

St. Nicholas Parish Council Meeting
Recorded Meeting Minutes
20 March 2014

Members in attendance: Claire Nobles, Elena Panomarenko, Mark Pietrzykoski, Michele Smith, Suzanne Tolstoy, Paul Moser, Ken Mitchell, Sharon Osmolovsky, Ivan Andonov (Deputy), and Walter Alesevich (Deputy)

Members absent: Nino Burjanadze, Peter Vlasov

Clergy in attendance: Fr. George and Fr. Valery

Guests: Marina Poutiatine

The Meeting began at 7:03 PM with a quorum present.

Everyone participated in the Opening Prayer.

Swearing in of New Members.

Father George swore in the two newly elected deputy members - Ivan Andonov and Walter Alesevich

Approval of the Agenda

Walter A. moved the meeting agenda be approved and that motion received a seconded. The vote passed the motion with a unanimous vote.

Approval of the January Minutes

Suzanne T. moved a motion to approve the January minutes. A second was offered. Everyone voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Approval of the February Minutes

The PC decided to table the February minutes for further review and corrections.

There was a discussion about recording of the PC meeting minutes to better ensure accuracy. With the possibility of reducing some of the content in the documented minutes. The PC decided to record starting at the next meeting, but the documented minutes need to continue with details. No decision was made, however, on how long the recorded meeting minutes should be kept or who should have access to those tape recorded minutes.

Father George Kokhno's Report

Fr. George said he had no news to report.

Father Valery Shemchuk's Report

He thanked the out-going members of the Parish Council - John Stepanchuk, Marina Poutiatine, and Walter Alesevich for their years of service to the Cathedral. He also noted that the Annual All Parish meeting was well organized and ran smoothly.

Parish Council President's Report—Pan-Orthodox Initiatives in DC area

Claire N. thanked the out going PC members. She then went on to discuss two meetings that were held recently. One was the “Greening” project held at St. Sophia. This program has benefits for us as a Cathedral to belong. Among other benefits, it will probably include a buying program for select products in bulk that can be purchased at a discount. The other meeting was a pan Orthodox initiative for FOCUS North America charitable operations. This organization has centers across the U.S.A. to serve people in need. We might start a center in the DC area with many of the local Orthodox churches participating. It was exciting as there were many young people in attendance. She noted the Metropolitan is also excited about both of these projects.

Old Business

Strategic Planning Working Group.

Ken Mitchell said that a number of sessions with parishioners have been held to gain input from them in terms of their ideas and what can be improved or other activities that the Cathedral might undertake. He also said he is continuing to work with the Strategic Planning Working Group to continue developing a strategic direction approach.

Update on Maslenitsa

Marina P. said she does not have the final numbers on the financial outcome for the program as of yet. She said it is likely the revenue will be close to what we did last year. The Centerpieces for the tables were a huge success. Marina thanked Sharon O. Zene, and Irina Knyazev for all their help.

New Business

Election of Officers for the Council.

Fr. George asked if the current officers would like to continue to serve in their positions? That would be: as Vice President, Nino Burjanadze, as Treasurer, Michele Smith, and as Secretary, Ken Mitchell. Everyone agreed. Michel S. said that her job situation is likely to change and would require her to leave the area, maybe sometime this coming year.

Walter A. made the motion to have the current officers continue to serve as Council officers. A second was offered. The vote was unanimous to have the current officers continue serving for this calendar year.

Further discussion then ensued related to collection and counting of gifts and other monies received by the Cathedral along with the Cashier Committee. It seems the Cashier Committee was not clearly defined in the Cathedral By-laws. Particularly, about secure methods of collecting and counting the received gifts and other monies. There was more discussion about having some additional official positions added to support the collection counting.

Michele said, that the PC needs to limit the access and knowledge that any one individual parish member has about pledging and charity giving. Going forward only the Stewardship Chair and the Treasurer should have access to that information. Additionally, our office bookkeeper, Zene, would also be allowed access to that information. No one else should have the full picture on

charity giving. Michele S. continued that it is not sound financial practice for just one person to have full responsibility to collect, count, record, and deposit the weekly revenue collected by the Cathedral. Rather there should be clear firewalls between some of these tasks, and these tasks should be rotated. Michele S. also said at this point we should have only the Treasurer and Stewardship Chair overseeing these activities. However, she indicated, we will continue to refine the process and update the policies and procedures around the financial collection and counting process.

It was suggested that the PC undergo a training session to bring every one on the Council up to speed as to the process of counting. Two council members will do the collection every Sunday on a rotating basis to protect ourselves and comply with modern standards.

