

Parish Council Meeting
January 9, 2023
Remote Zoom Meeting (recorded)

Roll Call

Parish Council Members Present: Christine Dardaris, Donna Dimitri, Sergio Georgi, Zachary Smith, Reem Tarazi,

Parish Council Members Absent: Davit Jishkariani, Nilda Salavachi

Clergy: Fr. Kai

Sunday School: none

Auxiliary Members Present: Linda Croke, Linda Notskas, Steve Coraluzzi

Meeting opened with prayer at 7:41 pm

Parish Council Update

- Donna communicated with Fr. Nikodhim and got OK for us to proceed as elected council for additional year.
- No one volunteered interest in taking over as chair. Zach nominated Donna. Donna agreed to serve another year as chair. Donna thanked all those on council for their commitment.
- Sergio agreed to continue to serve as vice-chair.
- Zach agreed to serve as a treasurer for one more year with goal of finding someone willing to learn the role through this year and take over in future.
- Reem agreed to continue to serve as Secretary.
- Christine, Davit, and Nilda will continue to serve as trustees.

Secretary's Report (reported by Reem Tarazi)

Reem presented the minutes from the December 2022 meeting. Sergio moved to accept minutes as presented and seconded by Zach. Motion passed.

Donna asked Zach to share contact information for donations by non-parishioners. Online donations do not come with addresses so Reem will send thank you via email to those. Sergio suggested we can have online system generate "thank you" immediately following donation, so that will be set up for future.

Treasurer's Report (reported by Zachary Smith)

At end December 2022:

- Checking account up to ~\$29,468
- Market investment at ~\$240,000 at end of December
- Total 76 pledges received for ~\$55,000; ended below pledge goal of \$60,000
- Still slightly short on icon payments, but most received
- Investment account down ~\$50,000 for the year; worst year in a long time
- Check register presented for review; one notable discrepancy unexplained despite efforts
- Other notable income or expenses
 - A number of pledge contributions received late this year
 - \$6610 donations received from 2 families who give generous donations yearly
 - Short on anticipated Christmas donations (though we exceeded pascha donations)

- \$1500 anonymous donation by a parishioner
- Last substitute priest payments made to Fr. Dennis
- Reimbursements for gift drive (though these funds covered by donations earmarked for this)
- We have Zelle working for automatic transfers to Fr. Kai
- Overall, we had a good year financially
- Bank and credit card statements available for review

Reem moved to accept the December report, seconded by Sergio. Zach abstained. Motion passed.

Zach shared analysis of 2022 contributions and pledges (average, median, mean) noting that the *median* contribution and pledge amount is low. 10 families (out of 140) contribute half of our contribution amount and 11 families contribute half of total pledge amount.

- Donna suggested we summarize and send this information to parishioners. Council agreed that summary should be prepared and shared, with the goal of eliciting greater contributions by more parishioners. Discussed providing a suggested pledge amount and/or reminding parishioners about relevance of tithing. Zach will be prepare something and send for review.

Clergy report (reported by Fr. Kai)

- Fr. Kai will generate ideas to address goals/needs of church after gathering information.
- Fr. Kai announced that he is available and willing to do house blessings and encourages parishioners to contact him directly. He has several scheduled for this week already.
- Would like to add a weekday evening service to the schedule that would allow virtual participation.

Sunday School Report (reported by Donna Dimitri)

- Nothing new
- Fr. Kai suggested doing a short lesson for children before communion
- Donna asked if Fr. Kai would be willing to meet with middle/high school children once a month on a regular schedule; Fr. Kai agreed

Chairperson Report (reported by Donna Dimitri)

- Archbishop Mark, Locum Tenens of the Albanian Archdiocese, issued a letter confirming the assignment of Father Kai to St. John Chrysostom. The letter was emailed to Parish Council.
- No response from the Post Office in reference to the complaint that was filed via email on December 8th, 2022. Sent an inquiry on Dec 28th and again tonight (January 9th, 2023). Will continue to follow-up with the complaint.
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy was emailed to everyone. Please take a moment to read over the policy. There will be a sign-off sheet at the candle stand for everyone to sign.
- The contractor who repaired the sidewalk in front of the church will be at the church this week to prepare an estimate to repair the plaster above the south side middle window in the church hall.
- The date for the Albanian Archdiocese Assembly has been changed to Sept 14-16. The plan is to have the consecration of Archimandrite Nikodhim as our Bishop on Saturday, Sept. 16th.

This will take place at St. George Cathedral in Boston, MA. Details will be shared as we receive them.

- Sergio was reviewing the PECO bill and noticed we are paying sales tax. This happened when we switched our energy supplier in 2020. Tax exempt form filed with PECO and forms will be submitted to PA Dept of Revenue requesting a refund on the tax we have paid – approximately \$620.00

Vice Chairperson Report (reported by Sergio Georgi)

- Webservices update: everything migrated to a new business tier to allow to send more than 50 emails per hour and now better platform for email and webservices
- Fr. Kai's email set up and working
- Livestream issues have resolved since driver updates
- Eduard Papa works for Facebook and has agreed to assist us in determining ownership of our page with the goal of transferring ownership and resetting password

Old Business

- Icon auction
 - Scheduled for Jan 22 and Jan 29
 - Most returned; Donna has been contacting those with outstanding icons
 - Stephanie Kosta and Pete Ghicondey agreed to be auctioneers
- Women's Day Dance
 - Need to schedule date in March 2023; Donna will check with Nilda
- Soup-er bowl Sunday event

New Business

- Donna asked Christine for update on background checks and if any renewals needed; Christine will check and report back
- Goals for 2023
 - Building maintenance
 - Paint church
 - Replace windows
 - Increasing awareness of pledge amounts and increasing pledge amounts
 - Addressing mail problem

Next Parish Council monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, February 6 at 7:30pm.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Reem Tarazi