



**MINUTES
of the Joint Meeting of the Standing Synod
and the 2018 Spring Session of
the Metropolitan Council**

**Tuesday, February 6 – Thursday, February 8, 2018
Immaculate Conception Seminary, Huntington, NY**

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

PARTICIPANTS

STANDING SYNOD

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon
His Eminence, Archbishop Michael
(except Tuesday morning)

His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin
His Grace, Bishop Paul

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

CHURCH OFFICERS

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

Archpriest Eric Tosi, *Secretary*

MEMBERS ELECTED BY THE ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL

Archpriest Chad Hatfield
Archpriest Antonio Perdomo

Maureen Jury
Katherine Vitko

DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES

Diocese of Alaska

Archpriest John Dunlop

Patrick Pletnikoff

Albanian Archdiocese

Archpriest Dennis Rhodes *(except Thursday)*

Donna Dimitri

Bulgarian Diocese

Priest Martin Watt

vacant

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Archpriest Timothy Hojnicky

Susan Schlasta *(except Thursday)*

Diocese of the Midwest

Robert Graban

Diocese of New England

Priest James Parnell (*except Thursday*)

Michael Danchak (*except Thursday*)

Diocese of New York/New Jersey

Igumen Joseph (Hoffman)

James P. Kornafel

Diocese of the South

Priest Joseph Lucas

Angela Parks, Esq.

Diocese of Washington

Archpriest Valery Shemchuk

Elizabeth Mikhalevsky

Diocese of the West

Archpriest John Dresko

David Lane, Esq.

Diocese of Western Pennsylvania

Priest Nikolai Breckenridge

Dr. John Schultz

ABSENT

Archpriest Alexander Kuchta (*Diocese of the Midwest*)

Archpriest Thomas Moore (*Member elected by the All-American Council*)

Deacon Nicolas Svetlovsky (*Archdiocese of Canada*)

Mark Petasky (*Archdiocese of Canada*)

Larry Skvir (*Member elected by the All-American Council*)

GUESTS (*for all sessions unless otherwise indicated*)

His Grace, Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa (*except Thursday*)

Protopresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky (*Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations*)

– Wednesday afternoon

Archpriest Christopher Rowe (*Project Manager, Department of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry*)

– Wednesday afternoon by conference call

Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak (*Secretary to the Metropolitan & Director, Stewards of the OCA*)

– Wednesday morning

David Drillock (*Chairman, Department of Liturgical Music & Translations – Wednesday afternoon*)

Cindy Heise (*Coordinator for the Office of Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations*)

– Tuesday afternoon by video conference

Judge E.R. Lanier (*OCA General Counsel*)

Alexis Liberovsky (*Recording Secretary*)

Andrew Romanov (*Communications Intern - Wednesday morning*)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

Metropolitan Tikhon celebrated a prayer service at 9:00 AM on Tuesday morning at the Immaculate Conception Seminary to open the meeting.

A. Agenda: Introduction (attached)

The meeting was then called to order at 9:20 AM. Fathers John Jillions and Eric Tosi provided minor clarifications to the agenda.

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

Fr. Tosi then conducted the roll call, announced guests who would be present at various points during this meeting (see participants list), and noted the absence of several persons due to illness. He requested approval

of Alexis Liberovsky as recording secretary for the meeting, which was accepted without objection. He indicated that Martin Myers is no longer in the Bulgarian Diocese and is therefore no longer a member of the Metropolitan Council. His replacement has not yet been appointed. Fr. Tosi then presented the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Metropolitan Council on September 20-22, 2017 for approval. David Lane indicated some minor corrections needed in those minutes. The minutes of the September 20-22, 2016 meeting were unanimously accepted with corrections.

C. Welcome

Metropolitan Tikhon welcomed everyone present for the meeting, including the members of the Standing Synod. He welcomed Michael Danchak as a new member of the Council at this meeting and thanked those who will be completing their terms this year, for their contributions as members of the Council.