Review of Annual Meeting Planning Process.
Tabled until another time.

Planning for Pascha.

At this point we have a group that will prepare meals following the midnight Pascha service. What we need now is to have a breakfast organized for after the Sunday morning liturgy. Michele S. will help coordinate some of the food needed. It is also going to be a problem on volume. Mark Nayden may also help. It seems we need a separate group for preparing the morning breakfast.

Helen and Peter Evans will have an all night Vigil on the Friday night/Saturday morning before the Great Pascha.

Walter A. talked about the Pascha collection. He indicated we need six or seven people to collect for the Midnight service. Sharon indicated that precise coordinating needs to take place for this process. Also noted - it is a good opportunity for fund raising like selling of baked goods.

There will be a “children’s’ egg hunt.” Alla Lowe will develop this program for the Cathedral.

Setting date for Fall Festival.
Tabled - possibly vote on line for the date.

It was decided to cancel the April meeting for the PC, thus the next PC meeting would be in May.

Committee Reports and Chair Nominations

Budget & Finance (Michele Smith).

Michele gave some of the financial highlights:

- the current financial report does not yet reflect the ongoing balance changes
- of note, we have now reached the goal of having a six month reserve in place in our financials
- the OCA repayment of expenses for the previous Metropolitan now shows up on the financials
- in comparing this fiscal year to last year, at this point our unrestricted pledges are not as good - this must, however receive more research - there may have been more 2014 pledges deposited in 2013 than the cycle of the previous year
- the Benevolent Fund wine purchase will be reimbursed

- plans are approved for the Gift Corner - the next step is to revise the cost estimate.

Stewardship (Elena Panomarenko)

The church survey closed on March 15, 2014. It was decided to extend the date until this coming Sunday, and to allow paper surveys to come in. A reminder will be sent on the extension to the parish.

Personnel (Nino Burjanadze).

No report.

Outreach (Claire Nobles).

No report.

Facilities (Mark Pietrzykoski).

Ivan A. said that we have six new speakers in the church. This will reduce the echo affect and sound will be clearer. We also have added four clip-on microphones.

Legal and By-Laws (Nino Burjanadze).

Walter A. said that we need to complete the biannual registration with the District of Columbia. We need to check if Barbara Rhenish will be our POC representative with the District.

Candle Counter (Paul Moser).

No report.

The PC then voted on each committee chair – and votes were unanimous for all nominated. All named committee chairs are in parentheses above.

Susanne T. noted we had 35 people attend a talk at the Cathedral with the Society of Arts and Letters. Mr. Tolstoy gave the talk and after everyone had a very nice meal. We brought in \$600.00 gross for the church from this activity.

A Motion for adjournment was made by Paul M. The vote to adjourn was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9:12PM.

All sang the Closing Prayer.

Next Meeting: May 22, 2014, 7PM

ADDENDUM

Claire N. called for a vote on the re-keying of all Cathedral locks on April 3, 2014.

Michele S. made the following: MOTION to re-key the Cathedral's locks and bolt the Cathedral's safe to the floor of the office. Because the total expense for these activities exceeds \$2,000, the Parish Council must vote to approve

this expenditure. These actions will enable the Cathedral to improve the security of our buildings and property and to prevent the theft of the safe that stores our weekly collections. The motion received a second. Nine votes were given in favor of the motion. Therefore the motion is passed on April 4, 2014.

Claire N. called for an electronic vote on May 6, 2014. Here is the background and motion-

Michele said that we received the final cost estimate from APC, the basement renovation contractor, for the completion of the Gift Corner renovation.

The total estimate is \$23,676. The current balance in the Basement Renovation account is \$17,865.

Last Fall the PC agreed to used up to \$2,000 more in funds from the Gift Corner savings account to pay for renovations costs.

Given the increased estimate, due to changes and improvements made by the Basement Renovation committee to the design, we need to authorize the use of \$4,000 more from the Gift Corner savings to complete this project.

The balance in the Gift Corner savings and checking accounts is \$89,156.

Michele Smith Motions: that the Parish Council approve the total transfer of \$6,000 from the Gift Corner savings account to the Basement Renovation account to pay for the completion of the Gift Corner Renovation. The motion received a second. On Friday, May 9, 2014 the all PC members voted in favor of the motion. Therefore the motion is passed.

These minutes have been prepared and submitted on May 22, 2014 by Council Secretary Ken Mitchell.

Approved:

President of the St. Nicholas Cathedral Parish

Priest in Charge of the Cathedral

Date

