



**MINUTES
of the Joint Meeting of the Lesser Synod
and the 2012 Fall Session of
the Metropolitan Council**

**Tuesday, September 25 – Thursday, September 27, 2012
East Norwich Inn, East Norwich, NY**

These draft minutes are subject to approval at a subsequent meeting of the Metropolitan Council

PARTICIPANTS

LESSER SYNOD

His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon
His Eminence, Archbishop Tikhon
His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin

His Grace, Bishop Melchisedek
His Grace, Bishop Michael, *OCA Administrator*
His Grace, Bishop Mark

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Church Officers

Archpriest John Jillions, *Chancellor*
Melanie Ringa, *Treasurer*

Archpriest Eric Tosi, *Secretary*

Members elected by the All-American Council

Archpriest David Garretson
Archpriest Chad Hatfield

Dr. Paul Meyendorff
Maureen Jury

Diocesan Representatives

Diocese of Alaska

Archpriest John Dunlop

Patrick Pletnikoff

Albanian Archdiocese

Archpriest Joseph Gallick

William Peters

Bulgarian Diocese

Hieromonk Stephen (Scott)

Protodeacon Michael Myers

Archdiocese of Canada

Archimandrite Alexander (Pihach)

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Hieromonk David (Mahaffey)

David Yeosock

Diocese of the Midwest

Archpriest Alexander Kuchta

Sam D’Fantis

Diocese of New England

Priest Robert Dick

David Zavednak

Diocese of New York New Jersey

Archpriest John Shimchick

Janet Van Duyn

Diocese of the South

Priest Gleb McFatter

Judge Ray Lanier

Diocese of Washington

Priest John Vitko

James Karabin

Diocese of the West

Archpriest David Lowell

Diocese of Western Pennsylvania

Archpriest John Reeves

Gregory J. Nescott

Absent

His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, *Locum Tenens of the Metropolitan See*

Protodeacon Nazari Polataiko (Archdiocese of Canada)

Dr. Dmitri Solodow (Diocese of the West)

Guests (for all sessions unless otherwise indicated)

Archpriest Michael Anderson (alternate elected by the All-American Council)

Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky (Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations - Tuesday morning, Wednesday evening and Thursday)

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick (Facilitator for Metropolitan Council discussion and SMPAC - Tuesday only)

Maureen Ahearn (Pension Plan Administrator – for Pension report only)

John Ehrhardt (Pension Plan actuary – for Pension report only)

Dr. Nikita Eike (SMPAC – Tuesday and Wednesday morning)

Alexei Krindatch (Research Coordinator for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America – for his report only)

Alexis Liberovsky (recording secretary)

Joseph Semo, Esq. (Pension Board Legal Counsel – for Pension report only)

Thaddeus Wojcik, Esq. (OCA General Counsel – all sessions except Wednesday evening)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2012

Following the celebration of a Divine Liturgy at Saint Sergius Chapel on its patronal feast day at 8:00 AM, the meeting was opened with prayer led by His Grace, Bishop Michael, Administrator of the Orthodox Church in America (substituting for His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, *Locum Tenens* of the Metropolitan See) at the East Norwich Inn at 10:40 AM.

A. Agenda: Introduction

A.1. Appointment of Co-chair:

Bishop Michael, who presided over this meeting, welcomed everyone and announced that he has asked Fr. John Jillions to co-chair the meeting

A.2. Roll Call

Fr. Eric Tosi conducted the roll call. He asked for prayers for Protodeacon Nazari Polataiko who is absent due to illness. He announced that barring any objections Alexis Liberovsky would again serve as recording secretary at this meeting. Fr. Tosi then introduced other guests present for this meeting (see participants list).

A.3. Agenda (attached)

Fr. Tosi announced that the only change in the agenda, barring any objections, would be the rescheduling of the External Affairs Report, due to Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky's travel schedule, which would be presented today rather than Thursday morning

B. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings (attached).

Fr. Tosi presented the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Metropolitan Council on February 21-23, 2012 for approval.

B.1. MOTION MEYENDORFF/LANIER – To accept the minutes of February 21-23, 2012 as presented. CARRIED.

Discussion and approval of the minutes of the conference call meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council on July 10, 2012 was postponed to a later time during this meeting.

C. Opening Remarks: Bishop Michael

Bishop Michael conveyed blessings, greetings and love from His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, Locum Tenens of the Metropolitan See, who could not be present due to a previously scheduled pastoral commitment and had asked Bishop Michael to preside over this meeting. In his remarks, Bishop Michael commended the officers and the entire chancery staff for all of their hard work. He expressed hope that this meeting and the upcoming election of a new OCA Primate will help the Church towards healing of the difficulties endured over the last decade and to flourish again in growing our parishes, in our youth outreach and to enhance all of our ministries especially through our young people. He noted the importance of outreach to minorities and the dream of realizing jurisdictional unity, the necessity of stewardship and expanding ministries to reignite the vision of Christ as expressed by the Apostles, St. Tikhon, Metropolitan Leonty, Fr. Schmemmann and others in order to return to the mission of the Gospel. Our challenge is to answer Christ's question in the Gospel "do you want to be healed?" in a positive way and to do the work that needs to be done. Bishop Michael's prayer is that we want to be healed and to vigorously take up spreading the Gospel message. After this difficult time, the OCA can resume from the ashes, its role in making America Orthodox. Bishop Michael expressed his hope that we may rise to this challenge overcoming any obstacles that may hold us back.

