

# Orthodox Church in America – Diocese of New England

## Diocesan Council Minutes – Wednesday, August 17, 2011 – Springfield, Massachusetts

### 1. OPENING

The regular meeting of the Diocesan Council held on Wednesday, August 17, 2011, at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Springfield, MA, was opened with the singing of “O Heavenly King” at 7:25 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 June 8, 2011 Meeting of the Diocesan Council were reviewed.

**MOTION:** Alexia Tassmer moved, seconded by Rosemary Delaney that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

### 3. HIERARCH'S REPORT

His Grace, Bishop NIKON, presented a short written report on file with the secretary. Highlights of His Grace's report include:

- Attended the Episcopal Assembly in Chicago. Committees were suppose to submit reports but many did not have anything to report since they did not meet.
- Met with two Crossroads groups that visited both Boston Cathedrals.
- Presided at the Groundbreaking of the new St. Nicholas Church, Pittsfield, MA.
- Traveled to Dallas to handle a number of issues at the cathedral and in the DOS.
- Spent a day with at the Youth Rally which I was not able to do last year due to illness.

### 4. DEPARTMENT of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS and INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, with the blessing of His Grace, spoke to the council about issues concerning autocephaly and our relations with other Orthodox jurisdictions. He stated that the OCA is not just a name but a mission statement. We are the church for America, in America. We are inclusive. Our canonicity is not in dispute by other jurisdictions but the Autocephaly. The statement made by His Beatitude in Dallas in 2008 did major damage to our relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Greek speaking churches. The first Episcopal Assembly became an embarrassment to the OCA. The EP did not want the OCA in attendance but Abp. Demetrios went to bat for our hierarchs. Metropolitan Jonah was not included in the executive committee as were other primates of ethnic jurisdictions. There seems to be a popular opinion that the Autocephaly of the OCA is a hindrance to unity of all Orthodox in America. In light of this, His Beatitude has voiced interest in returning to a status under the Moscow Patriarchate. There is very little support in Moscow for the OCA becoming autonomous and part of the MP. At the AAC our focus should be on maintaining our Autocephaly and working toward unity of all Orthodox Churches in the USA.

### 5. TREASURER'S REPORT

John Skrobat presented the 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, 2010 through July 31, 2011. He noted that the Fair Share is behind budget by \$21,000. Three parishes have paid nothing for 2011. On the Expense side, the big ones will come in August.

Financial Statement of Assets – 7/31/11  
Checkbook Balance

\$ 47,354.51

Diocesan Budget: 9/1/10 – 7/31/11

Total Actual Income (Inflows)	\$ 300,465.36
Total Actual Expenses (Outflows)	\$ 277,188.93
Total Income/Expense (Net Total)	\$ 23,276.43

**MOTION:** Fr. John Hopko moved, seconded Mat. Cindy Voytovich, that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

- A) Scholarships: There are two seminarians receiving scholarship; Andrew Boyd at St. Vladimir's and **John Taylor Carr** at Holy Cross. The custom to distribute any unspent difference between budgeted and actual to the applicants before the end of the fiscal year has been followed and monies were distributed.

#### 6. COMMUNICATIONS

Fr. Joshua Mosher reported that the July issue of ONE is being distributed and on the DNE Web page. The next issue will be for September. Distribution of each parish's mailing list for changes and additions will begin the first week of September. Fr. David is still looking for someone to be the web master.

#### 7. ONE STEWARDS

Prdn. Paul Nimchek stated that to date we have collected \$18,775. Tonight he gave the treasurer a check for \$3500 which has taken ONE Stewards above to \$20K barrier for the first time. The "Sponsor a Rallier" campaign worked well. Also, someone donated twice to the Bishop's Circle.

- A) Grant Program: By the Diocesan Assembly a proposal will be available for final approval and implementation.

#### 8. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Fr. Robert Dick, Clergy Representative from the DNE stated that there were two conference calls since the last meeting. The two main topics of discussion were finances and the Strategic Plan. The MC decided to keep the assessment at \$105/ person. Any surplus monies that were in the national treasury were spent fulfilling past obligations. As for the Strategic Plan, Metropolitan Jonah believes that the Holy Synod does not support the plan. It seems that ecclesiology is secondary to projects and programs. The next meeting of the MC will be at the end of September with the Holy Synod.

#### 9. YOUTH

Fr. John Hopko distributed a written report which is on file with the secretary. He stated that this years was very successful. There were 47 Ralliers with 13 adult staff members. s main concern for 2011 Youth Rally, which will be held August 8 – 13th at the camp in New Hampshire, is that more male counselors must be added. Without the proper staff Rally becomes very stressful for all in attendance.

**MOTION:** Fr. John Hopko moved, seconded Fr. John Kreta, to distribute \$125 each to the 12 staff members. The motion passed.

#### 10. PENSION BOARD

Greg Shesko said the last meeting was on June 13<sup>th</sup> at the chancery in Syosset. Everyone can visit the OCA web and click on the Pension Board tab for up to date information. This was a routine meeting. Total assets are down due to economic conditions. The next meeting is scheduled for September 12<sup>th</sup>.

