Orthodox Church in America –

Diocese of New England

**Diocesan Council Minutes – Wednesday, May 22, 2013 – Springfield, Massachusetts**

OPENING

The regular meeting of the Diocesan Council held on Wednesday, May 22, 2013, at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Springfield, MA, was opened with the singing of “Christ is Risen” at 7:30 p.m. His Eminence, Archbishop NIKON, of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese chaired the meeting.

1. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the November 28, 2012 Meeting of the Diocesan Council were reviewed.

**MOTION:** Timothy Tassmer moved, seconded by Fr. Joshua Mosher that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

1. HIERARCH’S REPORT

His Eminence reported on his schedule since our last meeting.

Highlights:

December: CT Deanery Meeting in New Britain

Holy Trinity Ordination of Fr. James Parnell at Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston for the Nativity

January: March for Life, Enthronement of Met. Tikhon, and Synod Meeting in Washington, DC.

February: Three Saints in Ansonia

St Mary’s in Waterbury

Metropolitan Council, Lesser Synod, and Chaplains meeting.

March: Lecture Series (Strategic Plan Program) Holy Conversations Marriage and Sexuality

Tonsure of Tim Tassmer at SS Peter & Paul, Meriden.

Spring Session of Holy Synod

Holy Resurrection, Berlin, NH

Annunciation, Natick/Maynard, MA

April: Pension Board

Holy Resurrection, Claremont

Unction Service, Ansonia, CT

**Diocese of the South April 22nd thru 30th**

May: Holy week at Boston Cathedrals

St Mark of Ephesus, Kingston, MA – for Anniversary

1. 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, 2012 through April 30, 2013. He noted that income is ahead of budget and the expenses are on Budget. Bishops Admin. Assistant is the Bishops driver, Deacon Michael Arida.

Financial Statement of Assets – 4/30/13  
Checkbook Balance $ 17,566.31

Diocesan Budget: 9/1/12 – 4/30/13  
Total Actual Income (Inflows) $ 226,025.05  
Total Actual Expenses (Outflows) $ 209,123.60

Total Income/Expense (Net Total) $ 16,901.45

1. Scholarships: 2 Semesters @ $1500 for Dn. James and 1 @ $1300 for Michael Andrzejewski, both of Holy Cross.

**MOTION:** Fr. Hopko moved seconded by Rdr. Daniel Bacon, that the Treasurer’s Report be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

1. CHOIR DIRECTOR’S TRAINING PROGRAM

Mat. Cindy Absent – no updates

1. COMMUNICATIONS

Fr. Joshua Mosher reported working on the next issue of the ONE to being completed by end of month.

1. ONE STEWARDS

Prdn. Paul Nimchek was absent but provided an update. $7,000 has been forwarded to the diocese in March. There is now almost $10,000 more in donations that will be forwarded to the treasurer later this month. There have been 2 new members to the Bishop’s Circle ($500 donations) this year.

1. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Written Report given by Fr. Robert Dick. (highlights of)

1. The tenor of the meetings has improved greatly. All bishops of the Holy Synod seem to work well with each other.
2. The Lesser Synod seems to work well with the clergy and lay delegates to the MC. A large part is due to the streamlining of the meetings. Rancorous and interminable debate has been replaced by focused and finite discussion. Matters are first dealt in committee then brought back for the entire council.
3. The report of the legal committee was brief due to the fact there exists only one open case.
4. The Holy Synod of Bishops has mandated that each clergy member of the OCA participate in 20 hours of continuing education, including 5 hours on sexual misconduct. An online course is being developed to satisfy this requirement. There is a department set up that can be accessed on the OCA webpage. To date both St. Vladimir’s and St. Tikhon’s seminaries are offering courses to address this mandate.
5. Of great concern appears to be the prevailing attitude by both the Dioceses of the South & West to diminish the Central church through financial starvation. Partly because:
   1. The Central Admin. Has been poor stewards in times past of the wealth of the church i.e. self-inflicted wounds from financial mismanagement and malfeasance.
   2. Emanates from the Dioceses desiring to supervise the central admin. So it doesn’t compete for the limited financial resources available on all levels.
   3. From a desire of the Holy Synod not to be dictated by the Metropolitan, but to increase an understanding of the conciliar nature of the Holy Synod in its deliberations.

