



**MINUTES  
of the Joint Meeting of the Lesser Synod  
and the 2014 Fall Session of  
the Metropolitan Council**

**Tuesday, September 23 – Thursday, September 25, 2014  
Immaculate Conception Seminary, Huntington, NY**

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

**PARTICIPANTS**

**LESSER SYNOD**

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon  
His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon  
*(all sessions except Tuesday morning)*

His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin  
His Grace, Bishop Michael

**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

Maureen Jury

**DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES**

**Diocese of Alaska**

Archpriest John Dunlop

Patrick Pletnikoff

**Albanian Archdiocese**

Archpriest Joseph Gallick

**Bulgarian Diocese**

Priest Robert Royer

Protodeacon Michael Myers

**Archdiocese of Canada**

Archpriest Anatoliy Melnyk

Deacon Justin Mitchell

**Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania**

Priest James Weremedic

David Yeosock

**Diocese of the Midwest**

Archpriest Alexander Kuchta

Sam D’Fantis

**Diocese of New England**

Archpriest Robert Dick

David Zavednak

**Diocese of New York/New Jersey**

Archpriest John Shimchick (*except Thursday morning*)

Janet Van Duyn

**Diocese of the South**

Priest Gleb McFatter (*except Tuesday morning*)

Judge E.R. Lanier

**Diocese of Washington**

Priest John Vitko

Elizabeth Mikhalevsky

**Diocese of the West**

Archpriest John Dresko

Deacon Antony Dyl

**Diocese of Western Pennsylvania**

Dr. John Schultz

**ABSENT**

Archpriest William Evansky (*Diocese of Western Pennsylvania*)

Dr. Paul Meyendorff (*Member elected by the All-American Council*)

William Peters (*Albanian Archdiocese*)

**GUESTS** (*for all sessions unless otherwise indicated*)

Archpriest Theodore Boback (*Dean of Orthodox Military & VA Chaplains*)

– *Wednesday afternoon & Thursday*)

Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky (*Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations – Tuesday*)

Archpriest Alexander Rentel (*Secretary, Statute Revision Task Force – Thursday*)

Cindy Davis (*Coordinator for the Office of Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations – Thursday*)

David Drillock (*Chairman, Department of Liturgical Music and Translations – Thursday*)

Alexis Liberovsky (*recording secretary*)

Dr. Albert S. Rossi (*SMPAC – Thursday*)

Nicholas Rozdelsky (*alternate elected by the All-American Council*)

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2014**

Following an all-day retreat for the Metropolitan Council on Christian Stewardship conducted by Priest Robert Holet on Monday September 22, 2014, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon celebrated a prayer service at 9:05 AM on Tuesday morning to open the meeting at the Immaculate Conception Seminary.

**A. Agenda: Introduction**

The meeting was then called to order. Fr. John Jillions welcomed everyone and indicated a change in the agenda in the transfer of the ORSMA and SMPAC reports to Thursday.

**B. Roll Call/Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings (attached)**

Fr. Eric Tosi then conducted the roll call and announced guests who would be present at various points during this meeting (see participants list). He requested approval of Alexis Liberovsky as recording secretary for the

meeting, which was accepted without objection. He presented the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Metropolitan Council on February 4-6, 2014 for approval.

**B.1. MOTION LANIER/HATFIELD -- To accept the previous meeting minutes of February 4-6, 2014 as presented. CARRIED with one abstention (Mikhalevsky).**