E. Metropolitan's Report (attached)

Metropolitan Tikhon presented his attached report. He spoke about Long-Term Planning and about Our Identity as the Orthodox Church in America, particularly in the context of their place within the *Four Pillars of the Guiding Framework* document, which will be released this spring in preparation for the 19th All-American Council. He then introduced Bishop Daniel, who outlined his work as Consultant to the Primate for optimizing the functioning of the OCA Chancery. His Grace particularly noted his many meetings with officers and staff as well as the change in His Beatitude's office location in the Chancery building and the resultant relocation of other offices. He also spoke about his joint work with the Human Resources Committee to update staff job descriptions. Metropolitan Tikhon continued his report by highlighting work in the areas of Communications and External Relations, particularly with regard to his recent travels to Russia and Mexico.

Following a short recess at 10:48 AM, the session resumed at 11:12 AM.

Questions and extensive discussion ensued, particularly concerning a variety of possible ways the Church could appropriately mark the 50th anniversary of autocephaly in 2020.

Following a recess for lunch at 11:58 AM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:29 PM.

F. Chancellor's Report (attached)

Fr. John Jillions summarized his attached written report and appendix. He particularly noted the significance of the upcoming 19th All-American Council and the recent office reorganization at the Chancery.

F.2. SMPAC

Fr. Jillions presented the confidential report of the Sexual Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee (SMPAC), which provided a summary of its recent meetings. Statistical data regarding annual compliance with the Policies, Standards and Procedures (PSPs) of the OCA on Sexual Misconduct within each diocese for the years 2015 and 2016 was distributed to the Council for information.

F.1. ORSMA

Cindy Heise delivered the confidential report of the Office of Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations (ORSMA), which included case statistics and coordinator activities. Questions and discussion on various issues pertaining to SMPAC and ORSMA ensued.

Following a short recess at 2:44 PM, the session resumed at 3:03 PM.

G. Secretary's report (attached)

Fr. Eric Tosi presented updates to his attached report and appendices. He reported on the purchase of a used vehicle for a replacement vehicle for the chancery. He also noted finalization of the standard metrical book for church-wide use and pectoral crosses for military chaplains. He then detailed progress in preparatory steps towards renovation of the Chancery basement, where the OCA Archives are located, and noted, in particular, a positive meeting with the local County legislator and the assistant County Fire Marshal the previous week. Permits need to be obtained before work can begin. Alexis Liberovsky, OCA Archivist, provided additional comments on the current status of the Archives. Fr. Tosi also reported on chancery property maintenance and technology issues. Questions and discussion of the report ensued.

G.1. 19th All-American Council (attached)

Father Tosi summarized his attached report with appendices and indicated that all preparations for the 19th AAC are proceeding in an efficient and timely manner. He presented the draft agenda and schedule for approval. Questions and discussion ensued. Bishop Paul provided additional comments on the work of the Preconciliar Commission, which he chairs. Funding to enable clergy from Alaska and Mexico to attend the Council was also discussed.

G.1.A. MOTION MIKHALEVSKY/PARNELL – To accept the draft agenda and schedule for the upcoming 19th All-American Council as presented and to recommend their approval by the Holy Synod. CARRIED.

H. Legal matters

H.1. MOTION DRESKO/JURY – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Angela Parks, Legal Committee chairperson, and Judge E.R. Lanier, OCA General Counsel, presented the confidential report of the Legal Committee, which covered a variety of current and potential legal issues.

H.2. MOTION DRESKO/WATT – To move out of executive session. CARRIED

Fr. Tosi introduced for adoption the attached *GIFT AND BEQUEST ACCEPTANCE POLICIES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA*. Judge Lanier provided further information on legal aspects of this document. In discussion, it was recommended that all church communities including dioceses, parishes and institutions should adopt similar policies.

