

Diocesan Council Meeting, June 2, 2014. St. Mark's Orthodox Church, Wrightstown.

Present: Bishop MARK, Fr. John Kowalczyk, Fr. Martin Browne, Fr. Michael Hatrak, Fr. Nicholas Solak, Fr. James Weremedic, Fr. Paul Shellbach, Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Fr. Stephen Vernak, Doug Yates, Elsie Herman, Mark Linnehan,

Absent: David Yeosock, John Buckeye

Began 10:15am, sang Ascension Tropar

Minutes: All in favor.

Mark Linnehan made motion to accept, Fr. Tim seconded

Diocesan Hierarchy:

Thank for support at the Enthronement, well organized and executed,

Thanked for miter

PSP –revisions and changes, recusal of bishop and effect of criminal conviction, policies regarding summer camp/youth ministry, guidelines for offenders in the church. Added in March.

- Discussion on applicability of level of background of the church
- Cindy Davis do a presentation on/overview of PSP and background check requirements?
- Health care experience driving a lot of legal groundwork on sexual misconduct
- Talked with Fr. Ian Pac-Urar about a workshop but \$150 per participant was prohibitively expensive

Holy Ascension in Lykens wants to close

- Chancellor, Dean put brakes on. Had already set date, Fr. Chuta suggested contractor for demolition.
- Meeting on 17th at 7pm to discuss what is involved.
- Reviewed by laws, no signatures, no stipulation of hierarchical authority
- Cemetery is desired recipient of their resources
 - Much to look into
 - Burials,
 - Perpetual care
 - Inventory
 - Liquidation of assets

Subcommittee of DC to be appointed by the bishop for reviewing parish and cemetery by laws in order to make recommendations specifically with the closure.

Fr. Martin made motion, Fr. James seconded

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One opposed. Motion carried.

Tracking compliance with OCA and diocesan policies

Progress reports – see more effort

Not getting from all parishes, not getting consistently

Need to do better with welcome. Even if good at the door, what about the coffee hour?

Education: not just for children.

Where there is none, parishes are in decline.

More parishes doing the PHIM.

By-Laws – problems in McAdoo. Had none, working on that.

Unified parish by-laws

Not binding until approved by the bishop

No amendments valid until approved by the bishop

Retreat center suggested by Fr. John and Fr. Nicholas as a location for deans retreat.

Fr. John thinks he can get a donor to pay for it.

Fr. John directed by the bishop to investigate this

New missions

Fr. Stephen Vernak suggested, Fr. John Perich suggested

No by-laws from Alden Station, Coatesville, Dundaff, St. Nicholas in Russian (Fr. Victor will translate)

Mat. Sandy has scanned all the by-laws for submission to Assembly of Bishops

2013 not received Dundaff, Lopez, Shillington, Holy Resurrection in WB.

Want to cultivate a warm relationship with clergy and laity. Don't want adversarial relationship, or be perceived as the heavy. But there are basic requirements. Will have to call in several priests.

Non-compliance with PSP, continuing education, criminal background checks.

Fr. Nicholas Solak - reviewed the minutes of Council meetings since 2008 – lots of positive discussion and proposals, but what has followed through?

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Need for a vision in which to place the various initiatives.

Subcommittee and/or workshop

Prepare material and then have workshop

Importance of principles over personalities

Tithing

How to move forward to comply with our Diocesan Assembly resolution to be a tithing diocese by 2018.

Chancellor's Report

Continuing Education presentation by Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky

Thanked Fr. Victor and Larry Skvir for chairing the Enthronement Committee

Hosted pilgrims at 110th Pilgrimage

MT, Bishops DAVID, MICHAEL, Archbishop JUSTINIAN

Scheduled meetings with potential clergy for the diocese.

