

**St. Nicholas Parish Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 2012**

Members in attendance:

**Barbara Rhenish, Walter Alesevich, Marina Poutiatine via telephone, Claire Nobles, Mark Pietrzykoski, Ann Alaoglu, Michele Smith, Marilyn Swezey, Suzanne Tolstoy, and Ken Mitchell**

Members absent:

**William Corcoran, John Stepanchuk, and Peter Vlasov**

Clergy in attendance:

**Fr. John Perich and Fr. Valery Shemchuk**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10PM having a quorum present.

The meeting started with an opening prayer led by all members.

The agenda was reviewed and then approved by all members.

The minutes for September were reviewed and it was decided that additional content was needed along with some other corrections. The minutes were then tabled until a later time.

**Administrator's Report**

No administrator's report

Priest's report by Father Valery.

The Fall Bazaar was a big success. Many volunteers from our parish spent time without sleep to make the festival a success. Everyone was in good spirits throughout the weekend.

On Saturday there will be meeting of the Washington Dioceses officers who will meeting to develop an agenda for the December 8, 2012 Diocese Council meeting. This coming Thursday, there will be a Liturgy with Archbishop Nathaniel who is here for the Orthodox Christian Laity meeting.

Bishop Alexander will give a retreat at St. Mark Orthodox Church in Bethesda.

Fr. John is inviting all parishioners to attend the Icon Exhibition at Villanova, starting on October 26 and going through early December.

## **Old Business**

The Fall Festival netted approximately about \$31,000 (this is likely to be revised as we finalize our count). The Festival did better than last year; The gift corner did slightly less than last year. The Bake Sale goods did a little less also.

The management approach worked very well and proved the concept that a team management approach can work. The festival management is too big a task for one person. Hopefully, next year we can improve on this model. Paul Moser did a great job on the advertisement.

The Parish Annual meeting will now be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, but this is tentative, since it will depend on the new Metropolitan's schedule and his approval.

We will have to coordinate as we have also asked our parliamentarian to attend as well at that time.

## **Kitchen and Basement Renovation**

We have secured now \$395,000.00 in funds for the project. We still need to secure another \$27,650.00 to complete the money required to start the project. The Architects are, however, willing to go forward with the plans at this point. We do need to announce that fund raising will continue, but this is not to interfere with the pledge process for 2013.

We will need a vote from the parish to formally approve the renovation. To confirm that we have formally met the the requiremnts of the Parish b-ylaws for this type of project.

Since the Special Parish Meeting there is some opposition that has developed. To be fully transparent, we will publish the entire budget for the project as well as the details of the plan and proposed schedule for the project; including the professional opinions of our advisors on the viability of the overall plan and make clear this project is undertaken with the major part of the financing from a committed gift. Also, everyone needs to understand that stopping the project and giving back the funds will cost us more money to quit and back out. This project is analogous to a restaurant kitchen. Much of this is for infrastructure and DC code compliance

At 7:45PM Father John requested the PC go into Executive Session. Barbara made the motion to go into Executive Session and it received a second. Everyone agreed.

At 8:25 Walter made the motion to end the Executive Session and return to normal session. The motion received a second. The PC voted to return to normal session.

## **Committee Reports**

Budget and Finance.

Michelle offered the following motion for the adoption of the Cathedral's 2013 budget. The motion reflects the majority view on the Parish Budget CommitteeA second is given

***Motion: The Budget and Finance Committee motions that the Parish Council approve the attached budget for 2013, with the caveat that in the event of a significant income shortfall in the first half of the year, the budget must be realigned no later than July 31, 2013. A significant income shortfall is defined as actual charitable income received falling below figures projected in the attached budget by 15% or more). The motion received a second.***

The PC passed the Budget Motion with a unanimous vote of those in attendance.

Barbara made the motion for an Executive Session at 8:33PM. The motion was seconded and the PC voted itself into Executive Session.