**E. Metropolitan's Report**

Metropolitan Tikhon welcomed everyone and expressed gratitude for the previous day's fruitful retreat, which he was unable to attend. He noted the falling asleep of former Metropolitan Council members, Dr. Dmitri Solodow and Leda Dzwonczyk. He highlighted his activities since the last Metropolitan Council meeting. He noted that his previous report was in the form of a "Focused Statement of Purpose", which he has since also discussed with the Boards of St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's Seminaries, the diocesan chancellors and treasurers at their annual meeting, the clergy of the Archdiocese of Washington, the annual meeting of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Washington, DC, the Mission Focus Group and other gatherings. This discussion has refocused the statement into three main areas: missions and evangelism, clergy health and the strengthening of the Church's institutions, particularly monasteries and seminaries. He reflected on the period since the 2011 All-American Council leading up to next year's All-American Council as one of the most productive in terms of consistency, implementation and follow-up between Councils, which has been accomplished through the Strategic Plan Post-Conciliar Committee and throughout the Church. He thanked both the Statute Revision Task Force and the Office of the Treasurer for efforts to develop a funding system transition from assessments for their hard work in preparation for the upcoming All-American Council next year. He then reflected further on the three aforementioned focus areas. In mission and evangelism, he noted the upcoming establishment through an endowment of the mission school and the work of all OCA departments. Regarding clergy health, he highlighted the new programs facilitated by the Department of Continuing Education and the excellent and professional work of ORSMA, particularly in the prevention of sexual misconduct. Concerning seminaries and monasteries, he noted their crucial significance for the life of the Church and indicated that the Chancellor's recommendation pertaining to seminaries will be deliberated by the Holy Synod and with the seminaries. Regarding monasticism, he spoke of the fruitful first synaxis of monastery superiors that took place in July allowing them to confer on areas of common concern while endeavoring jointly to strengthen the vital presence of monasticism in the Church. He noted that such monastic gatherings would be convened regularly. Touching on administrative matters, he indicated that an annual review of the officers and staff has not yet been done but will be by the end of the year. He expressed profound gratitude for the productive and selfless work of the officers, chancery staff and the members of the Metropolitan Council. Finally, Metropolitan Tikhon reflected on the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, which was held the previous week. He highlighted the inspiring presentations at the gathering by the Assembly's various agencies, which offer concrete programs and activities that manifest the de facto unity of the Orthodox Churches in the United States. He indicated that Canada now has its own Assembly of Bishops. He spoke of very constructive discussions at the meeting on the means by which this de facto unity might be made more real in terms of the administrative unity for which we are striving. He said that while it is clear that there are strong differences of opinion on whether this administrative unity is even desirable, there is a definite sense that something must be done to strengthen our cooperation. He referred to two proposals being considered by the Assembly, each being an expansion of a proposal that was presented at last year's Assembly. He further explained that the first proposal envisions a 10-year period of autonomy under the direction, not of one, but of all the Patriarchs and Heads of the Autocephalous Churches, to be concluded with the granting of autocephaly. The second proposal is less specific concerning the overall administrative structure and encourages a more active role of the present Assembly Committees and the concrete alignment of existing departments and organizations of each jurisdiction. The Holy Synod of the OCA made a formal (but preliminary) response to these proposals, noting that each has positive and negative points, but emphasizing that our focus first needs to be on the ultimate goal of this process. In our understanding, this goal can only be a fully functioning local autocephalous Church with a proper Holy Synod, which elects its own primate. Since no conclusion was reached on the validity of either plan presented, it was decided that the Committee on Canonical Regional Planning would continue to review the plans. However, it was also decided that each

jurisdiction would prepare a more formal response to the question within six months for the Committee to consider. While there is and will certainly continue to be hesitation about any kind of movement forward, there was positive response from members of other jurisdictions. Metropolitan Tikhon indicated his intention to follow up on the Holy Synod's preliminary response by drafting a more detailed proposal for possible canonical restructuring based on an end goal of autocephaly. This draft will be sent to a number of OCA clergy and laity who have expertise in those areas where more details might need to be fleshed out (canonical/historical, pastoral, practical). In concluding his report, Metropolitan Tikhon said that it is important for us, as the OCA, to continue humbly to present our vision of a local Church here in North America. To do this, we must continue our present course with faith, hope and love and place our energies into developing and enhancing the great work that is already being done throughout the Orthodox Church in America. An extensive discussion by the Metropolitan Council concerning the Assembly of Bishops and related issues then ensued.

Following a short recess at 11:24 AM, the session resumed at 11:45 AM.

**F. Chancellor's Report (attached)**

Archpriest John Jillions, Chancellor, presented his attached written report, noting that his proposal in the report concerning theological education is being referred to the Holy Synod for further deliberation. He additionally suggested that Metropolitan Tikhon's workload requires the eventual appointment of an auxiliary bishop, noting that 110 clergy are under the direct archpastoral supervision of the Metropolitan.