D. Discussion on Resignation of Metropolitan Jonah

Bishop Michael initiated a discussion on the circumstances and aftermath of the resignation of Metropolitan Jonah and opened the floor to questions. It was suggested that clarification is needed from the Holy Synod in response to those who claim that Metropolitan Jonah resigned from the primacy but not his diocesan see. In response, the hierarchs noted that this claim is incorrect. The Holy Synod has established a commission to study all circumstances surrounding the resignation and develop an appropriate statement. It was agreed that a statement from the Metropolitan Council on these issues would not be appropriate or useful at the present time. Hierarchs noted that the Holy Synod wanted Metropolitan Jonah to succeed and were his greatest supporters. It was concluded that ultimately this is a pastoral issue that must be approached with great discretion.

S. External Affairs Report

Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, delivered an extensive oral report and answered questions on the work the OCA's external relations, particularly:

- notification of other churches concerning the resignation of Metropolitan Jonah and the election of *Locum Tenens*
- travel of OCA delegation to celebrations in Kyiv in July and its meeting with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow there
- Meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in Crete in late August/early September and Fr. Kishkovsky's encounters with representatives of most other Orthodox Churches
- The bicentennial celebration at Fort Ross and related events
- The recent meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America
- The status of the OCA Representation Church in Moscow

E. Chancellor's Report (attached)

Archpriest John Jillions, Chancellor, highlighted the goals in the conclusion of his attached written report

F. Sexual Misconduct

Fr. Jillions elaborated on the work and procedures of addressing cases of sexual misconduct (as briefly presented in the Chancellor's report) and the specific activities of SMPAC (Sexual Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee) and ORSMA (Office for Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations). He noted progress towards the hiring of staff for ORSMA and the appointment Mr. Robert Koory to a volunteer position as Director of Special Projects for ORSMA. SMPAC members in attendance as guests at this meeting, Protodeacon Peter Danilchick and Dr. Nikita Eike, were introduced. A lengthy discussion ensued.

F.1. MOTION LANIER/GARRETSON – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

Confidential specifics pertaining to sexual misconduct were discussed in executive session

F.2. MOTION GARRETSON/MYERS – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

F.3. MOTION GARRETSON/REEVES – To revise the agenda in order to continue discussion of sexual misconduct issues to be followed by the Legal Committee report during the afternoon session and move the discussion to be led by Protodeacon Peter Danilchick to tonight's evening session. CARRIED.

Following a recess for lunch at 1:04 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:54 PM

F.4. MOTION GALLICK/DICK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

Discussion of confidential specifics pertaining to sexual misconduct continued in executive session

F.5. MOTION GALLICK/REEVES – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

Fr. Chad Hatfield presented the following statement to the Metropolitan Council:

"I want to thank Archpriest John Jillions for his report. I also want to present, once again, for the record, my belief that if the OCA is going to correct the "dysfunction" that we have attempted to correct on our own we must now begin the search for a team of outside consultants to help us reach what is the desire of everyone who wants the OCA to become what she was intended to be when she was granted autocephaly over forty years ago.

When I went to the microphone at the last All-American Council to thank Metropolitan Jonah for publically admitting his part in the “dysfunction” I also asked, based on the family therapy model being presented to those of us in attendance by the Synod of Bishops, that all of the bishops enter into therapy as well. Any of us who understand the dynamics of family addiction counseling and the basics of family communications and healing know that “scapegoating” is not the answer and it always leads to more dysfunction. Everyone in the family must make changes if the pattern is to be broken and healing can begin. This is a larger process, by the way, than just the Synod of Bishops. I hope that this clarifies my remarks at the AAC so that all of us can hear clearly the need to get outside help to guide us.

At the last MC meeting after being assured that we were better and moving forward I asked that if and when the dysfunction returns that we would immediately seek a team of experts from the outside to help us to heal and to build a new model for conducting the business of the OCA. My comments were received. Does anyone here question that the dysfunction has returned?

The Orthodox Church in America has much talent in the areas of psychology, business management and public communication just to name of few of the areas that need to be employed to move us out of the dysfunction that everyone talks about, in all of the wrong venues.

A failing business or institution would either take the steps necessary for re-organization or they simply fail. When we say that we are competent to solve our own problems we are like the person fighting addictions who says that he does not need any help, thanks very much. Every pastor in this room knows where that person ends up and it is not good.

This is our moment of truth. I ask one more time if we, the OCA, are ready to ask for this help and to begin to employ a team of outside experts?”

This statement was extensively discussed. Many Metropolitan Council members expressed support for the general principles expressed in the statement. Some expressed displeasure at the systemic dysfunction of communication, procedure and accountability that has stalled the hiring of ORSMA staff since the last Metropolitan Council meeting. Possible resolution of this issue at the earliest opportunity was discussed. Fr. Jillions stated that it had been projected that candidates for ORSMA staff would be presented for appointment to the Holy Synod at its upcoming meeting in October.

F.5. MOTION GARRETSON/D’FANTIS – To direct SMPAC, the Legal Committee, officers and others who may be involved to meet within the next two weeks to resolve all outstanding issues pertaining to ORSMA staff hiring. CARRIED.

Following a short recess at 3:39 PM, the session resumed at 4:10 PM.

H. Report of General Counsel

Thaddeus Wojcik, General Counsel for the OCA, noted that his activities would be covered in the Legal Committee’s report and that he welcomes questions at any time from Council members.

I. Legal Committee Report

I.1. MOTION MAHAFFEY/GALLICK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Gregory Nescott, Legal Committee chairman, Judge Ray Lanier and Thaddeus Wojcik presented the Committee’s confidential report, which covered a variety of current and potential legal issues. A lengthy and in-depth discussion ensued.

I.2. MOTION NEScott/GARRETSON – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

I.3. MOTION GALLICK/GARRETSON – That General Counsel and at least one expert member of SMPAC review the releases and other documents in sexual misconduct case files handled under the previous administration and present their findings to the Holy Synod.

At the request of Bishop Michael, this resolution was tabled to the following day, pending further discussion of this issue by the Holy Synod.

I.4. MOTION NEScott/TOSI – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

Discussion of legal matters continued in executive session.

I.5. MOTION NEScott/TOSI - To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

I.6. MOTION MAHAFFEY/LANIER/REEVES – To wholeheartedly express profound gratitude to Gregory Nescott for his exemplary and selfless work over many years as Chairman of the Metropolitan Council’s Legal Committee. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Following a dinner recess at 6:16 PM, the evening session was called to order at 7:20 PM.

Fr. Eric Tosi relayed an email of heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the hierarchs and members of the Metropolitan Council from Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko.

G. Focus Discussion on Issues and Relationships Facing the OCA as a new Metropolitan is elected (attached)

Fr. Jillions introduced Protodeacon Peter Danilchick who initiated a discussion of suggested topics for deliberation in breakout groups (see attached outline) centered on issues and relationships. He asked that the members of the Council divide themselves into five groups and requested that one hierarch join each group. He outlined some working rules for deliberation. He asked that the session reassemble in 45 minutes to hear reports from the reporters of the five groups.

The five groups reported the following priorities:

Group 1 – Fr. Chad Hatfield reporting

- Evangelization
- Streamlining operations
- better stewardship of time and resources, avoiding overlap
- youth ministry
- outreach to African-Americans and Hispanics
- accountability
- restructuring meeting format for Metropolitan Council
- supporting theological education and continuing education
- project Alaska
- focus funding and grant searches for projects
- focus on prayer

Group 2 – Melanie Ringa reporting

- handling crises and sexual misconduct cases
- establish clear timelines and decision making authority for projects

- define governance relationships
- continue improvement in relationships
 - o e.g. Metropolitan Council/Holy Synod joint meetings
 - o dioceses and central administration

Group 3 – David Yeosock reporting

- improve relationships and infrastructure
- standardize procedures in dioceses for certain issues (sexual misconduct, etc)
- revitalization, fostering trust
- establish missions, outreach to everyone

Group 4 – Maureen Jury reporting

- core mission of the Church and Metropolitan Council: preach Gospel and bring others to Christ
- outreach to immigrants
- retaining our youth and cradle Orthodox
- encourage and develop lay ministries
- increase confidence and trust in the Church
- church growth
- spiritual formation
- clergy leadership training
- Metropolitan Council must focus on ministries and programs through departments, each MC member to focus and advocate for area that he/she is passionate about
- expand use of social media and internet for outreach
- stewardship of time, talent and resources at all levels

Group 5 – Protodeacon Michael Myers reporting

- overcoming contentment with ghetto mentality
- we have to seek (mission)
- improving clarity in communication among Holy Synod, Metropolitan Council, chancery
- continuing to fine tune church structure

Protodeacon Danilchick thanked everyone, particularly the hierarchs, for their participation. He asked everyone to indicate their priorities among all the points of discussion by affixing red dot stickers to the lists presented by each group. The results of the prioritization will be conveyed on Wednesday.

The evening session adjourned with prayer at 9:20 PM.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2012

The morning session was called to order, following prayer, at 9:07 AM.

Janet Van Duyn, at the request of Protodeacon Danilchick who had already departed, reviewed and summarized the initial results of the previous evening’s session. She stressed the importance of taking ownership of chosen priorities. The priorities chosen by the group were preaching the Gospel, revitalization, theological education, church growth, use of social media, communication to overcome lack of clarity, handling crises.