Visited Holy Trinity McAdoo with Fr. Michael Hatrak and Fr. Timothy Hojnicky

Regular meetings with Bishop MARK

Holy Week visitations of Bishop MARK

Wilkes-Barre Deanery -Fr. Solak

- New priests doing a good job
- Good turnout at Mission Services, including Lopez
- Vacant: Dundaff, Alden Station, Uniondale
- June 13 deanery meeting at Michael Pasonick's food pantry

Frackville Deanery – Fr. Hatrak

- McAdoo, Lykens
- Fr. Ignatius serving in Coaldale, currently working on placing him there
- Mission turnout good. Money used for episcopal installation
- Family outing July 1st
- Lykens and Mt. Carmel vacant

Philadelphia – Fr. Weremedic

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- Successful mission services
- Friday June 13th youth outing at Camden Sharks
- Welcome Fr. James Mason to deanery
- Catasauqua still served by Fr. Tim Hascenescz
- St. Nicholas Church – met with Fr. Bohush, no compliance.

Revitalization:

- Committee has not met
- Monday St. Stephen's Philadelphia
- All Saints in Olyphant
Fr. Weremedic pointed out that the website tab has had no change in a very long time.
Short surveys on topics of PHIM suggested by Bishop Mark.

Liturgical Life Committee:

- Do we want one? What would its function be?
- Fr. Victor – originally establish diocesan norms
 - Deeper cultural issues
 - How are we exceptional? – Liturgy
- Fr. Tim – St. Petersburg Academy training Liturgy
- Synodal norms on cremation and other things.
- Fr. Victor as chair. Fr. Dn Sergei Kapral asked to be a part

Metropolitan Council Report

- Nothing to Report

Treasurer's Report

- Fr. Martin presented his report which was sent out beforehand.
- There were some discrepancies with the ticket sales for the banquet. It is being rectified.
- There was \$12,000 brought in, and only \$9,900 expended. There was a discussion on what to do on the leftover money.
- There was a discussion on maintenance in the Diocesan center.
 - Cleaning: \$75 a month
 - Grass cutting
 - A repair issue in the master bedroom. Could be a major expense.
- Proposals
 - Issues a statement that is the policy of the diocese that the parish is responsible for the submitted number of parishioners at the beginning of the census.

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- Fr. James made a motion
 - 2nd? Vote?
- Auditors met in April, plan to meet again in August
- Bishop moved his personal items from storage in Dallas to Eastern PA. Fr. Michael Hatrak made a motion to reimburse his Grace for the cost of the moving expenses. Fr. Stephen Vernak seconded. Unanimous approval.
- Diocesan Center Property
 - How do we get the committee together to dissolve the Orphanage board to then get this taken care of?
 - A long discussion took place.
 - A letter will be sent directly to the Metropolitan to have him call a meeting to come to a conclusion on this situation.
 - Fr. Raymond Browne presented a statement: *The Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Philadelphia & Eastern Pennsylvania expresses its extreme disappointment over the failure to resolve the transfer of property from the orphanage to the diocese and strongly supports His Grace, Bishop Mark in any and all efforts he undertakes to bring this to a speedy resolution.* Seconded by Fr. Steve Vernak. Unanimous approval.
- Fr. Nicholas Solak made a motion to go into executive session. Bishop Mark blessed this.
- After the council came out of Executive session:
- Mark Linnehan asked some questions on how the aging summary is reflected and recorded. Will some of the back assessments be written off as bad debt? Fr. Martin will follow up.
- Fr. Nicholas Solak made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Fr. Michael Hatrak. Unanimous approval.
- Pdn. Sergei Kapral gave the Auditors Report. Everything checkout out fine. New member Gregory Polk is a great asset to the team.

Old Business

- By-Laws – meeting with committee to be scheduled
- Revised Diocesan Assembly Minutes

New Business:

- Fr. Daniel Mathewson called about mission projects
 - Fr. Solak suggested he talk with Fr. Matthew Cantrell

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- Continuing Ed conflict of schedule with Dn Seraphim and St. Tikhon's Continuing Education
- Include reporting delinquencies on clergy newsletter

Next meeting at Christ the Saviour in Harrisburg, August 19th

Motion to close Fr. Stephen, second Fr. Hatrak.

Meeting ended at 4:06pm

Respectfully submitted

Priest Raymond Martin Browne

Secretary