



# HOLY TRINITY-ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## Parish Council Meeting Minutes June 28, 2012

### ATTENDANCE

**Clergy:** Fr. William Cassis, Fr. Paul Truebenbach

**Members present:** Chris Chrysosvergis (Presiding), Peter Aamodt (Recording), Frank Cook, Brad Fielden, Nick Georgiton, Eleni Haralamos, Dr. Anastasios Ioannides, George Kalemanis, Dr. Pete Kambelos, Ron Nichols, John Sakelos, Ianthe Schulte, Andy Stefanopoulos.

**Member absent:** John Sakelos.

**Honorary Member:** Sophie Guethlein.

**Parish Staff:** Chris Jonson, Eugene Nicholas.

### PRE-MEETING

**Opening Prayer:** Fr. Bill gave the opening prayer at the fellowship meal preceding the meeting.

### MEETING

**Call to order:** Chris Chrysosvergis called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

#### **Presider's remarks:**

- Thanks to Peter Aamodt for the evening's fellowship meal.
- Recently travelled Traverse City, Michigan, and visited with Fr. Ciprian and family. Was struck by the example of a small parish working to procure a fabulous plot of land – five acres total – overlooking the bay, upon which the community will soon build a church building. If a parish that small is capable of doing something so grand, our larger community should be able to do as much and more. Council members should consider what they want to accomplish together in the second half of the year. We should not settle for small ideas, rather we should collectively blaze a path forward.
- Thanks to Frank Cook, Eugene Nicholas and everyone who volunteered at Panegyri. It was a great success, and we were able to share our culture, faith and ethnic heritage with the community. Thanks to God for blessing us with great weather.

**Secretary's report:**

- Minutes: the minutes of the May 17, 2012, meeting were unanimously approved.
- Correspondence/announcements: the following were communicated to the Council:
  - Thank-you letter to Fr. Bill from Hellenic College-Holy Cross Seminary acknowledging the recent donation made in honor of his and Presvytera's 20th anniversary at the Parish.
  - Monthly newsletter from the Metropolis of Detroit.

**Clergy remarks:**

- Fr. Bill:
  - Thanks to those who made the Panegyri successful. It was an extraordinary time.
  - Leaves tomorrow [June 29] for the Clergy-Laity Congress and afterwards is on vacation until July 25. Any concerns in his absence should be directed to Fr. Paul.
  - Received a request from the Metropolis of Detroit asking for a \$250 contribution to the Metropolis Camping Commission. This is a standing annual request authorized by the 2001 Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly and is due July 8.
  - Distributed a draft guide in response to an inquiry by Chris Chryssovergis regarding church etiquette. Many points of etiquette are addressed. Please provide comments and feedback. Ianthe Schulte asked whether the guide could be part of a broader education effort regarding symbolism – yes, it certainly could be. Pete Kambelos asked whether the guide covered communion – yes but does not contain guidelines for receiving.
  - Has not yet received confirmation regarding next year's Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly.
- Fr. Paul:
  - Expressed his thanks for a fun first Panegyri at the Parish. He extended special thanks to those who helped with Church tours and in the Bookstore.
  - Vacation church School will be held during July.
  - Requests everyone's support in Fr. Bill's absence.

**Treasurer's report:**

- The May 2012 financial reports were reviewed. Nick Georgiton reported that the Parish is down only \$18,000 in revenue compared to the same point last year but otherwise on track with this year's budget. Rental income is down due to the absence of ballroom dancing bookings. Pete Kambelos asked about higher expense in May for music ministry – it's due to an extra week in May. Ron Nichols asked about the Choir's schedule, with Fr. Bill reporting that Janice Kellaris will be out eight-ten weeks for medical reasons, which may also impact the entire choir. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

**Parish Administrator's report:**

- Provided an update on utility expense. Upon further inquiry, the Parish did not receive a utility surcharge, rather the higher charge reflected higher scheduled demand because of the Panegyri. After adjustment, the Parish received a \$9,800 credit, \$8,600 of which was refunded by check.
- So far, the Parish has avoided tapping into the Northside Bank line-of-credit through effective cash management.
- Panegyri gross revenues are in, but final expenses will not be known for several weeks. Of note was \$14,418 spent on needed electrical upgrades. The Parish passed inspection as a result without further repairs required. Also noteworthy is that the Bookstore more than doubled its festival revenue over last year.

