



METROPOLIS
OF DETROIT

HOLY TRINITY-ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Fall 2019 General Assembly Meeting Minutes October 13, 2019

ATTENDANCE

Clergy: Fr. Mark Emroll

Pastoral Assistant: Mr. Nick Tzetzis

Parish Council Members present: Andy Stefanopoulos (Presiding), Matthew Neuendorf (Recording), Eli Cassis, Buzzy Gaz, Bill Kanelopoulos, Peggy Kehayes, Kim Lambrinides, Gus Lazares, Ron Nichols, Gus Poneris, Sylvia Rombis, Jay Williams

Parish Council Members absent: Gus Koutsogiannis

Parish Staff: Eugene Nicholas

Parishioners: 55 voting members present, more than necessary for a quorum

MEETING

Call to order: Andy Stefanopoulos called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM.

Opening Prayer: Father Mark led the opening prayer.

Election of Chairperson: Andy Stefanopoulos nominated Nick J. Sarakatsannis to serve as Chairperson. Bill Tsacalis seconded. Nominations closed, and Nick J. Sarakatsannis was elected.

Minutes of 2019 Spring General Assembly Meeting:

- The minutes of the prior General Assembly were posted publicly. Irish Condorodis moved to suspend the rules, dispense with the reading of the minutes, and accept the minutes as posted on the website and bulletin board. Pete Zaferes seconded. The motion passed.

Reports:

President's Report:

- **Andy Stefanopoulos:**
 - Thank you for being here. Last night, GOYA, under the guidance of Mr. Nick, presented a wonderful Taverna Night. The camaraderie and energy instill confidence that Holy Trinity-Saint Nicholas will be in good hands in the future.
 - This has been an interesting year for our Parish. We had a mortgage balance of over \$200,000 in January, but thanks to a \$100,000 matching grant from a parishioner, the mortgage will be paid off before the end of the year. We also received a very sizeable bequest.

Clergy Report:

- **Fr Mark:**

- The special matching funds effort in March, April, and May raised over \$100,000 in just those three months. Father is thankful and grateful for all of the efforts of everyone here and elsewhere who contributed. Thanks in particular to Peter Zaferes and the Parish Council for a wonderful Panegyri. It is a labor of love that is noted and appreciated.
- This past September was the Metropolitan Clergy-Laity Conference in Troy, Michigan. Metropolitan Nicholas has indicated that our Metropolis is financially sound and is even possessed of enough funds to continue to work within our means for programming and ministries due to the generosity of the Friends of the Metropolis and the parishes.
- We have begun a Teaching Orthodoxy series sponsored by the St. Sophia Mothers' Club. This year it involves Mr. Nick and Fr. Mark presenting on living our Orthodox faith. It is always important for us to continue our Orthodox education. The series is open to all adults and meets on the 2nd Wednesday evening of every month. November 13 is the next session discussing our life in the scriptures.
- November 27th is the day before Thanksgiving. We will have our Good Shepherd Pantry as guests and we will need volunteers to help us serve and welcome them.
- The Archdiocese has put together a youth safety program, requiring all people who work with youth including staff and volunteers, with any of our programs, to be screened, trained, and certified. We are required to be compliant by the end of the year.
- We received a very generous direct bequest from Vassiliki Christopoulos, in an amount in excess of \$2,000,000, intended for the completion of the iconography on the ceiling of the Church. We are very grateful and the project will be moving forward.

American Farm School:

- **Bill Tsacalis:**

- The American Farm School is 115 years old. They work hard to educate and improve agriculture and rural development in Greece. May 3 will be an event celebrating a program with American high schoolers who go to Greece to learn and gain experience. We will be hosting a fund-raising Taverna. If anyone wishes to help, contact Vivian Kapourales, Stephanie Bottomley, or Marie Tsacalis.

Pastoral Assistant Report:

- **Mr. Nick:**

- Last night our GOYA hosted Taverna Night at the Parish. This was the biggest yet, with tables full and constant dancing.
- In April GOYA is going to Boston during the week after Easter to visit the seminary and see the city.
- Our altar program had a lot of graduating captains, but our juniors stepped up and we have new young Altar Boys in droves. Remember that registration is not closed. We are happy to add Altar Boys throughout the year.
- HOPE/JOY has been off to a good start. We're looking to do more to integrate it with Mothers Club. Integration is a theme throughout our ministries because it is where young people can see adults living the faith alongside them. Consider becoming a youth worker.
- College students and other visitors have said that we are known to be a welcoming Parish. We are looking at developing care packages for students who have registered on our website.

Treasurer's Report:

- **Kim Lambrinides:**
 - Year-to-date, Stewardship is down by about \$15,000. The budgeted amount was set as part of our goal to become a fully stewardship-funded Parish. Candles and other donations were off by around \$23,000, but fundraising was up by \$34,000, largely due to the Panegyri. Our expenses were mostly below budget. The lighting upgrade is starting to show in our expenses with a reduction of around \$10,000 for utilities. Over the last 9 months, we have not met our stewardship, but have had a successful Panegyri and kept our expenses tightly controlled. We will continue to strive toward being fully supported by our own stewardship alone instead of relying on the Panegyri.

Audit Committee Report:

- **Nick J. Sarakatsannis:**
 - Patricia Neuendorf, Christine Masella, Bill Karas and Nick met on March 11. Eugene provided all requested records for calendar year 2018. The committee reviewed the Endowment Fund at Morgan Stanley. They examined income and expenses and consulted with our Northside Bank officer. The committees review found nothing that would cause them to believe that the current assets (including the Endowment Fund), restricted assets, and total liabilities shown on the 12/31/18 balance sheet do not reflect the financial position of those accounts.