At 9:00 PM Barbara put forward a motion to extend the PC meeting. The motion received a second. The vote was unanimous to extend meeting at 9PM.

At 9:30PM Walter made the motion to end the Executive Session and return to the normal session. A second was given and the PC voted to return to normal session.

Following discussion on the topic of the urgent need for a second priest for St, Nicholas, Walter presented the following motion to the PC.

***Motion: I move to hire a full-time second priest with the salary and benefits that have already been reflected in the 2013 Cathedral budget, to be effective on November 1, 2012 – subject to final confirmation from the Cathedral Treasurer that the projected funds will be available.***

The Parish Council vote was eight members in favor of the motion and two members voted to abstain. The motion was passed.

Budget and Finance.

Michele has received a request again from the diocese challenging our parish census figures. They are questioning St. Nicholas on the 2011 census figures again based on the new proportional formula. Michele indicated we are going to contest the figures.

We received the District's tax figures and we are going to continue to dispute the amount demanded, even though we did receive a reduction based on our continuing appeal.

Facilities.  
No report

Suzanne indicated one of the original iconographers who helped paint the walls is presently in the area for a period of time. And she wondered if there is any possible repair work on the iconography in the Cathedral he could do.

It was mentioned we have a new parishioner who has the capability to fix and resurface the marble floor in the Cathedral as well as make repairs to the Ambon area.

Legal and Bylaws.  
Verizon is still looking for our past records

Barbara made the motion for adjournment at 9:45PM. The motion received a second. Following a closing prayer the meeting completed at 9:45PM

#### **ADDENDUM to the Parish Council Meeting**

On November 3, 2012 Barbara placed the following motion before the Council for a vote to replace the current Sexual Misconduct Policy with a policy that has been standardized by the OCA. The Cathedral Attorney and By-Laws Committee as well as the Clergy have reviewed the policy. The motion received a second from Ken.

*The Parish Council unanimously passed the vote on the motion on the Sexual Misconduct Policy on November 5, 2012 via e-mail voting with everyone voting in favor of the motion.*

***Motion: The St. Nicholas Parish Council agrees to adopt OCA Policies, Standards and Procedures of the Orthodox Church in America on Sexual Misconduct: The Parish Council, and all members of the clergy and laypersons working on behalf of St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Washington, DC agree to be bound by and comply with the Policies, Standards and Procedures of the Orthodox Church in America on Sexual Misconduct and any amendments thereto. The Cathedral Dean (or designated priest) and parish council will ensure that such Policies, Standards and Procedures are distributed to and understood by all laypersons working on behalf of the parish.***

Furthermore, St. Nicholas will adopt the following programs:

***Screening of potential 'youth workers'***

1. Screening of all laypersons who will have more than incidental contact with minors in connection with Church ministries or programs, to include: the completion of an application form; a criminal records check; a check with the Child Protective agencies in the Washington, DC metropolitan area; and an interview by the clergy or a responsible staff member. This will also apply to voluntary church school teachers. All references on the application form shall be verified and documented in writing.
2. The Dean shall receive any training on child sexual abuse matters that is available from local law enforcement or social service agencies.
3. Unless approved by the Bishop in writing at the request of the Dean, laypersons who are volunteers should not be considered for work with youth or children until they have been members of the parish for a minimum of six months.
4. No person who has been convicted or has plead guilty to any violation of law involving child sexual or physical abuse, and no person known to have a paraphilic diagnosis such as, but not limited to, pedophilia, exhibitionism, or voyeurism as defined by the American Psychiatric Association shall be allowed to work with children or youth in any capacity.
5. Adult survivors of child abuse must meet with the Dean before being approved to work with youth.

***Supervision of youth activities, including open door and two adult policies***

6. Two or more adults shall be present, except for necessary brief absences, during any Church activity involving children.
7. Doors on any parish rooms in which youth activities are taking place must either be left partially open or have a glass window unless there is adequate adult supervision in the room.
8. Prior written permission from a parent or guardian must be obtained for any youth to participate in any parish sponsored youth activity away from St. Nicholas.