Bishop Michael asked Archbishop Tikhon to read the decision of the Lesser Synod after the previous day’s discussion: “At its Fall Session, the Holy Synod of Bishops, in consultation with ORSMA, will appoint a team of qualified professionals to review the past cases of sexual misconduct.” Fr. Gallick then withdrew his motion (I.3) that had been tabled the previous day.

J. Secretary’s report (attached)

Archpriest Eric Tosi, OCA Secretary, highlighted his written report. He stressed the importance of the Metropolitan Council's committees and encouraged members to join committees. He commented on staff changes. Bishop Michael and Bishop Mark further explained the tasks assigned to Bishop Mark in his work with departments, which will focus on advocating for the departments. Melanie Ringa explained the financial arrangements to allow for the new hires within the existing budget. In terms of the chancery property, Fr. Tosi stressed the importance of undertaking the removal of the old unused swimming pool on the property. He also informed the meeting that a proposal from AT&T has just reached the chancery for the erection of a cell phone tower on the property, which will provide income of at least \$2000/month. He outlined problems in communications work, particularly on the OCA website and Facebook page. In highlighting the work of the departments and their attached reports, he underscored the church planting grant requests from the Department of Evangelization. It was agreed that the appropriations for this would be voted on in conjunction with approval of the 2013 budget. Further discussion of the cell tower proposal took place.

J.1 MOTION GARRETSON/LOWELL – In anticipation of the resolution of the codes and any legal issues involved, the Secretary is authorized to execute a contract for the erection of a cell phone tower on the chancery property. CARRIED.

B. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings (continued)

Maureen Jury initiated discussion concerning revision of the conference call meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council on July 10, 2012.

B.2. MOTION JURY/DICK – To amend the minutes of the conference call meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council on July 10, 2012 as follows:

- **Strike the sentence “A plan for moving forward was agreed upon.” in section B of the minutes.**
- **Move “the circumstances and events of the resignation of Metropolitan Jonah were presented. A review of immediate concerns was discussed.” from section B to section A, inserting them after the sentence: “Fr. John Jillions ... during the call.”**

CARRIED with 1 abstention (Judge Lanier, due to his absence during the conference call meeting).

J. Secretary's report (continued)

A further discussion on parish planting grants took place. It was noted that in the long history of the planting grants, very few have failed. The success rate has been over 90%.

K. 17th All-American Council Report (attached)

Fr. Eric Tosi highlighted his report on preparations for the 17th All-American Council, scheduled for November 13, 2012, with a PowerPoint presentation. Many details were discussed including the process of selecting the venue, funding through assessment of the dioceses, appointment of the Preconciliar Commission and other concerns. An overview of the Council's agenda was presented. It was announced that there would be both webcast streaming and podcasts of the council sessions. The need to assist Alaskan and Mexican clergy to attend was advocated. It was recommended that an appeal for this purpose be initiated. Archbishop Benjamin, Fr. Mahaffey and the Alaskan members of the Metropolitan Council were charged with developing a plan to accomplish this. Fr. Jillions and Judge Lanier were proposed for the positions of clergy and lay vice-chairmen of the 17th All-American Council.

K.1. MOTION MAHAFFEY/GALLICK – to accept the nomination of Archbishop John Jillions and Judge Ray Lanier as vice-chairmen of the 17th All-American Council. CARRIED.

It was announced that a contract has been prepared to hire a professional parliamentarian, as at the 16th Council, has been prepared. His qualifications and experience at church meetings were discussed.

K.2. MOTION GARRETSON/MYERS – to contract James Williams as parliamentarian for the 17th All-American Council. CARRIED.

Arrangements for security at the 17th All-American Council were discussed.

Following a short recess at 10:48 AM, the session resumed at 11:07 AM.

In conjunction with security issues during the All-American Council's plenary session, the possible need for one or more sergeants-at-arms was discussed.

K.3. MOTION NESMOTT/YEOSOCK – the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Preconciliar Commission to appoint, if necessary, one or more sergeants-at-arms for the 17th All-American Council. CARRIED.

L. Metropolitan Council Committees

L.1. Crisis Management

In the absence of Dr. Dmitri Solodow, who has tendered his resignation from membership in the Metropolitan Council, Archbishop Benjamin delivered an oral report for this committee

He noted the perceived crisis in crisis management in terms of availability of information to members of the Crisis Management Team (CMT) in any given situation. In discussion of information flow, delicate issues of confidentiality were stressed. It was noted that the need for systematic crisis management was a direct result of recommendations in the Special Investigating Committee (SIC) report. Archbishop Benjamin noted the need for possible revision of the *POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (PSPs)* to accommodate sufficient flow of information to the CMT. The expectation of a brief factual report on the work of crisis management, listing the cases handled and actions undertaken was discussed. A clear articulation of policies and interactions in crisis management was also requested in discussion. Fr. Tosi stated that the situations that the Crisis Management Team has been involved in handling were the resignation of Metropolitan Jonah, a clergy case in the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania and the case of Bishop Matthias. He also noted that crisis management training had been stalled due to Metropolitan Jonah's lack of presence at the chancery for training and Bernie Wilson's illness. Additional crisis management tasks include crisis prevention, response and publicity in a crisis situation. Fr. Jillions discussed the role of CMT in sexual misconduct situations and the relationship of the CMT and ORSMA. The Metropolitan Council then extensively deliberated these issues and the role of the chancellor in this regard, particularly in terms of communication and information flow. Several Metropolitan Council members expressed disappointment concerning the resignation of Dr. Dmitri Solodow and his absence at this meeting, where he should have stated his concerns in person. It was suggested that this matter might be referred to the Lesser Synod for adjudication. Archbishop Tikhon stressed the great need for crisis management training. Fr. Hatfield noted that the issues discussed here touch on the Church's internal governance, which needs clearer definition, perhaps with outside assistance. Bishop Michael reiterated the necessity for crisis management training at all levels of the Church.