11. MISSION UPDATE

Fr. John Kreta stated the focus will be in the Bangor area. The mission group will be looking for a place to rent in the old town section. Fr. John Pawelchak will go up for the last weekend in August. There is a St. Tikhon's grad who is leading "reader" services between visits of priests.

12. CHOIR DIRECTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

Mat. Cindy Voytovich reported that the class meet on July 30. The plan is to have the last class on September 10<sup>th</sup> for a "final exam". Three of the four participants will be ready to receive their certificates at the Assembly. The next group has a potential of 13 members and should start in the fall.

13. FORCC

Alexia Tassmer reported that the last meeting reviewed the by-laws, downsized the meeting schedule and finalized the banquet schedule. The annual Scholarship Banquet is scheduled for Sunday, October 2nd.

14. OLD BUSINESS

A. 48<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly – The Courtyard by Marriott in Shelton has been selected for the hotel with a room rate of \$89.00 until September 20<sup>th</sup>. 45 rooms have been reserved. Registration and reports are due by September 30<sup>th</sup>. All information about the assembly will be sent via email at the beginning of September.

B. Assembly Officers:

Clergy Vice-chairman:	Fr. Joshua Mosher
Lay Vice-chairman:	Rdr. Daniel Bacon
Secretariat:	Fr. David Koles, Dn. Christopher Westrate
Credentials Committee:	Alexia Tassmer, Mat. Cindy Voytovich
Nominations & Resolutions:	Fr. John Hopko, Gregory Shesko

The slate was accepted unanimously.

15. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2012 Budget: John Skrobat presented that proposed budget from the finance committee. Fair Share numbers are contingent on what happens at the AAC and the population (communicant) count within the DNE. Discussion ensued about not dropping the Fair Share dollars no matter what happens at the AAC. The consensus was to keep the diocesan portion of the Fair Share to each parish at \$105 per person. There is a 5% increase for Bp. NIKON.

**MOTION:** Fr. Joshua Mosher moved, seconded by Marion Gulash, to accept the 2012 Diocesan Budget as presented. The motion passed.

B. The COLA has not been calculated. It will be ready for the assembly.

C. The Parish Development Program has been put on hold for the time being.

D. 2012 Diocesan Assembly – Salem, MA is the site of our 49<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly. Due to the proxcimity to Halloween it was thought that the week after would be more advantageous for our gathering. Research showed that there isn't any advantage to before or after Halloween. The best room rate is \$149. If the DNE "reserves" more than 35 rooms and does not fill them it will be responsible for 80% of the total cost. A "banquet" room for our traditional dinner will cost \$2000. After discussion about what was done the last time we visited Salem, the consensus of the council was to use two hotels and avoid the "reservation" guarantee costs. Also, a restaurant will be used for the "banquet".

- E. All American Council – nothing was discussed.
- F. A council member asked if we could have the DC meetings on a Saturday morning verses Wednesday evening. The consensus was no. Discussion ensued about establishing an email system for the distribution of reports so that the time gathered could be used more productively.

**MOTION:** Fr. John Kreta moved, seconded by Fr. Joshua Mosher, that reports to the Diocesan Council are to be written and disseminated via email. The motion passed.

Fr. Joshua Mosher will establish a closed email list to be used by council members to disseminate information and reports.

#### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Diocesan Council is scheduled for Ss. Peter and Paul, Springfield, MA on Wednesday, November 16, 2011, beginning with the celebration of Daily Vespers and Blessing of the New Council at 6:30 p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Acting on a motion by Marion Gulash the meeting closed with the singing of “It is truly meet ...” at 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest David Koles,  
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, Dean of the Connecticut Deanery, Webmaster
4. John Skrobat, Diocesan Treasurer
5. Fr. Robert Dick, Metropolitan Council Clergy Representative
6. Fr. Robert Arida, Dean of the Boston Deanery
7. Fr. Steven Hosking, Clergy-at-Large Representative
8. Fr. Caleb Abetti, Clergy-at-Large Representative
9. Rosemary Delaney, Laity-at-Large Representative
10. Marion Gulash, Laity-at-Large Representative
11. Inga Leonova, Laity-at-Large Representative
12. Alexia Tassmer, Laity-at-Large Representative
13. Fr. Michael Korolev, Auditor (Non-Voting)
14. Matushka Cindy Voytovich, Auditor (Non-Voting)
15. Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, ONE Stewards Financial Secretary
16. Fr. Joshua Mosher, Director of Communications – Editor, ONE Newspaper
17. Fr. John Hopko, Diocesan Youth Director
18. Gregory Shesko, OCA Pension Board Representative

#### **Members of the Diocesan Council excused for this Meeting:**

1. Dn. John Zarras, Diocesan Metropolitan Council Lay Representative
2. John Barone, Laity-at-Large Representative
3. Rdr. Daniel Bacon, Laity-at-Large Representative

#### **Members of the Diocesan Council absent for this Meeting:**

1. Fr. Peter Carmichael, Dean of the Northern Deanery
2. Fr. Nicholas Dellermann, Clergy-at-Large Representative
3. Thomas Eisenmann, Auditor (Voting)

#### **Guest at the Diocesan Council Meeting:**

1. Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of the Department of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations