

2/6/22 St Nicholas Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting

Attending: Fr John, Deacon Igor, Jan Bear, Bobby Borisov, Janet Frazier, Charles Iragui, Amy Lines, Tim Moore and Jennifer McDonald. Fr. David came late. (MSA- moved, seconded, approved)

1. Meeting opened with prayer.
2. Minutes of the January council meeting were reviewed and approved with minor corrections.
3. Rector's report- Routine services all held. Fr. has done a few house blessings. There is one inquirer who will have zoom classes. There are 4 catechumens. Fr. has ordered some covid tests for the parish, also N95 and children's masks.
4. Treasurer's report- none presented.
5. Business for upcoming annual parish meeting:
 - Budget- Charles presented the proposed budget. Discussion: The amount for travel to All-American council is for only 4 people, but we have the right to send 6 people- 3 clergy, 3 lay. Budget draft includes 2 columns- one based on historic expenses and another with 3% inflation. There has been a clarification and correction which shows as a significant change in the budget for this year. In the past the parish had been paying for both the parish contribution to rector's pension, but also paying the rector's contribution. In addition, that percent had climbed- the parish's required contribution had gone up over recent years from 6-> 8->10% of rector's salary/housing expenses. The rector's contribution was and is supposed to be at 6%, but somehow the portion the parish had been paying for this had also been increasing at the same rate as the required percent to 10%. That expense (rector's contribution to pension) has now been removed from the budget. There was a percentage raise in proposed priest's compensation to avoid a dramatic change in take-home pay given this change.
Decisions/changes made today: Will offer the budget with 3% increase for inflation. These numbers are based on what was actually spent in 2021, not on the budget (less was spent for many line items.) Increase from \$4,000 to \$6,000 for All-American Council. We added \$1,000 for youth. It was recommended that we add \$300 for charities, plus other minor adjustments. (There is still money in the Covid fund which is available for charity.)
 - Council nominees. Need 2 people for 1 year slots, each. One of these is the alternate. Fr was given names of several people to call.
 - Reports for annual meeting are due 2/17. This will include reports from the leaders of each work group. Janet reminds us that part of the role of these leaders is to encourage involvement from parishioners.
 - It was recommended that the annual meeting be available on Zoom.
 - Agenda of annual meetings is a part of the new bylaws.
6. Bylaws committee met and reviewed our old bylaws and the new recommended bylaws template from the DOW. Several modest changes were made. Fr. has sent the amended bylaws to Bishop Benjamin for his approval (granted). Now they need to be approved at the annual meeting. The major changes, when compared with our old bylaws, will be mentioned by Fr. John- removal of requirement for semi-annual meeting and removal of requirement for special approval of expenditures above a certain amount. Parish council will not spend money that we don't have in the bank. Any major expenditure involving real property already requires a special parish meeting.
7. Business (old & new)

- Safety report by Tim. OSHA requires a safety plan, but not a safety committee (d/t fewer than 11 employees). He has updated the safety plan and has a couple things that need to be accomplished before the fire inspector comes.
 - Building and grounds: Kathy Baghdanov has discussed the roof leak in church with several companies. This leak is related to the flashing around a flue. She also plans to discuss this issue with the HVAC company which will be coming for a maintenance checks of our 2ACs and 5 furnaces. These have not had had maintenance in several years.
 - Suggestion for modification of the flower room sink- a new sink versus just changing the faucet, though a new faucet can be expensive. We agreed to the new sink.
MSA.
 - Request from parishioners to sell items at the church and donate the money to the church. It was decided this would not work out well. Further discussion about possibly holding a parish garage sale instead.
 - Safety of low wall by lower door into the hall. Fr. spoke w/ Stilian, who has spoken w/ Radoslav and Nikola and they are working on some ideas.
 - Jan has spent some time reviewing church records/archives. She notes that Gabriela is studying library science. They discussed that there are issues of how to maintain paper records, versus which ones are put into digital images. We would probably need to buy a simple scanner to simplify the process.
 - Carpeting for the stairs in the hall. Janet and Amy have gotten a bid for new carpets. Another company did not come when scheduled. They have ordered samples of two carpets, which will be shown to council members. Assuming there is adequate money in building fund, we will proceed- MSA.
 - ‘Give or Take’ program- protocol has been developed. The tables will be on the east side of the lower hall room. Nancy Jones will be managing the program. Rules: 1. All items approved by Nancy Jones. Any not properly approved will be removed. 2. Limit of 5 items (per person) at a time. 3. All items clean/in working order. 4. Limit 4 weeks on table, then, must be taken back by owner. If not, that person cannot bring more items. 5. Large items will have a picture on cork board. 6. No clothing, shoes, or food. MSA to start this.
 - Charities: Nativity charity- \$750 was collected for blankets to Portland rescue mission- matched by St. Martin’s committee.
Local charity for Lent- There were two local organizations suggested. Portland Homeless Solutions was chosen. MSA.
 - Amazon Smile is a charity fund where Amazon donates a small percent of purchase price to a charity chosen by the buyer. Fr. had received some indication of money donated to us, but in order to receive it he had to register the church. Money will go directly into the bank account. He will announce this program. People need to do a sign-up on Amazon for their purchases to accrue money to St. Nicholas.
 - Church lawyer- Fr. John spoke w/ Fr. Matthew Tate- they have the same issue as we have in terms of choosing a new lawyer. He will check w/ the Greek parishes.
 - Video/audio. The router in Fr.’s office has been moved and seems to be working better. Further plans to be developed.
8. Next council meeting 3/13, 2:15 pm. Annual meeting Feb 27.
9. Meeting closed with prayer.

Jennifer