**I. External Affairs Report**

Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, delivered an oral report highlighting a variety of significant issues and events, particularly the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America and the *Preliminary Response of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America to the Proposals for Canonical Restructuring*, recent events in other Orthodox Churches, Orthodox relations with non-Orthodox religious bodies, recent happenings in ecumenical organizations, as well contacts with various governmental organizations and personalities. He particularly highlighted recent positive contacts with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Church of Albania and the Church in Ukraine. Extensive discussion ensued

Following a recess for lunch at 12:30 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:34 PM

Wide-ranging discussion of various issues pertaining to External Affairs and Interchurch Relations continued.

**J. Legal matters (attached)**

Judge Lanier, Chairman of the Legal Committee, presented its attached report.

**J.1. MOTION DRESKO/GALLICK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.**

Confidential details pertaining to personnel and pending legal matters were discussed in executive session.

**J.2. MOTION GALLICK/JURY – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.**

Following a short recess at 3:19 PM, the session resumed at 3:41 PM.

**G. Secretary's report (attached)**

Archpriest Eric Tosi, OCA Secretary, summarized his attached written report, particularly highlighting work on database rebuilding on the chancery's computer system, the work of the staff, the projected publication of

*The Orthodox Church* magazine as an annual review, preparation of new metrical books and ongoing maintenance of the chancery building. The possibility of electronic metrical recordkeeping was discussed. He presented the attached mission planting grant recommendations for funding in the coming year submitted by Fr. John Parker from the Department of Evangelization, including three communities continuing in the program (Annapolis, MD, Lansing, NY, Cardiff, CA) and two new communities (Tempe, AZ, Beaufort, SC).

**G.1. MOTION WEREMEDIC/VAN DUYN – To approve funding for planting grants in 2015 as presented totaling \$102,000. CARRIED.**

Fr. Tosi summarized the attached proposal and progress of plans for the Mission School. He noted that the curriculum, which has been nearly completed, would be practical rather than theoretical. The School is projected to begin functioning in the spring and its sessions will take place in various locations throughout the country. During discussion of the proposal, he noted that students would be both clergy and laity enrolled with the blessing of their diocesan bishops.

Fr. Tosi then presented for approval the attached *Draft Record Retention and Electronic Policy for the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America*, along with two appendices, which are included for informational purposes only and are not to be considered part of the Policy. He requested approval of the document with the understanding that these policies will be evolving.

**G.2. MOTION MIKHALEVSKY/MYERS – To approve the Record Retention and Electronic Policy for the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America as presented. CARRIED.**

**G.3. Archives Advisory Committee (attached)**

Fr. Tosi introduced Alexis Liberovsky, OCA Archivist, who presented the attached report from the Archives Advisory Committee. He provided additional updates resulting from the Committee's conference call meeting the previous week which decided to proceed with hiring a consultant to evaluate current environmental security in the OCA archives, suggest possible renovations of existing facilities, and appropriate data monitoring of environmental conditions, approved an upcoming preliminary meeting with an architect specialized in museum, library and other construction, and reviewed a draft *OCA Archives collection development and management and deaccessioning policy*,

**H. 18th All-American Council (attached)**

Fr. Tosi delivered the attached PowerPoint presentation outlining preparations for the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council as well as a draft agenda and noted that organization and arrangements are proceeding smoothly. Extensive discussion took place on various issues pertaining to the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. Many questions were asked concerning the projected revision of the OCA Statute. Further discussion of this issue was deferred to the presentation of the Statute Revision Task Force report on Thursday.

The session was adjourned with prayer at 5:35 PM

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2014**

Following the celebration of a Divine Liturgy at Saint Sergius Chapel at 8:00 AM, the meeting was opened with prayer led by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon at the Immaculate Conception Seminary at 10:58 AM.

**K. Strategic Plan Post-Conciliar Committee (attached)**

Fr. John Vitko highlighted his attached report with a PowerPoint presentation. He particularly noted ongoing progress in continuing education programs throughout the Church and parish revitalization initiatives. In

discussion that ensued, he stated that ongoing strategic planning makes sense for the Church as long as it does not replace the Gospel. Our current initiative is more of an activity plan than a strategic plan and its spiritual dimension must be maintained. He reaffirmed that the committee will be phased out at the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council and indicated that many of its activities have transitioned into the normal life of the Church

**L. Metropolitan Council Committees**

**L.1. Charity (attached)**

Protodeacon Michael Myers presented the Charity Committee's attached written report. He noted that the committee needs new members. He indicated that more charity funding is needed that would enable the OCA to assist needy clergy among many other worthwhile causes. He suggested that a new page be created on the OCA website to promote more contributions for charities. Discussion ensued.

**L.1.A. MOTION MYERS/JURY – That a page be created on the OCA website to provide information on how to donate to the OCA Charity Fund. CARRIED.**

**L.2. Crisis Management Team**

Fr. Eric Tosi presented an oral report regarding the work of the Crisis Management Team. He noted the sensitive nature of its activities and the key role played by Bernard Wilson. He indicated that the team works in concert with the Holy Synod through its Episcopal moderator and the Legal Committee through Judge Lanier. Official statements are carefully crafted and in some cases, it is decided that no statement should be made. He also noted that crisis management training with Bernie Wilson has yet to take place. Responses to questions from the press are issued in writing only to avoid any inconsistencies in official statements. In discussion, it was noted that a definition of crisis was needed along with the development of contingency plans. It was suggested that a generator be acquired for the OCA chancery.

**L.3. Ethics**

On behalf of Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Committee Chairman, who was absent from this meeting, Fr. Tosi stated that the Ethics Committee has nothing to report at this time.

**L.4. Human Resources**

Fr. David Garretson presented an oral report, noting that a search for a part-time administrative assistant for stewardship will be taking place. A motion on this matter was tabled until the Treasurer's report. He noted that the Committee would be undertaking revision of the Human Resources and Employee handbooks for the OCA chancery.

**L.5. Internal Governance (attached)**

Archpriest Chad Hatfield highlighted the committee's attached report. He requested suggestions of topics for future Metropolitan Council retreats, indicating missions and evangelism as a possible subject. He also requested suggestions of people with appropriate professional qualifications to serve on the Audit Committee. He reported that the Metropolitan Council Members Handbook would be revised after Statute revisions are enacted. The need for further clarification of organizational charts for staff and departments was discussed. Various other issues pertaining to OCA governance and structure were extensively deliberated. Melanie Ringa requested the Committee to conduct a search for a new external auditor for the Church.

Following a recess for lunch at 12:33 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:38 PM.

**M. Treasurer's Report (attached)**

Melanie Ringa highlighted the attached Treasurer's report, with a PowerPoint presentation. The report included the external Audit Reports for 2012 and 2013, 2014 financial statements and the preliminary 2015 budget. She indicated a lower net deficit for 2013 than originally projected of \$54,791. She noted a current operating surplus of \$160,000 due to expenditures under budget.

**O. 2015 Budget (attached)**

Fr. Gleb McFatter, chairman of the Finance/Investment Committee, and Melanie Ringa presented the proposed balanced budget for 2015. It was noted that the per capita assessment has been lowered from \$92 in 2014 to \$90 for 2015. Fr. John Dresko presented information on the new proportional funding system in lieu of assessments proposed in the Diocese in the West. Discussion and questions on the budget and related issues ensued.

**O.1. MOTION WEREMEDIC/DYL - To approve the proposed budget for 2015 as presented. CARRIED.**

Melanie Ringa reported a recommendation of the Investment Committee to move OCA endowment investments from the Honesdale National Bank and Wells Fargo Bank to the Philadelphia Trust Company. Discussion and questions ensued.

**O.2. MOTION HATFIELD/VAN DUYN – To move the investment portfolio of the Orthodox Church in America from the Honesdale National Bank and Wells Fargo Bank to the Philadelphia Trust Company. CARRIED with two abstentions (Lanier, Vitko).**

Fr. David Garretson proposed the following resolution of thanks.

**O.3. MOTION GARRETSON/GALLICK – To thank Melanie Ringa, the internal and external auditors, and the Finance Committee for their stewardship in bringing the finances of the Orthodox Church in America to a positive cash flow. CARRIED.**

**N. Financial Development (attached)**

David Yeosock, Chairman of the Financial Development Committee, presented its attached report. He noted the value of the stewardship retreat that took place before this meeting. Discussion of the report ensued.

**T. Other Business**

Upon a suggestion by Fr. John Jillions, a wide-ranging discussion on clergy health issues took place.