***Transportation Policy***

9. The following Transportation Policy shall apply: (a) drivers must be 18 or older and not have adverse driving records; (b) the driver cannot be alone with one youth in a vehicle unless he/she has the advance approval of the Dean; (c) the parish and each driver must maintain liability insurance with limits to satisfactorily protect the parish and any other sponsoring organization from liability.

***Reporting and investigation of inappropriate activity***

10. Laypersons shall report possible sexual misconduct in the parish to the Dean if the Dean is not alleged to have committed the acts. If a report cannot be made to the Dean it shall be made to another member of the clergy serving in the parish in the order of precedence. If there are no other clergy the report shall be made to the senior elected layperson of the parish council.

11. Any inappropriate conduct between an adult and a child shall be confronted immediately and investigated.
12. By District of Columbia Law (*this might need to be verified*), clergy and those involved in child and youth ministry are “mandated reporters” and are legally required to report suspected instances of child abuse by “parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child’s care”. (This mandated reporting does not apply to information conveyed to the priest in confession.)

***Individual certification of compliance***

13. Every person involved in youth programs and each parish council member shall be given a copy of the *Policies, Standards and Procedures* and shall certify in writing that they have read and will fully comply with them.

**Additional Addendum to the PC Meeting**

On November 7, 2012 Fr. Denis submitted the following motion to the Parish Council for consideration

**Motion: I, Father Denis move that we reimburse the expenses and provide a stipend for Archpriest John Perich, Administrator of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Washington DC, for his work in the Cathedral during the period June – October 31, 2012.**

Background Information:

When Fr. John was invited no one could anticipate the scope and amount of work and stress that he would face due to the unexpected resignation of Metropolitan Jonah. So it is only fair that we revisit our previous discussion and review what has actually occurred.

Over the last few months, Fr. John has spent a total of 47 days at the Cathedral! He has done innumerable hours of work on behalf of St. Nicholas Cathedral: with the Holy Synod; with the Central Administration of the OCA (Syosset); with the Archdiocese of Washington — in the Church, in the office, on the telephone, and even physical labor in the rectory. He has served a number of Liturgies, and organized the major Liturgy and reception when the Sretensky choir visited from Moscow.

It is impossible to calculate the exact number hours that he has given to us. From the beginning, we know that he offered to help up us "gratis." That is why Fr. John is not going to submit any "bill." He just doesn't operate in that fashion. He is generous but also sensitive to any inference that he is helping St. Nicholas for his own self-benefit.

For many reasons, not least to foster our own community's sense of responsibility, spiritual growth, and maturity, we should be as generous as possible. I believe that

all clergy of the Cathedral concur with this sentiment. We have seen, at very close range, how much Fr. John has given to St. Nicholas.

Fr. George has helped me draw up and I would like to submit the following calculations based on the 47 days that Fr. John physically spent in DC:

1. Travel: 8 trips from Boothwyn, PA to St. Nicholas at \$.55 a mile —the standard government rate (calculated by the Parish Council President) = \$1210.00
2. Food – 47 days - \$20 per a day = \$940.00
3. Misc. expenses - \$50 per month = \$250.00
4. Stipend \$100 per a day – 47 days = \$4700.00

Total = \$7, 290.00

We all understand that St. Nicholas Cathedral is in difficult financial straits and has only limited funds. I move, therefore, that we provide Fr. John the sum of \$5000.00. (The Treasurer has confirmed that these funds are available.) The reimbursement could be made in one or two payments as seems best.

The motion received a second.

***The Vote on the motion passed, with ten votes in favor, two votes against the motion and one abstention on November 12, 2012 through e-mail voting by the Parish Council***

*Approved:*

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*President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish*

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*Priest in Charge of the Cathedral*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*