

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting
Recorded Minutes
24 October 2013

Members in Attendance: Claire Nobles, Walter Alesevich, Sharon Osmolovsky, Nino Burjanadze-Willsea, Michele Smith, Marina Poutiatine (via conference call), Peter Vlasov, Mark Pietrzykoski, John Stepanchuk, Suzanne Tolstoy, and Ken Mitchell

Members Absent: Paul Moser, Elena Panomarenko, and Paul Grenier (Deputy)

Clergy in Attendance: Fr. George Kokhno and Fr. Valery Shemchuk

Guests: George Nartsissov and Lana Gerich

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

Father George led opening Prayer.

Approval of Agenda.

Claire N. asked for approval of the meeting's agenda. Walter made the motion for approval. There was a second to support the motion. The PC voted in favor with 9 votes.

September Minutes.

Walter offered to accept the September Minutes, with the corrections offered by Marina P. There was a second offered. The PC voted 7 in favor and there were 2 abstentions. The minutes were accepted with corrections.

Father George Kokhno's Report.

This past Sunday our Bishop was with us for the Divine Liturgy, and we had a very beautiful service. The choir performed very well and we had good attendance. The bazaar was a big success with more than 40 volunteers working together to make it a success. The bazaar was both a good outreach and fundraiser for the Cathedral. We are all now working together to make things at the Cathedral function. We are doing outreach with both spiritual and regular food for our parishioners.

Father Valery Shemchuk's Report.

He agreed that we had a good bazaar with lots of energy and enthusiasm that went into the entire effort. He gave a good thanks to Nino as well as so many others who worked on this project: Irina Panyutin, Michele S., Elena P., Mark P., and many others did a lot of work. This event showed us we could accomplish great things if we work together. The bazaar was conducted in a good spirit. Mark P. said no conflicts or tension arose during the work; just everyone was stressed and tired. There was a lot of energy and strength.

Parish President's Report.

She wanted also to thank everyone, especially the team captains. People worked very hard and endured loss of sleep and backbreaking work. We succeeded very well on the revenue raising

made from the bazaar, plus working together and providing outreach to the community. This past Saturday we had a small gathering dinner with the Metropolitan. Michele S. provided the main meal course for everyone. Claire N. said that it was nice to be able speak to the Metropolitan in an informal setting. The Metropolitan was trying to find out how things were going. There was a diversity of opinions shared over the evening. The Metropolitan wants to continue to do more groups, possibly with the Dormiton Guild, the Veterans Guild and others. He wants to meet as many parishioners as he can.

The next day, Sunday was a meeting with the Metropolitan to answer questions. Most of the questions that were asked, were answered. The Metropolitan also allowed follow up questions. Claire thought this was a good sign. Mark P. said after the long service in the morning and the long lunch break, many people could not stay to hear the Metropolitan. Time is important for many Mark P. noted.

Old Business

Fall Bazaar Results Update.

Nino B. updated everyone on the post bazaar results. She wanted to congratulate everyone and those who worked on all the good things that happened. The final fund raising gross total was \$43,000.00, but we still need to calculate the expenses to determine our net total -- those will be reported soon. We will have a debrief on Nov. 3rd and with the bazaar group to review strengths and weaknesses.

Strategic Planning Working Group Update.

Ken M. said that the Strategic Planning Working Group was underway with developing a strategy. So far everything was working as to the plan. Several of the group members also spoke about what had taken place so far. Claire liked the fact that the first step of the group's work focused on the history of the church. George Nartsissov said we needed to follow through once the plan is developed on execution. Nino B. stressed that this will be a huge undertaking. Fr. George said it is important to have a clear picture where we are and this will be a great opportunity for the Cathedral. He further said we have to work to have a common vision and goal - and then promote it and get people involved. Michele S. said she would send out this year's survey on parishioners' attitudes soon. Peter V. said we should do the survey and think about other metrics.

New Business

Staffing Church Office.

Michele S. said it is important that we have steady hours when the office is supposed to be open. She reported a situation that happened during the bazaar regarding her need to have a delivery made to the Cathedral. She asked can we agree on specific times when we have a person physically at the Cathedral office? Claire N. said this is a good issue. Sharon O. has been generous with her time, Claire N. noted. We will have to ask the priests and Zene, the office assistant, about how we can do this. Father George said we have worked to coordinate as best as possible. Sharon O. said in terms of deliveries, when package delivery services come, it is not possible to predict exactly when they will arrive at the Cathedral. The delivery companies give large windows of time - such as 8AM – 12Noon. Or from 12Noon - 5PM. Claire N. asked what Sharon O. thought about the idea that we set an objective to have coverage from 9AM – 5PM six