Endowment Committee Report:

- **Peter Aamodt:**
 - The fund began the year at \$1,167,000, now it is up by an additional \$149,000. Having reached the \$1,000,000 threshold several years ago, we have had the option to withdraw funds. The Parish Council has access to funds based on a 3-year average of June 30 balances, which is currently just shy of \$50,000.
 - Our fund has been focused heavily on growth in the last seven years, and one of the committee's goals has been to educate people about how to contribute.
 - Thank you to all the committee members, Fr. Mark, Jonathan Crawford, Philanthy Nichols, Jim Gelis, Kim Lambrinides and Andy Stefanopoulos.
 - The Parish Council took a disbursement in 2018. At this time, the Parish Council does not plan to take any of the available funds for 2019.

Panegyri Committee Report:

- **Peter Zaferes:**
 - This year was a great success. We brought in around \$430,000, with a profit margin of around 57%. Thank God for the weather. It was hot, but dry. Thanks to the volunteers who came out in the weeks and months leading up to the Panegyri. The week of the event, we are still short on volunteers, as well as in the days after for takedown.
 - Thank you to the entire leadership committee and especially Craig Sansone for his tireless efforts.
 - We combined gyros and souvlaki into a "mega meat booth" which was a great success. We had new faces this year but are always looking for more. Reach out to family and friends. We are looking forward to next year, June 26-28, and thank you for all your hard work.

Stewardship report:

- **Bill Kanelopoulos:**
 - Thank you to all who have given time, talent, and treasure in support of our Church and its ministries. We had Stewardship Sunday. Our theme is “Bringing God Into Focus.” Thank you to everyone on the Council and the Committee who helped out, and especially to Cassia and Sophia Chryssovergis for their art and design work.
 - As of October 11, we have had 102 people pledge \$156,950 for 2020.
 - Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles for the Voice.
 - Online giving increased this year through PayPal. We launched the Givelify App as an alternative means to donate.
 - Our goal for 2019 was \$505,000. As of October 11 we are up both in commitment and in received Stewardship compared to last year, an increase of \$17,000 from this time last year.
 - The Stewardship Committee and Education Pillar of the Strategic Planning Committee are hosting an event on the hymnography of the Church and the development of early Christianity. Fr. George R. Parsenios will present. He was born and raised here. It will be Saturday, November 16. Please RSVP by Friday, November 8. Lunch will be provided.
 - Thank you to everyone who works in our Parish to bring God into focus now and into 2020.

Nominations:

- **Audit Committee:**
 - Eugene nominated Nick J. Sarakatsannis. Dr. Nick Parthenakis nominated himself. Jim Raptis nominated Milan Snyder. Milan Snyder suggested that we amend the bylaws to allow for alternates, perhaps 4 members and 2 alternates, to make it easier to assemble four. The governance committee will evaluate this suggestion. Karen Aamodt nominated Patricia Neuendorf. The nominations closed.
- **Election Committee:**
 - Five members are necessary. The election is on November 24. Nick Sarakatsannis nominated Peter Aamodt, Beryl Love, Lew Assaley, and Bill Tsacalis. Buzzy Gaz nominated Chris Chryssovergis. The nominations closed.
- **Endowment Committee:**
 - Lew Assaley nominated Chris Chryssovergis for the 1-year position. Eugene nominated Justin Bates for the 2-year position. Nick Sarakatsannis nominated Jim Raptis for the 3-year position. The nominations closed.
- **Parish Council:**
 - Seven open positions need to be filled. Bill Kanelopoulos nominated Tom Tsiominas. Peggy Kehayes nominated Andrea Siouris. Peggy Kehayes nominated Sylvia Rombis to a second term. Buzzy Gaz nominated Gus Koutsogiannis for a second term. Melanie McNulty moved to close nominations, Beryl Love seconded. The nominations closed.

New Business:

2020 Budget:

- **Kim Lambrinides:**
 - The budget was mailed out for review. Lew Assaley moved to accept the budget as attached to the agenda, Peter Zaferes seconded. The largest change is the lack of a mortgage. We did not discuss climate change impact on our ground maintenance budget, but we did increase the expected expenses for maintenance and utilities. We reduced our budget for church trays and candles as well as other donation income. We always put pressure on Stewardship in support of our goal to becoming a fully Stewardship-funded Parish. The

budget is a template. Mr. Nick's ordination will have no impact on our budget, as he is listed in our budget as Assistant Priest already. The motion passed.

Organization Reports:

Philoptochos:

- **Carrie Petrou:**
 - December 6-8 is the Sweet Treats sale.
 - May 2 they are bringing in a comedian.
 - They continue to serve bi-monthly at the City Gospel Mission.

Choir:

- **Nick Sarakatsannis:**
 - We have our new choir director.

St. Sophia Mothers' Club:


- **Maria Meyer:**
 - Thanks to Fr. Mark and Mr. Nick for their assistance with our programs and especially the bake sale.

Adjournment

Call to adjourn: Lew Assaley moved to adjourn. Beryl Love seconded.

Closing prayer: Fr. Mark led the closing prayer. The meeting ended at 1:50 PM.

Approved as written,



Fr. Mark Emroll Andy Stefanopoulos Matthew Neuendorf
Proistamenos President Secretary