**Committee reports:**

- Special Events/Car Raffle: Andy Stefanopoulos reported that 195 tickets were sold during Panegyri. He wants to sell all 1,000 tickets this year.
- Outreach: Eleni Haralamos reported that flyers have been posted on bulletin boards as a reminder to keep the Parish Food Pantry stocked. The flyers also call attention to the support that the Parish may receive through Kroger's community support program. There will be a gathering on July 27 at the Parish to watch the Olympics' opening ceremony as a way to offer inexpensive events to the Parish community. The suggested donation is \$5 per person or \$20 per family.

**2012 Panegyri Post-Mortem:**

- Chris Chrysosovergis asked for 2012 Panegyri feedback and suggestions for improvement.
  - Beer cups: Ron Nichols found that the elimination of large cups made for faster filling.
  - T-shirts: Andy Stefanopoulos asked why festival t-shirts were not available for sale? Eugene Nicholas reported that t-shirts have not been available for the past two years – they are not really profitable.
  - Volunteer shortage: Eugene discussed better deployment of volunteers. Deployment was especially critical Friday and Sunday, when we were 60 volunteers short.
  - Parking: Pete Kambelos asked about cars parked in front of church on Friday – we allowed some short-term parking there for pastry pickups, but most of the cars parked there were for police officers. Parking went very well thanks to a good chairman who has already volunteered for next year.
  - Attendance: Eugene confirmed that attendance was down about 2,700 people. Inconclusive discussion ensued about factors for lower attendance and whether there has been a declining attendance trend since admission prices were raised.

- Food prices: George Kalemanis noted that other festivals have higher prices than ours. Lower/simpler prices make it easier for us to sell items such as gyros and beer. However, profitability then becomes dependent on transaction speed. Fr. Bill reminds everyone that maximizing profitability would not be a concern if the Parish did not choose to fund itself through the festival rather than through stewardship.
  - Admission prices: Ianthe Schulte suggested increasing the admission fee but offer a weekend pass rather than per-day pricing. Chris asked if it makes sense to restart the canned food donation in lieu of paying an admission fee. This would help keep the pantry stocked during the summer months.
  - Contingencies: Andy asked about rainouts. Eugene suggested that the best option would be to have a huge after-festival sale.
  - Communication & advertising: George reported that several of his co-workers did not hear about the festival. How do we have better advertising? Eugene replied that some advertising is just too expensive. We only had two newspaper articles featuring the festival this year. We used to receive more coverage in years when we paid for more print advertising. Roadside billboard advertising is nice but also expensive.
  - Rides: Ron asked if the rides are worth having? Fr. Bill and Eugene both believed that it would be difficult to attract parents with young children if the rides weren't there.
  - Social media: Eleni Haralamos asked if Parish didn't have a Facebook page. No, there isn't one.
  - Menu: Fr. Bill suggested healthy options, e.g. a fruit booth. George suggested serving lamb shank.
  - Dining space: George suggested the need for more indoor dining tables, which could be placed in the Bishop's Walk.
  - Follow-up: Chris thanked everyone for the discussion and suggestions. If there are others, please send them to Eugene, Frank Cook or him so that they may all be compiled and sent to the various committee chairmen.
- Other:
    - Several members thanked Frank Cook and Eugene Nicholas for their festival efforts.
    - Ron Nichols reminded everyone to review the Narthex greeters' schedule.
    - Fr. Bill reported that Fr. Mitsos recently had an accident in which he fell backwards and hit his head. He was been put into a medically induced coma and subsequently revived.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Call to adjourn:** the motion to adjourn was made at 8:26 pm.

**Closing prayer:** Fr. Paul offered the closing prayer.

Approved as written,

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Fr. William Cassis  
Proistamenos

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Chris Chrysovergis  
President

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Peter Aamodt  
Secretary