 31, 2013, the total balance of all Cathedral funds was \$760,245.60.
- The May 2013 collections include the 2013 Pascha offering of \$18,247.00 (Pledges \$7,365.00; Gifts \$10,432) and Pascha Candle sales of \$10,918.00. The overall 2013 Pascha collections are \$5,113.50 greater than the 2012 Pascha collections
- May 2013 Pledge collections, including Pascha, were \$748.00 more than budget
- May 2013 Gift collections, including Pascha, were \$8,300 more than budget
- May 2013 candle sales, including Pascha were \$7,378 more than budget
- May 2013 the net change in the Operating Fund is \$11,000 positive as opposed to the \$1,069 budget negative
- As of the May 31, 2013, the Operating fund year to date is \$33,980.39 better than budget because of the \$28,565.00 Pascha offering and candle sales.

Operating Fund Activity Comparison between Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013 as of May 31, 2012

- For total collections, the 2013 total year to date collections are \$61,424.34 less than the same period in 2012
- For disbursements, the 2013 year is \$13,011

Part of the issue on collections is the decrease in number of steady contributors. That number is down by 50 in 2013.

Facilities

Mark presented several possible proposals for the improvements to the Bell Tower and sidewalks. Mark provided diagrams that illustrate, from the proposers' perspective the areas needing improving on the sidewalk project. The Johnson Landscape Company proposes a cost of \$37,714.00 to do the sidewalk repairs. Another proposal is \$69,000.00. The major work is to

fix the steps, level out two of the plateaus that exist along walkways on the backside of the Cathedral, and repair the concrete walk around the retaining wall. Mark thinks he can get this cost down. He also thinks the Dormition Guild can contribute funds for the project.

Mark then spoke about the bells and the ringing process. The I. T. Virden Company was the original supplier of the bells. They have a \$14,000.00 system that automates the bell ringing. Also, Church Specialties offers for \$8,000.00 an approach to ringing the bells. Mark is still looking for other vendors. But for \$8,000 -, we can get an electronic ringing system.

Suzanne said safety issues are more important in the priority list.

Mark suggested we start collecting for donations to supply some of the funding. He asked everyone to think how we might do this.

The Council congratulated Mark and George for all the hard work on the church grounds.

At 9:00 PM Fr. George asked that the PC Meeting be extended for 15 more minutes.

Legal and By-Laws.

As a result of the decisions decided at the Parish Annual meeting, the By-Laws Document is being updated and will be prepared for Metropolitan Tikhon's signature -.

The Metropolitan inquired -if - the Church has - an up-to-date policy on Sexual Misconduct. He suggested we do this at the next PC meeting.

Ken indicated that the PC had adopted the OCA Standard Policy in a motion at the October 2012 PC meeting. Ken further said we need to review this with the Sunday School Program and conduct the required documentation.

The motion was made for meeting adjournment at 9:20PM. The vote to end the meeting was unanimous.

The Metropolitan led the Closing Prayer.

Next Meeting 25 July 2013 7PM

Kenneth D. Mitchell, Secretary to the Parish Council, submitted these Parish Council Minutes on 25 July 2013.

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest in Charge of the Cathedral

Date