



METROPOLIS
OF DETROIT

HOLY TRINITY-ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Parish Council Meeting Minutes January 16, 2014

ATTENDANCE

Clergy: Fr. William Cassis, Fr. Irenaeus Cox.

Parish Council Members present: Andy Stefanopoulos (Presiding), Stacey Loukoumidis (Recording), Peter Aamodt, Justin Bates, Chris Chryssovergis, Frank Cook, Alex Geromes, David Greene, Maria Kontopos, Matthew Neuendorf, Peter Rodish, Nick Sarakatsannis,

Parish Staff: Chris Jonson, Eugene Nicholas

Absent: John Sakelos

PRE-MEETING

Opening Prayer: Father Irenaeus Cox gave the opening prayer at the fellowship meal preceding the meeting

Call to Order: Andy Stefanopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:57

President's Remarks: Andy Stefanopoulos is deeply honored to be President. He gave a brief history of himself and the types of organizations he has been involved in. They all required teamwork. He hopes that this Parish Council can work together as a team. Regardless of how the Parish Council votes we will all support the decision of the Parish Council. Please be willing to listen to parishioners and their concerns. Just one last comment teamwork, teamwork.

Secretary's Report:

- **Minutes:** Maria Kontopos moved to accept the minutes, Peter Aamodt seconded. The minutes of the December 19, 2013 meeting as presented by Stacey Loukoumidis were unanimously approved.
- **Received Correspondence:** Received 2 thank you notes for the Panera gift cards given to office volunteers. Eleni Z. and Elaine Snyder. The Shepherd's Staff was also passed around for each member to look at.

Clergy Remarks:

- Father Bill Cassis:
 - A lot of discussion the last couple of years about the condition of our building. There are three areas of major concern the Bishops Walk especially the carpet, the gymnasium and small banquet hall, and especially the accoutrements in church. Father has never had the green light from Parish Council to start pursuing the up keep of these items in the church.

There have been donations made specifically for the upkeep of these items and he hasn't looked into whether it is cheaper to replace or repair the items. These items are not going to get better on their own we are going to have to put some money into it. Father doesn't know if we should make a committee to work on this. Peter Rodish asked if we will be doing a tour of the church again so new Parish Council members can see the entire church building. Father Irenaueus said that the church he just came from has a beautification committee that there are 3-4 people on the committee and if things were brought to their attention the committee would look at repairing or replacing the item. It didn't involve a lot of people to get the item fixed. Andy Stefanopoulos suggested to bring this up under new business. Nick Sarakatsannis wanted to know if this couldn't fall under Chris Jonson? Why couldn't we just use some elbow grease to clean the brass? This is not building maintenance it is all of the items that make our church beautiful. Not carpet, paint however we do need to have a punch list of what needs to be repaired or replaced.

- Father Bill mentioned that the Clergy Laity had each parish pick two volunteers to be honored for their volunteer service. Father would like to do something like that in our parish where we have a luncheon to honor all of the volunteers in our church. He would also like to have it where we honor two of our parishioners at the luncheon.
- Father would like to see our 2015 Stewardship drive to start no later than October 1, 2014. The year that Chris Chryssovergis organized the stewardship program he distributed stewardship information the Sunday after the car raffle. Stacey Loukoumidis asked if many people fill out stewardship cards. Eugene said they do, and it is encouraged. Father Bill pointed out that there is a "paid in full" option on the card for those who want to make a single lump-sum payment and still fill out a card.
- Father Irenaueus Cox: Had nothing to mention except what he already said about beautification committee.

Treasurer's Report:

- The December 2013 financial statements were presented by Peter Rodish for review. All Parish Council members received it by email.
- Everything looks good except our stewardship. Once we get that started things should start coming together. Stewardship is our biggest weakness. It would help if, no matter how big or small the contribution, everyone filled out a Stewardship card.
- Peter Aamodt asked a question about the format of the report. Peter would like to have the month, year to date, and budget. Comparing month to month from each year doesn't give a good picture. Typically the month to month expenses are the same. Chris Chryssovergis liked Peter's idea but also thought having month to month is a good idea. Eugene added that month to month gives a good barometer of ongoing trends. We decided to try the report with four columns and using a smaller print, keeping month to month and year to date but adding a budget column. Peter Aamodt moved to approve the December 2013 financial statements. Chris Chryssovergis seconded the motion. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

Parish Administrator's Report:

- Food Pantry: Eugene Nicholas informed the Parish Council that we reopened the food pantry after being closed for 3 weeks. We had about 70 families come in this week to get food.

- Roof Repair Update: We continue to get donations from Parishioners and a second tray. So far we have \$54,244. Break down of where money has come from: AHEPA gave \$5,000, left over from the clergy laity \$4,300, second tray \$1,944 and donation \$43,000. Eugene Nicholas borrowed again making our line of credit draw \$72,000. Eugene has charged \$14,000 so that we won't have to pay until the March statement comes in and then the roof will be paid off. Eugene thinks he has enough money right now to take care of January's bills. The Line of Credit should not be needed through the end of the month, but February is uncertain. Peter Rodish mentioned that there was an uptick in giving for the roof after Father Bill spoke about the second tray in church.
- Sacrament fees will be going into the February Voice. We are asking that people pay before service, which has been well received so far. As Parish Council members we may be asked about this. The price policy has been in place for the last 6years. It is \$300 for a wedding and \$150 for a baptism. If you are not a member of our church the fee is \$500 for a wedding. Funerals there is no fee.