Following a recess for lunch at 12:18 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:05 PM

L.2. Ethics – attached

Fr. David (Mahaffey) summarized the attached report of the Ethics Committee. He noted that although the Committee receives many complaints, most are not within the mandate of the Committee. Only one complaint is currently under review by the Committee. He welcomed Dr. Paul Meyendorff as a new member of the Committee.

L.3. Charity – attached

Father John Reeves presented the attached report of the Charity Committee and encouraged the submission of new requests from worthy organizations for grants. He highlighted the six years of the Committee's work since its establishment and the need to follow its established guidelines assiduously. Gregory Nescott noted the disgraceful lack of clear procedures for OCA charitable distributions prior to 2006 and commended Fr. Reeves' leadership of the Charity Committee.

L.4. Council Development

Fr. Tosi noted that the Committee had been chaired by former Metropolitan Council member, Protodeacon Peter Danilchick. Its tasks are to update of the Metropolitan Council Handbook, previously developed by the Committee, and to organize retreats for the MC. New members are needed to continue this work.

L.5. Human Resources

L.5.A. MOTION GARRETSON/LANIER – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

Fr. Garretson delivered an oral report from the Human Resources Committee with discussion of personnel issues.

L.5.B. MOTION GARRETSON/PIHACH – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

L.6. Internal Governance

Fr. Hatfield presented Dr. Solodow's report concerning confidentiality and leaks. Policies concerning confidentiality need clearer definition. Extensive discussion of these issues as well as the role of consultants and the availability of information to them took place

L.6.A. MOTION JILLIONS/NESCOTT – Fathers Thomas Hopko and Leonid Kishkovsky as consultants to the Metropolitan Council would normally receive any correspondence sent to all Metropolitan Council members. CARRIED.

L.7. Post-Conciliar Committee (attached report and PowerPoint)

Fr. John Vitko highlighted his attached written report with a PowerPoint presentation and additional comments. He noted that the approval of the Strategic Plan at the 16th All-American Council has planted seeds that are beginning to germinate. Of the eight identified goals, four are being piloted at the local level, three at the central Church level, and one at both levels.

According to Father John:

- **Evangelization and Parish Development** is well on the way to developing its training modules for articulating Orthodoxy to the various cultures in North America, while **Growing Leadership in the**

Church is focusing on leadership in the deanery – e.g. peer mentoring, lay participation, mission planting—and is piloting this in the Diocese of the West.

- **Management Tools**, in response to feedback from dioceses and parishes, is developing simple templates to help with parish budgeting, reporting of financial information, and auditing of financial records.
- **Youth and Young Adults** has developed and deployed a monitored Facebook Page—<http://www.facebook.com/yyaoca>—to enable youth to network and share their experience of life in the Church.
- **Continuing Education** has received a great amount of interest, with the Holy Synod approving a pilot project to form an OCA Office of Continuing Education with an initial emphasis on legal and ethical training; Saint Vladimir’s Seminary establishing an Office of Continuing Education in response to needs identified in their alumni survey; and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania piloting a series on monthly continuing education sessions.
- **Diocesan Revitalization** is being piloted in the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, which has formed an active Diocesan Revitalization Committee, which received a strong response to a diocesan talent survey and adapted a Parish Health Inventory Model to its specific needs.
- **Inter-Orthodox Relations** is emphasizing grass-roots efforts, has collected many examples of successful pan-Orthodox efforts at the city/metropolitan area/state and regional levels, and is using these to develop a “how to get started best practices guides” for those seeking to initiate similar efforts.
- **Contemporary Moral and Social Issues** has developed a template for conducting “holy conversations” around contemporary issues confronting Orthodox in the 21st century and is exploring the possibility of piloting same in the Diocese of New England and the Archdiocese of Washington DC.

Father John emphasized that, “like any new plants, these are still fragile and need nurturing to reach their potential.” He also extended thanks to the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops for establishing a pilot project to form an OCA Office of Continuing Education and to the bishops and dioceses conducting pilots of the various planning goals. The report was discussed, particularly in terms of its impact on the budget. It was noted that efforts to obtain outside funding for some projects had begun.