While there are no concrete proposals on reorganization, the mandate from the 16th AAC is that parishes be assessed no more than $50/capita beginning in 2014. While the next AAC has been pushed back one year to 2015 because of the Special AAC to elect a Metropolitan in 2012, it is unclear if this mandate will be extended one year. Whatever the decision, the central administration will be radically different due to financial constraint.

1. YOUTH

Information sent to all parishes. Following the same pattern as in the past. There are 16 Adult volunteers with the Health Team “up to code.” Applications not yet distributed because updated health information needed. Applications will be due the 2nd week of July. The theme for this year is not yet decided.

Fr. Hopko has requested to please put on the Diocesan Assembly Agenda for the Youth Rally Director & Diocesan Youth Coordinator to be split into two positions, and that a Lay person may be preferable.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRAM UPDATE

“Holy Conversations” in White River Junction

-The speakers were excellent! If done again – different topic and with a more central location.

-Both priests had not done plans for things on this magnitude. However, a good topic, presentation & speakers

1. FORCC

The Banquet is October 6th at St. Dimitrie Romanian Orthodox Church in Easton, CT

1. PARISH GRANT PROGRAM

Two Grants have been approved – One is a renewal to Christ the Savior parish in Southbury, CT for their Bible Lecture Series. The second is to St. Alexis parish in Clinton, CT. Also have received word that Ansonia will be submitting a grant request.

1. OLD BUSINESS
2. 50th Diocesan Assembly – Bridgeport, CT (Oct 25-26, 2013)

Trumbull Marriott - $99.00 per room plus local & state taxes

Rooms to be booked by October 3rd to secure rate

1. Speaker for the assembly is Fr. John Parker (new Department-chair on Evangelization OCA)

Metropolitan Tikhon has been invited & has accepted.

Fr. Sergius Bowyer of St. Tikhon’s for next year.

1. Upcoming Assemblies

2014 - Northfield, VT

2015 - Berlin, NH

2016 - Springfield, MA

1. NEW BUSINESS:

Parish Statistic information request – check for timeline.

ADJOURNMENT

Marion Gulash motioned, seconded by Fr. Vasily Lickwar

Meeting closed with the singing of “Christ is Risen”.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Diocesan Council is scheduled for Wednesday, August, 21, 2013 at Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Springfield, MA, beginning with the celebration of Daily Vespers at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting on a motion by Marion Gulash, seconded by Fr. Vasily Lickwar.

The meeting closed with the singing of “Christ is Risen” at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexia Tassmer,

Secretary

**Members of the Diocesan Council present for this Meeting:**

1. His Eminence, Archbishop NIKON, Diocesan Hierarch
2. Alexia Tassmer, Diocesan Secretary Webmaster
3. John Skrobat, Diocesan Treasurer
4. Fr. Vasily Lickwar, Dean of the Boston Deanery
5. Fr. Michael Korolev, Clergy-at-Large Representative
6. Timothy Tassmer, Laity-at-Large Representative
7. Rdr. Daniel Bacon, Laity-at-Large Representative
8. Robert Popadic, Laity-at-Large Representative
9. Marion Gulash, Auditor (Non-Voting)
10. Fr. Joshua Mosher, Director of Communications- ONE Newspaper
11. Fr. John Hopko, Diocesan Youth Rally Director

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

1. Fr. John Kreta, Chancellor
2. David Zavednak, Met Council Ly Representative
3. Fr. David, Koles, Dean fo the Connecticut Deanery
4. Fr. Patrick Burns, Clergy-at-Large Representative
5. John Barone, Laity-at-Large Representative
6. Patricia Egan, Laity-at-Large Representative
7. Pdn. Paul Nimchek, Director & Financial Secretary of ONE Stewarts

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

1. Fr. Robert Dick, Metropollitan Council Clergy Representative
2. Fr. Peter Carmichael, Dean of the Northern Deanery
3. Fr. Caleb Abetti, Clergy-at-Large
4. Pamela Parsons, Laity-at-Large
5. Mat. Cindy Voytovich, Auditor (Voting)
6. SubDn. Lawrence Johnson, Auditor (Non-Voting)
7. Fr. Steven Hosking, Webmaster