Old Business:

- Nick Sarakatsannis informed the Parish Council that we will be getting 2 new ovens for the kitchen. There are a few things that will need to be updated so that we are within code. The ovens will be movable so that if we have any issues we can shift ovens around. Nick would like to have ovens in by February. The ovens will be bakery depth and gas. The ovens will be placed next to the refrigerator.
- Eugene said that Nick is going to come in under budget so we will have the resources to do the upgrading of code. Philoptocos will be giving a \$3,000 donation plus we received a \$1,000 personal donation.

New Business:

- Andy Stefanopoulos brought up the Agape event: do we want to have a Sunday dinner like in the past or do a Resurrection meal after church? Attendance at the Agape meal has been falling. We need to find out who from Parish Council will be available to be at these meals and will we have the man power. Father Bill asked the question how many people will be available for the Agape and 8 people were available. Chris Chryssovergis mentioned that since it is Western Easter as well this might be a good year to start the Resurrection meal. The question was asked how many people would be available for that and the number was 7. Peter Aamodt moved to do the Resurrection meal and Alex Gerome seconded the motion. Frank Cook said since he won't be there for either that we should have a signup sheet for Time, Talent, or Treasure. Time could help with set up, Talent would be serving and taking down, and Treasure would give a financial donations. This way everyone on Parish Council could help. Father Bill suggested we just don't have a meal. Father thinks the decline in attendance (more than 400 people in the past, down to around 150 recently) is because people are spending time with family not because they don't want to have it. Eugene Nicholas said that whatever we decide we can get it into February's Voice. Stacey Loukoumidis called the question and the vote passed, ending discussion. Andy called the vote for Peter Aamodt's motion. The motion failed. Then Chris Chryssovergis moved that we do no kind of meal this year. Stacey Loukoumidis seconded. Maria amended the motion to add that we put our findings into the February Voice. The motion as amended passed.

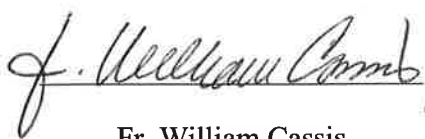
- Andy Stefanopoulos brought up the beautification idea Father Bill brought up. Nick Sarakatsannis moved to follow Father Irenaeus' suggestion that we establish a new standing committee called the Beautification Committee. Peter Rodish seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Father Bill wanted to know if Parish Council is having a table at Outreach Sunday. We should have a table. Andy Stefanopoulos offered to set up a table and man it. Peter Rodish volunteered to make chili for Parish Council.
- Peter Aamodt brought up distribution of communion and is 2 people enough to control the communion line. Maria Kontopos said that something Ron Nichols and herself found out from last year. You have to have someone stand behind pew 7 to barricade the aisle so that Sunday School can take communion. Then let the younger children go, then we will dismiss row by row. We decided to have 3 people, 2 people to manage the aisle and one to dismiss the Sunday School. Stacey Loukoumidis pointed out that some people are unwilling to change lines. Father Bill offered to speak about it in church, as well as to reiterate the proper way to receive communion: short, close, wide. Maria Kontopos reminded everyone that we need three people to handle money and three to be ushers, so it is very important to arrive as scheduled, or to arrange a substitute if we can't be there.
- Andy Stefanopoulos brought up committees and who would like to be on what committee. Finance Committee is Peter Aamodt, Facilities Committee is Peter Aamodt, Governance & Continuity Committee is Maria Kontopos and Chris Chryssovergis, Human Resources Committee is Stacey Loukoumidis, Communication is Chris Chryssovergis. This is in addition to various automatic committee memberships held by certain officers.
- Nick Sarakatsannis wanted to see what we thought the message would be if we stopped sending mailers to parishioners who don't attend often. There are around 300 families that don't give anything. Chris Chryssovergis suggested that maybe we only send them electronic information rather than hard copy so we don't incur any cost. Further discussion was inconclusive. Until we contact them verbally we won't know why people aren't giving. We need to call people after we send out our stewardship info and make sure they received it and filled out their pledge card. We also need to have a script for making calls. Father Bill needs to address the Parish as to how the pledging process works. It was also suggested that maybe different people on Parish Council speak as well. Father Bill pointed out that Stewards have filled out a form, while Contributors have not. A pledge is not a contract and can be changed if the need arises. We need to convince Contributors to become Stewards. Andy Stefanopoulos suggested we put up a stewardship table every Sunday.
- Father mentioned to never bring up a tray that is empty. It should have a large bill in the tray. This will maybe make people rethink what they are going to give. People were putting \$1 bills in the tray thirty years ago, and money isn't worth as much now.
- Maria brought response Chris Chryssovergis made to Andy's email. Frank Cook moved to give Sam Boulmetis a \$100.00 gift card to Remezo. Peter Rodish seconded. We took the vote everyone was in favor of it.
- Chris Chryssovergis made a comment that we need to keep in mind when we take money. It should not be during the Great Entrance, the Lord's Prayer etc.
- Father Bill mentioned that he was very pleased with the tone of the meeting.

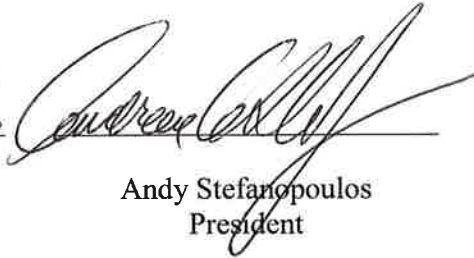
ADJOURNMENT

Call to adjourn: Meeting ended at 8:47.

Closing prayer: Father Irenaeus offered the closing prayer.

Approved as written,



Fr. William Cassis
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Andy Stefanopoulos
President

Stacey Loukoumidis
Secretary