days a week. Sharon O. mentioned that on Sundays, she comes in to keep up with emails and phone messages. Sharon O. specified that we do work with Cathedral volunteers when we have emergencies that neither she, Zene, or the priests can be in the office. Sharon O. will try to recruit additional volunteers who can help in tight situations or emergencies. Mark P. said if we have volunteers, could we have them doing some tasks, rather than just sitting and waiting? Mark P. also suggested that the fathers, Sharon and Zene come up with a plan and report back next meeting. Suzanne T. said we used to have a schedule of the clergy and when they would be available at the Cathedral. We have addressed it in the past. Maybe we should go back to this idea. Father George said Fr. Valery is here at the Cathedral six days a week. Fr. George is here four days a week. Claire N. said we have an emergency number for those in need of pastoral care. Presently, Sharon O. is managing this. The priests' numbers are on the website and published in the Sunday Bulletin it was noted.

Publishing Collection Totals in the Bulletin.

Walter said we did publish this information in the past. Father John Perich asked us to stop this practice. We needed to have a weekly intake about \$8,000.00 a week to meet expenses and we are not consistently reaching that number. Walter A. said he was told not to provide the collection figures any more. Michele said that if people see we are falling short, people might think about giving more. Michele S. said she favored to put the numbers back in the bulletin, but not put in a plea or indicate we are begging. Mark P. said we should also let people know what is needed. Claire N. said maybe we put the numbers in and every so often provide some context of the situation about our income and what are the needs - such as once a month, maybe.

An agreement was reached to do this monthly -- provide a reporting on income and needs to parishioners.

Sasha's Status.

Suzanne T. said during the bazaar set up period, she found out that Sasha has worked at Sibley Hospital for 40 years now and he may be thinking about a change and retiring. He is now 75 years old. He now uses younger people to come in and help him around the church. Suzanne T. said we need a plan in place to replace him when the time arrives.

This should fall under the personnel committee - to start thinking about how we will transition to a replacement. How much would we need for a salary and how much value providing a basement apartment adds to the compensation package or not. George Nartsissov said we need to review and prepare a job description. Can Sasha help us with this task? We will need to approach this in a very discrete fashion. Marina P. said the Budget & Finance Committee should start in the planning process as well.

Welcoming Newcomers.

Claire said at the meeting with the Metropolitan, the group talked and discussed how we are welcoming new comers. One new comer said it is hard to come to coffee hour and meet people. How new comers come here and meet seems to be a struggle for some - and it is hard to meet parishioners here. Old timers only talk to their friends in many cases. Mark P. said we do have visitors coming who we do not know. It is hard to get people out of their groups. George N. said that we used to (this question is not new) have a designated welcoming committee during the 1st coffee hour -- council members had a nametags and welcoming buttons. Council members

rotated the dining hall during the coffee hour and sought out new comers. Further we used to have two welcoming committee members stationed at the back entrance to the Cathedral door with bulletins and welcomed everybody into the church. The coffee hour greeting has now been many years ago, but the door welcoming is more recent. Father George said during the veneration of cross after the service, the priests recognize new comers. So there maybe a need for the Hospitality Committee idea. Claire N. said that it might work better if there were personal greeters walking around the church, rather than at the door. Fr. George said the new communication committee should tackle this topic as well.

Need for Hospitality Committee.

Claire N. said when the Metropolitan comes here or other high profile visitors, we need to anticipate that we provide hospitality for these guests. The coffee hour committee cannot be expected to provide this support. So we need to figure something out as to how we can provide support and hosting. Mark P. said we use to have that with some of the senior parish members providing this support. But we have lost those who use to do this work; we now need to come up with a new list to help in this activity. In the future we may need to raise some money to cover expenses, but we should also ask the Archdiocese for some help as well.

Claire N. asked the two fathers to help here and to develop a new committee or ask the Dormition Guild. Ideally, the Dormition Guild may be more attractive to people than a hospitality committee.

Claire said she was happy how the priests were able to reach out and get volunteers for Christ House, as one example.

Mark P. said we need to revitalize the Dormition Guild to take up some of its previous activity. Mark P. will work with the Guild officers to see how we can move forward with this idea.

Committee Reports

Stewardship.

Marina P. said she received a note from Ksenia Papkov to thank the parish for our financial support to her during this time of need. Marina P. also has a draft of a letter on our pledging and stewardship efforts.

Personnel.

Nino sent out an e-mail to set up a meeting on Nov. 17 regarding Sasha. John Morris has agreed to serve and has sent a letter agreeing for "pro bono" work with the Cathedral. On Barbara Ashton's status on the unemployment pay, we have paid the fees plus a penalty we had for being late. We have to pay based on the way we separated her from employment with us. Marina P. said the whole issue was put into dispute; Marina P. said she had to decide if we pay, and the lawyers said we needed to pay. The DC office said our dispute is being considered, if we win, we will get our money back. We let her go because of budget issues and not for cause; as a result of that decision, we are more vulnerable on this issue. We did not get all the licenses for the kitchen with DC, because we had not paid our bills. Our accounts are delinquent so they have frozen us out. Marina P. said we gave Barbara a choice to be dismissed or resign. If she resigned we

offered her a letter of recommendation. But the lawyer's decision was to dismiss Barbara Ashton.