M. Treasurer’s Report (attached)

Melanie Ringa highlighted the attached Treasurer’s report with a PowerPoint presentation and additional comments. She explained the financial implications of personnel changes that have taken place and how they have been handled within the budget. She discussed funding provisions for the unexpected 17th All-American Council. She provided further information on bequests that have been received.

- M.1. MOTION LANIER/D’FANTIS – that the Metropolitan Council authorize the OCA Treasurer, acting on behalf of the OCA, to execute an appropriate instrument regarding any and all proceeds of real estate sales real property interests of the estate of Xenia Weigel, renouncing all rights, title and interest in and to such interests in favor of Eigens Abolins, brother of the deceased Xenia Weigel. CARRIED.**

O. Finance Report

Fr. Gleb McFatter introduced several points prior to discussion on various financial issues. He stated that the Finance Committee works closely with the Treasurer. He spoke of the resolution adopted at the 16th All-American Council and the reduction of assessments that it mandated that must be considered as the Metropolitan Council deliberates the proposed 2013 budget. He stated that feedback from the diocesan Chancellors and Treasurers, since their joint meeting in January has been utilized in shaping the 2013 budget. He noted that the Investment subcommittee of the Finance Committee will begin to formulate an investment

policy for the OCA and will be consulting the investment advisors of the OCA Pension Plan. The first policy will be to pay down existing debt as quickly as possible.

Following a recess at 2:37 PM, the session resumed at 3:00 PM.

Q. 2013 Budget

Melanie Ringa initiated discussion of the resolution adopted at the 16th All-American Council as it pertains to the proposed 2013 OCA budget. She presented information and input received from dioceses concerning their assessment contributions and funding methodology. She particularly expressed gratitude for feedback received from Milos Konjevich, Treasurer of the Diocese of the South, and the innovative funding methods utilized by that diocese. She noted that while the OCA Statute must be amended in the future to move away from “head tax” funding, it remains the currently mandated system for funding the OCA budget. In discussion, it was stressed that education is sorely needed throughout the Church in order to promote stewardship and move away from “head tax” funding. The concepts of current funding methods are deeply ingrained in the Church. Such attitudes are a systemic issue and require a major change in outlook towards church growth and evangelization, which would foster stewardship. Transition to proportional giving and/or tithing is a difficult process. Fr. Reeves stated that revenues at all levels of the Church must increase in order to accomplish what needs to be done beyond just maintenance. Fr. Hatfield noted that we are in denial concerning the decline in church membership. Fr. John Reeves suggested that OCA chancery staff salaries be cut by 50%. As a vehicle for further deliberation, the following motion was proposed. Extensive discussion took place. It was reiterated that proportional giving must be implemented. Janet Van Duyn suggested a 10% salary cut for chancery staff. Several members suggested that even if salaries are cut, the budget should not be cut but rather, funds should be reallocated to outreach ministries. The need to procure outside funding was repeatedly mentioned. Maureen Jury reiterated the need for radical changes in funding methods.

Q.1. MOTION REEVES/JURY – To reduce the salaries of OCA chancery staff by 50%. DEFEATED UNANIMOUSLY.

Fr. Gallick suggested that last year’s remaining budget surplus of approximately \$19,000 and a FOS appeal be utilized to supplement OCA revenue. Melanie Ringa presented a systematic overview of the budget as outlined in the Treasurer’s report according to scenario #2 (\$95 per capita assessment). The need for the expensive Blackbaud accounting program used by the chancery was deliberated. It was pointed that other less sophisticated programs can be easily manipulated. Thaddeus Wojcik outlined the extensive legal services he performs for the OCA and their cost. His fees charged to the church are discounted and some of his work is done *pro bono*. He stated that two thirds of his time for the OCA is spent on sexual misconduct matters. Mrs. Ringa stated that the Finance Committee is suggesting a flat-rate single payment retainer for the 2013 budget. Extensive discussion took place on appropriate wording for the following motion took place.

Q.2. MOTION D’FANTIS/VITKO - That the basic compensation package of the General Counsel of the OCA for 2013 consist of two payments of \$60,000 each at six-month intervals coupled with the good faith agreement that we will negotiate and conclude a set of gate-keeping controls that will be designed to reduce the open door access to General Counsel and would reduce his time devoted to work for the Church as well as the additional provision that these agreements would be revisited if a catastrophic situation should impose itself on the Church causing an extraordinary increase in his time commitment to the Church. CARRIED.

Q.3. MOTION DICK/ZAVEDNAK/ - To authorize Bishop Michael and Father Chad Hatfield together with the Financial Development Committee to solicit support outside of the Church’s budget for the following initiatives mandated by the Strategic Plan: evangelization, parish revitalization, youth ministry and continuing education.

The motion was tabled for later discussion in conjunction with the report of the Financial Development Committee.

Mrs. Ringa outlined the funding requested for parish planting grants and provided a summary on the various endowments of the OCA and possible distributions from the endowments, which has not been done in several years.

Q.4. MOTION JURY/HATFIELD – to adopt an appropriate spending policy for 2013, within the restrictions of New York State law for non-profit organizations, for the permanently and temporarily restricted endowments of the Orthodox Church in America. CARRIED.

