

Orthodox Church in America – Diocese of New England

Diocesan Council Minutes – Wednesday, February 20, 2008 – New Britain, Connecticut

1. OPENING

The regular meeting of the Diocesan Council held on Wednesday, February 20, 2008, at Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT, was opened with the singing of the “O Heavenly King” at 7:30 p.m. His Grace, Bishop NIKON, of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese chaired the meeting.

2. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the November 2007 Meeting of the Diocesan Council were reviewed. Alexia Tassmer noted that an addition was needed under New Business: A) Assembly Procedures. “His Grace asked Alexia Tassmer to create an Assembly Manual (Operating Procedures) and have something ready for the February meeting. She accepted the challenge.

MOTION: Timothy Tassmer moved, seconded by Fr. Jason Vansuch that the minutes be accepted as corrected. The motion passed.

3. HIERARCH’S REPORT

His Grace, Bishop NIKON, presented a short write report. (on file with the secretary) highlights of His Grace’s report include:

- First Deanery Vigil, in a number of years, at St. Nicholas Church, Salem, MA.
- Nativity celebrations at both Boston Cathedrals.
- Continues to meet with UConn OFC as often as possible.
- Attended CT Deanery meetings.
- Not pleased with the missing issue of ONE.
- Continues to make trips to Syosset for Pre-Conciliar Commission meetings and Pension Board meetings.
- Will attend the Lesser Synod meeting in March and the Holy Synod meeting in May.
- Will make a pastoral visit to Three Saints Church, Ansonia on February 24, 2008 and meet with the entire parish following the Divine Liturgy. Fr. John Kreta, our Chancellor and Dn. John Zarras will accompany His Grace.

4. TREASURER’S REPORT

Peter Kopcha, Diocesan Treasurer, presented a report about the diocesan finances, including distribution of detailed reports of the Diocesan Checking Summary and a comparison of Diocesan Income/Expenses and Budget for the period encompassing September 1, 2007 through to February 20, 2008. He noted that Fare Share collection is behind and that there is one parish that hasn’t fulfilled its 2006 obligation and two parishes are behind in their 2007 obligation. With the vacancy in the Diocesan Residence, the lack of rental income added to the budget deficit of \$14,951.31. On the expense side payments for oil delivery, electrical and phone are still needed for the house. There will be an adjustment to the Bishop’s Expenses, with a lower stipend and an increase in the ‘long term care’ line item. This is being done at the request of His Grace. After preparing the 2008 budget for the Diocesan Assembly a line item for the assessment for the All-American Council was omitted therefore the \$1000.00 will be listed as a non-budget item. Spending for this period was over budget by \$9,796.08 due to the fact that some scheduled payments were paid out at this time.

Financial Statement of Assets - 2/20/2008

| | | |
|-------------------|----|----------|
| Checkbook Balance | \$ | 4,798.75 |
|-------------------|----|----------|

Diocesan Budget: 9/1/2007 – 2/20/2008

| | | |
|---|----|------------|
| Total Actual Budget Income (Inflows) | \$ | 158,818.69 |
| Total Actual Budget Expenses (Outflows) | \$ | 168,614.77 |
| Total Income/Expense (Net Total) | \$ | 9,796.08 |

MOTION: Alexia Tassmer moved, seconded by Joseph Baruch, that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

5. DIOCESAN RESIDENCE

A written report was presented (copy on file with the secretary). The assessed value of the Diocesan property \$270,800. The house needs approximately \$30 – 50 K worth of improvements.

MOTION: Dn. John Zarras moved, seconded by Fr. Steven Voytovich, to accept the recommendation of the Diocesan Residence Committee to do only the work necessary to get the house ready for sale and to sell the property. Motion passed.

His Grace called for a Special Assembly for obtaining approval for the sale of the Diocesan Property.

MOTION: Fr. John Hopko moved, seconded by Joan Skrobat, that the Special Assembly be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at Holy Trinity Church, New Britain at 7:00 p.m. Motion passed.

Fr. David Koles as Secretary of the Diocese will send a notice of the Special Assembly together with Delegate Registration. Joan Skrobat and Alexia Tassmer will serve as the credentials committee.

6. CHOIR DIRECTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

Fr. Steven Voytovich reported that there has been difficulty getting people to sign up for the program. One candidate has forwarded the deposit to the diocese and will have to be refunded if the class does not convene in 2008.

7. OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Fr. Sergius Halvorsen apologized for the delay in getting out the current issue of ONE. The January/February issue is at the mailing house as of this meeting. The next issue will be the March/April issue. Also, there are plans for a special issue dedicated to ONE Stewards with articles on the History of the Youth Rally, Profiles on our diocesan seminarians, etc. A scheduled publication time has not been set for this issue.

8. ONE STEWARDS

Prdn. Paul Nimchek stated that the ONE Stewards Committee met during January. The 2008 campaign has gone to the mailing house and will be arriving soon to the faithful on the mailing list. New brochures are going to be printed to be given out during Lenten Vespers in the Connecticut Deanery and sent to other parishes in the diocese. Also, updated posters will be printed for parishes to display in their halls. The 'current' posters are about 10

9. DEAN OF MISSIONS

Fr. Mark Sherman, Dean of Missions, had no report at this time.

10. YOUTH

Fr. John Hopko, Youth Director of the Diocese, stated that the potential dates for the 2008 Youth Rally will be August 11th – 16th.

11. SCHOLARSHIP

Peter Kopcha reported that we have two seminarians at SVS, Lee Whitfield from Southbury and Justin DuMoulin from Clairmont and Dimitry Kaluzhny at STS receiving scholarships. He has received a request from Jeff Frate, who is at Holy Cross. To date \$7500 has been paid out.

12. TASK FORCE / Committee for Evangelization and Revitalization

Fr. Sergius Halvorsen, Chairman of the CER, presented a short report about a seminar he attended and would like to have presented within the DNE.

13. PENSION BOARD

Greg Sheshko informed us that the next meeting will be Tuesday, February 26, 2008.

14. FORCC (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in Connecticut)

No report at this time.

15. OLD BUSINESS

- A. 2008 Diocesan Assembly Speaker – Fr. Marc Vranes reported that the Director of the IOCC, Demetri ?? has accepted our invitation to speak at the assembly. Arrangements will be forthcoming at future meetings.

16. NEW BUSINESS

Assembly Procedures – Alexia Tassmer reported that the information she has gathered at the request of His Grace at the last meeting will be emailed to all members of the Diocesan Council for their input.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Diocesan Council is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2008, at Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT, beginning with the celebration of Daily Vespers at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on a motion by Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, the meeting closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest David Koles
Diocesan Secretary

Members of the Diocesan Council present for this Meeting:

1. His Grace, Bishop NIKON, Diocesan Bishop
2. Fr. John Kreta, Chancellor
3. Fr. David Koles, Diocesan Secretary
4. Peter Kopcha, Diocesan Treasurer and Manager of the Diocesan Residence, Laity-at-Large Representative
5. Fr. Mark Sherman, Metropolitan Council Clergy Representative and Dean of Missions
6. Dn. John Zarras, Diocesan Metropolitan Council Lay Representative
7. Fr. Vladimir Aleandro, Dean of the Connecticut Deanery and Clergy-at-Large Representative
8. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Clergy-at-Large Representative
9. Fr. Jason Vansuch, Clergy-at-Large Representative
10. Fr. Marc Vranes, Clergy-at-Large Representative
11. Joan Skrobat, Laity-at-Large Representative
12. Joseph Boruch, Laity-at-Large Representative
13. Matushka Ann Sovyrda, Laity-at-Large Representative
14. Tim Tassmer, Laity-at-Large Representative
15. Alexia Tassmer, Laity-at-Large Representative
16. Nicholas Bobrovsky, Auditor (Non-Voting)
17. Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, ONE Stewards Financial Secretary
18. Fr. Sergius Halvorsen, Director of Communications – Chairman, Membership Task Force, ONE Newspaper/Webmaster
19. Fr. John Hopko, Diocesan Youth Director
20. Gregory Shesko, OCA Pension Board Representative

Members of the Diocesan Council excused for this Meeting:

1. Fr. Andrew Tregubov, Dean of the Northern Deanery
2. George Ludko, Laity-at-Large Representative

Members of the Diocesan Council absent for this Meeting:

3. Fr. Robert Arida, Dean of the Boston Deanery
4. Marion Gulash, Auditor (Voting)
5. Matushka Cindy Voytovich, , Auditor (Non-Voting)