**L. Metropolitan Council Committees (continued)**

**L.1. Charity (continued)**

Protodeacon Michael Myers suggested that the current qualifications required to serve on the Charity Committee are too stringent.

**L.1.B. MOTION MYERS/DRESKO – That members of the Charity Committee have prior experience in or be willing to undergo training in Best Practices for not-for-profit boards. CARRIED.**

The session was adjourned with prayer at 3:24 PM and was followed by committee meetings.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2014**

The morning session was opened with prayer at 9:10 AM.

**S. Department Reports**

**S.1. Military Chaplains (attached)**

Archpriests Theodore Boback, Dean and Executive Director of Orthodox Military and VA Chaplains, and Joseph Gallick, Assistant Dean and Deputy Director, presented the attached report. Fr. Boback also briefly outlined the history of the Military Chaplaincy. He thanked Metropolitan Tikhon for his participation in meetings of endorser's conferences. He noted the need for new liturgical items for chaplains as well as icons and publications for distribution in the military and that an Orthodox chaplaincy website is being planned. He highlighted connections with chaplains from other Orthodox Churches throughout the world. Fr. Gallick provided additional specifics on the ministry of chaplains. He appealed for qualified priests to consider serving as chaplains. Fr. Boback thanked the Church for its support for chaplaincies and the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) for aid it has provided in various ways over many years. Discussion ensued

**P. Statute Revision Task Force (attached)**

Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Secretary of the Statute Revision Task Force, presented its attached report. He also distributed some samples of Statute articles drafted by the Task Force. Extensive discussion took place. It was indicated that completed articles drafted by the Task Force would be posted online in January to provide sufficient time for comments by clergy and faithful.

**P.1. MOTION - GARRETSON/WEREMEDIC – That all completed articles drafted by the Task Force and approved by the Holy Synod be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for its review by December 1, 2014. DEFEATED (16 votes opposed, 10 in favor, 3 abstentions).**

**U. Future Meeting Dates**

Fr. Tosi proposed that the Metropolitan Council meetings in 2015 take place on February 10-12 and September 22-24, with a possible retreat on September 21. These dates were approved by consensus.

Following a short recess at 10:36 AM, the session resumed at 10:51 AM.

**F.1. ORSMA**

Cindy Davis delivered her report outlining the activities of the Office of Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations (ORSMA). She outlined case statistics, coordinator activities, communication issues as well as policy and procedure matters. She highlighted her presentation at the Diocese of the South Assembly where there was particular concern about background checks. She noted the productive cooperation of ORSMA and SMPAC. She projected future education efforts on the OCA Policies, Standards and Procedures (PSPs) and sexual misconduct prevention. Questions and discussion ensued.

**Q. SMPAC (attached)**

Dr. Albert S. Rossi presented the attached written report from the Sexual Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee (SMPAC). Discussion and questions ensued.



**R. Pension Board Report**

Fr. Gleb McFatter delivered a brief oral report. He reported that the OCA Pension Plan investment return for the past year was 22.71% and that because of the recent change to higher employer contributions a year has been gained towards the full funding of the OCA Pension Plan now projected by 2025. There has been a net gain of two participants in the Plan during the last year.

**S. Department Reports (continued)**

**S.2. Liturgical Music and Translations (attached)**

Mr. David Drillock highlighted the attached report from the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations. In conclusion, he noted the importance of choir directors and singers in our liturgical tradition and the need for their proper training. Although the department functions on a small annual budget of \$18,000, the crucial issue for the department is not additional funding but qualified people to accomplish its work.

**T. Other Business (continued)**

Fr. John Jillions reported that after two years in Moscow, Archimandrite Alexander (Pihach), OCA Representative in Moscow, has obtained a Russian work visa enabling him to have legal signing authority in the administration of the OCA Representation Church in Moscow.

Fr. Eric Tosi provided clarification concerning expenditures of Metropolitan Council members to attend the All-American Council. The expenditures of those members elected by the All-American Council are funded by the OCA, while diocesan representatives are funded by their respective dioceses.

**V. Adjournment**

**T.1. MOTION PLETNIKOFF – To adjourn the meeting. CARRIED.**

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Liberovsky,  
Recording Secretary