Following a dinner recess at 5:31 PM, the evening session was called to order at 6:33 PM.

Q.4. MOTION RINGA/REEVES – To adopt budget scenario #2 (\$95 per capita assessment) with additional increases of legal fees to \$120,000 and church planting grants to \$103,000. CARRIED (1 vote against – Garretson).

P. Financial Development (attached)

David Yeosock, Chairman of the Financial Development Committee, provided additional comments to the attached report. The Committee is suggesting the reinvigoration of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS) appeal to procure additional funding. Fr. Hatfield has agreed to write an appeal letter.

U. Other Business

An email received from former Metropolitan Council member, Dr. Faith Skordinski, concerning the Holy Protection Monastery in Weaverville, NC was noted. It was stated that Metropolitan Jonah had released the monks, who now live in Europe.

The issues of internet postings by Metropolitan Council members, along with leaks of confidential documents were discussed.

The overuse of executive sessions at Metropolitan Council meetings was also discussed. The development of a system to maintain appropriate confidentiality and discretion concerning certain issues, while releasing some information in meeting minutes was suggested. The necessity of keeping a confidential record of executive sessions, with the advice of the legal committee, was also discussed.

Judge Lanier suggested that the Metropolitan Council recommend to the Holy Synod of Bishops that it consider the promulgation of a publicly accessible statement clarifying the canonical status of the former Primate of the Orthodox Church in America - His Eminence, Metropolitan Jonah – and that this statement be promulgated well in advance of the 17th All-American Council. This was approved by consensus.

U.1. MOTION GALLICK/ZAVEDNAK – To adjourn the evening session. CARRIED.

The evening session adjourned with prayer at 7:05 PM.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2012

The morning session was opened with prayer at 9:08 AM.

R. Pension Board Report (attached PowerPoint)

Fr. Gleb McFatter, member of the OCA Pension Board, Joseph Semo, Counsel to the Board, John Ehrhardt, OCA Pension Plan actuary, and Maureen Ahearn, Pension Plan administrator, reported orally on the current state of the OCA Pension Plan and answered questions from the Metropolitan Council. Mr. Ehrhardt delivered a PowerPoint presentation (attached) on the Millman Protection Strategy for risk management of the OCA Pension Plan. Discussion and questions ensued. Several amendments to the OCA Pension Plan were presented to the Metropolitan Council for adoption.

R.1. MOTION NEScott/LOWELL - WHEREAS, the Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan (“the Plan”) was most recently amended and restated effective January 1, 2010;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article 10, Section 10.01, of the Plan, the Metropolitan Council has authority to amend the Plan;

WHEREAS, the Pension Board has presented a unanimous recommendation that the Plan be amended;

NOW THEREFORE, the following provisions of the Plan are amended as set forth below:

Plan Section 1.9 is restated as follows:

1.9 "Beneficiary"

(a) The person designated by a Member to receive payments after the Member's death under an optional form of benefit described in Article 6; under the return of contributions described in Article 7, Sections 3.2 and 8.2(b)(i); or under the Normal Form of Retirement Income described in Section 1.22. Effective January 1, 2009, the Beneficiary of a Member who is married shall be his Spouse. A Member who is married but who seeks to designate a person other than his spouse to receive payments after his death may, with the written consent of his Spouse (which consent must be duly notarized), change his designated Beneficiary at any time, but no designation shall be effective unless filed with the Pension Board. If no Beneficiary has been designated, or the designation is defective, the balance shall be paid to the Member's estate. Such person is the designated beneficiary under Code Section 401(a)(9) and Treasury Regulation Section 1.401(a)(9)-4.

(b) In the event that a Member chooses not to designate a person to receive any remaining payments of the 120 payments of the Normal Form of Retirement after the Member's death, the Member may designate such payments to be made to a church affiliated with the Orthodox Church of America or the Plan for the benefit of other Members.

Plan Section 1.31(a)(i) is restated as follows:

1.31 (a) Membership Service

(i) Except as otherwise hereinafter provided, all service while a Member for which contributions are made by the Member, as provided in the Plan, shall be Membership Service. A Member shall be credited with a year of Membership Service for each twelve months of Membership Service. One-twelfth of a year (one month) of Membership Service shall be credited for each month such contributions are made.

Plan Section 1.31(b) is restated as follows:

(b) Housing Allowance Membership Service

Effective January 1, 2006, the amount described in Subsection (a) during which a Member was eligible to Member in the Plan, during which the Member and his Employer make the required contributions on their Housing Allowance Compensation to the Plan in accordance with Article 3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any parish provided housing after retirement shall not be considered compensation on which contributions are required to the Plan.

Plan Section 5.4(e) is restated as follows:

(e) In the case of a non-vested Member who has terminated Employment and returns to employment and Membership Service within 24 months of the last day of the month in which he terminated Employment, his pre-termination years of Membership Service and post-reemployment years of Membership Service shall be aggregated to determine his years of Membership Service under the Plan. Otherwise, if a former Member who was not entitled to a vested benefit is reemployed he shall be deemed a new Employee for all purposes of the Plan. In the event that the Member has received the distribution of his Member's Contribution Account, he must return his Member's Contribution Account within 60 days of reemployment in order to have his Employer Contribution Accounts restored.