Budget and Finance.

Michele S. discussed the current budget and account balance situation of the Cathedral. She noted that the current picture does not take into account the proceeds from the Fall Bazaar revenue.

Concerning fund balances, the current Operations Account as of the end of September has a combined operating plus reserve total of \$234,181.97. (Operating \$76,567.46, Reserve \$157,614.51) The total balance in the combined Facilities Account is \$270,509.42. The total for the Gift Corner Account is \$81,688.72. The Long Term Endowment Account has a \$56,138.43 positive balance. The Benevolent & Education Fund stands at \$117,593.69 in the black. The total of all funds is \$760,112.23.

In terms of the monthly cash flow and budget projections things are good. For the month of September, we have a positive balance of \$14,000.00. Thus we are doing well relative to our budget and the planned budget projections -- we are not as much in the hole as we had earlier thought. By budget comparisons for the planned budget for the year versus the actual activities, we are doing all right for fiscal year 2013. But, in comparison between 2013 and last year (2012) at this point in time, we are not doing so well. We need to work on growing our financial revenue numbers.

The final estimate is in to finish the gift corner. The cost is around \$19,000.00. So we are short by a little amount and we need to ask how to raise the difference. Suzanne said she has not seen a plan for finishing the Gift Corner renovation. Michele said Suzanne had seen the earlier, original plan and the final plan is being developed right now. It just now is in a stage that the plan is viewable. Suzanne T. said the Gift Corner has funds in their fund that could be used to cover the small short fall in the renovation budget.

Michele S. asked that we do an electronic vote on the transfer of funds from the Gift Corner to the Basement Renovation fund, once she has the final figures of the total cost. Claire N. said she agreed with this idea.

Facilities.

Mark P. said we need to be concerned about security of the Annex building -- because he found the bathroom window open on the second floor. Also, air conditioners can be popped out and then someone can easily enter. Two crime incidents have occurred at the Cathedral as well as items being taken from the basement - wallets and other items. Mark P. said we need to consider security cameras. Claire N. said at the Facilities Committee meeting they should discuss this item. The Basement Renovation contractors can come and do a walk through to give an assessment.

The tree removal people have given no answer as of yet as to when they can come (PEPCO).

Sharon O. said since we have two more thefts recently, we need to give another message to parishioners through a sign put up telling them to be aware and keep personal items close. Claire N. said we need polices about building locking and security.

George N. said the ACHS repair contractor indicated that our wiring harness, which is a necessary repair part to complete the work, is on back order; they do not have it in their shop and cannot find one. The carrier service will send a technician on Friday to develop a work around to see if the system can provide partial service.

Legal and By-Laws.

Walter A. said they worked on the Barbara Ashton Tate's personnel issue. Our check has cleared the bank on the DC Government tax payment.

Vote on DC Archdiocese Assembly Representatives.

The two priests and Claire N. were already established as the delegation. We can have two more lay members. Walter A. and Michele were nominated to be the two.

Father George made the motion that Michele S. and Walter A. be named the two lay delegates. There was a second offered to this motion. The vote of the Council was unanimous to name these two as delegates.

Ken M. offered a motion for adjournment at 9PM. There was a second offered. The vote was all in favor of adjournment.

Everyone participated in singing the Closing Prayer

Next Meeting 21 November 2013

Addendum to the Council Minutes

Michele S. submitted the following request and motion and asked for an electronic vote: The final estimate to finish the gift corner is \$19,467 for APC and up to \$1,000 for the architects. We have approximately \$18,536 left in the Basement Renovation Account. As we discussed during the last PC meeting, I plan to pay the difference \$1,931 from the Gift Corner Savings Account. The balance in the Gift Corner Accounts as of the end of September was \$79,896.

Will you please ask the council to vote to approve the use of up to \$2,000 from the Gift Corner Account to finish the renovation? Michele then put forward the following motion

Motion: The St. Nicholas Parish Council authorizes the use of up to \$2,000 from the Gift Corner Account, which contained \$79,898. as of the end of September, in order to finish the Gift Corner renovation by Wednesday November 6th. Nino B seconded the motion.

The electronic vote results were 12 votes in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

These minutes have been prepared and submitted on November 21, 2013 by Council Secretary Ken Mitchell. These minutes have been resubmitted on December 18, 2013 with editorial revisions. KM

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest in Charge of the Cathedral

Date