Plan Section 5.3(b) is restated as follows:

Upon termination of employment by an Active or Inactive Member before qualifying for any other benefits under the Plan and before his completion of five years of Membership Service, there shall be no benefits payable under the Plan, other than provided for in Subsection (a) above. Such amount shall be paid to such Member within 60 days of the close of the Plan Year in which the Member has been separated from Employment for 24 months of the last day of the month in which he terminated Employment or such earlier date at the election of the Member. Any Accrued Benefit attributable to his Employer's Contribution Account shall be forfeit and reallocated as of the close of the Plan Year in which the Member has been separated from Employment for 24 months measured from the last day of the month in which he terminated Employment. CARRIED.

R.2. MOTION NEScott/GARRETSON – To amend and restate the Trust Agreement for the Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan as follows:

Trust Article 4A, section 1 is restated as follows:

(A) To invest and reinvest such portion of the Trust Fund as in the sole judgment of the Trustees is not required for current expenditures in such securities, properties or other investments, as may be selected by the Trustees and which are legal for investment of trust funds in the State of New York including, without limitation, so-called "common" or "pooled" funds, insurance or annuity contracts issued by insurance companies qualified to do business in the State of New York, stocks, bonds, participation in mutual investment funds, U. S. Government and agency obligations, commercial paper, and certificates of deposit, and to take any and all action with respect to holding, buying, selling or maintaining such investments as the Trustees, in

their sole discretion, may deem appropriate, provided that no loans shall be made to the Orthodox Church in America or its affiliated organizations. The Trustees shall have exclusive authority and discretion to manage and control, invest and reinvest the assets of the Trust Fund except to the extent that such authority has been delegated to one or more Investment Managers;

(B) to sell, exchange, convey, transfer, lease, or otherwise dispose of, and also to grant options with respect to, any property, whether real or personal, at any time held by them, and any sale may be made by private contract or by public auction, and for cash or upon credit, or partly for cash and partly upon credit, as the Trustees may deem best, and no persons dealing with the Trustees shall be bound to see to the application of the purchase money or other proceeds or to inquire into the validity, expediency or propriety of any such disposition;

(C) to engage an Investment Manager or Managers who are registered as investment advisors with the Securities and Exchange Commission, to direct the investment and reinvestment of the assets and funds of the Trust in any and all assets (including, without limitation, debt or equity securities, futures contracts, options on futures contracts, forward contracts, foreign exchange contracts, currency swaps, forward rate agreements, total return swaps, credit default swaps, security-based swaps, broad-based or narrow-based securities index contracts, contracts for differences and other over-the counter or exchanged traded swaps or derivatives and other financial instruments and cash). The Investment Manager may engage in swaps transactions and other derivatives transactions on behalf of the Trust Fund, such transactions being for the purpose of financial risk management and not for speculation.

Trust Article 4A, section 9 is restated as follows:

(9) to do all acts, whether or not expressly authorized herein, which the Trustees may deem necessary or proper to carry out the terms of this Agreement, and for the protection of the property held hereunder. CARRIED.

T. OCA Demographics and Statistics (attached PowerPoint)

Alexei Krindatch, Research Coordinator for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America, delivered a PowerPoint presentation outlining a variety of demographic and statistical information on the OCA and, more broadly, Orthodoxy in the United States, focusing mainly on parish life. Extensive discussion ensued. In response to a question, Mr. Krindatch stated that the message to be drawn from his presentation is the need for more detailed study of the issues presented. Discussion focused on worship and church growth. It was suggested that Mr. Krindatch's work would be useful in complementing the evangelization and church growth tasks of the Strategic Plan as well the efforts of OCA Department of Evangelization and that Mr. Krindatch be asked to assist in these initiatives.

U. Other Business (continued)

Janet Van Duyn noted that few concrete actions were taken at this three-day meeting and suggested organizational improvements for Metropolitan Council meetings including the appointment of an independent chair to moderate and direct discussion at the meetings and that the Church's ministries be given priority in the agenda. In ensuing discussion, it was suggested that the Internal Governance Committee work with the chancery on improving the agenda and structure of Metropolitan Council meetings.

Fr. Lowell noted for the record that Bishop Michael has agreed to lead the Reorganization Task Force.

Fr. Reeves reflected on his years of service on the Metropolitan Council and noted much improvement in the Church's situation over the last six years. He encouraged the Metropolitan Council members to continue to ask hard questions.

U.2. MOTION GARRETSON/LANIER – To gratefully recognize the exemplary service of outgoing Metropolitan Council members Archbishop John Reeves, Gregory Nescott and James Karabin. CARRIED.

By consensus, the next meeting of the Metropolitan Council was tentatively scheduled for February 26-28, 2013.

U.3. MOTION MYERS/RINGA – To adjourn the meeting. CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Liberovsky,
Recording Secretary