H.3. MOTION MIKHALEVSKY/HATFIELD - To approve as presented the *GIFT AND BEQUEST ACCEPTANCE POLICIES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA*. CARRIED with 3 opposed (Jillions, Jury, Lane).

Fr. Tosi introduced for adoption the attached *GENERAL POLICIES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA REGARDING COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMERCIAL AND FOR-PROFIT VENDORS, SUPPLIERS, AND CONTRACTORS*, and Judge Lanier provided some legal clarifications on this document.

H.4. MOTION PARNELL/DANCHAK - To approve as presented the *GENERAL POLICIES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA REGARDING COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMERCIAL AND FOR-PROFIT VENDORS, SUPPLIERS, AND CONTRACTORS*. CARRIED.

The day's sessions were adjourned with prayer at 5:28 PM.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2018

Following the celebration of a Divine Liturgy at Saint Sergius Chapel at 8:00 AM, the morning session was opened with prayer at 11:05 AM.

I. Stewards of the OCA (attached)

Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, Director of the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America (SOCA), presented his attached report. Additionally, he acknowledged the assistance of media intern Andrew Romanov, particularly in the development of a social media strategy. In discussion, various suggestions for cultivating gifts were offered. Archdeacon Joseph asked Council members for volunteer help in coordinating SOCA's presence at the upcoming 19th All-American Council.

J. Metropolitan Council Committees

J.1. Charity (attached)

The attached report from the Committee and its work were discussed. It was noted that the Committee will need a new chairperson and several members due to the expiring Metropolitan Council terms of the current chairman and some other members.

J.2. Ethics

Committee members indicated that the Committee has nothing to report at this time.

J.3. Human Resources

Elizabeth Mikhalevsky, Committee Chairperson, reported that the Committee has been working with Bishop Daniel on the chancery personnel structure. She indicated that two subcommittees had been formed: she will head one which will review job descriptions, while David Lane will head the other which will update the employee handbook.

J.4. Internal Governance (attached)

Archpriest Chad Hatfield, Committee Chairman, reported that D'Arcangelo & Co., LLP. has been engaged as external auditor for the audit of 2017 financials.

J.4.A. MOTION WATT/DRESKO – To approve the engagement of D'Arcangelo & Co., LLP. for the external audit of 2017 financials. CARRIED.

Father Tosi indicated that suggestions for the Metropolitan Council's fall retreat should be submitted to Father Chad. He also noted that the Internal Governance Committee will be updating the Metropolitan Council Handbook. The need to revise the charter of the Legal Committee was discussed.

Following a recess for lunch at 12:27 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:31 PM.

K. Treasurer's Report (attached)

Melanie Ringa highlighted the attached Treasurer's report and appendices, which includes preliminary 2017 financial results and projections for 2018. She also reported on her extensive work together with the staff at St. Catherine's OCA Representation Church in Moscow and officials from the Moscow Patriarchate to audit its finances and to rectify disorders in recordkeeping, which had been going on for several years. She noted that new controls and staff are now in place to ensure accountability and transparency. Discussion and questions on various financial matters ensued. Melanie introduced the following motions:

K.1. MOTION BRECKENRIDGE/LANE – To submit to the Holy Synod with a recommendation for approval the following draft finance resolution, which will ultimately be presented for adoption at the 19th All-American Council:

“The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America affirms the important role of the Synodal Chancery in the work of the OCA. We also encourage the continuing transition to proportional giving as the best means of supporting the work of the Church. At the 18th All-America Council held in Atlanta, Georgia in July 2015, this body passed a funding resolution, recognizing that each diocese was at a different place in this process. For the year 2018, the territorial dioceses, with the exception of the Dioceses of the West and South, are contributing 46% of their “net operating budgets” to the work of the Synodal Chancery, while the Dioceses of the West and South contribute 34% of their “net operating budgets”. To this end, and to continue working toward a common contribution rate for all territorial dioceses, we unanimously recommend the adoption of the following financial resolution:

For the budget years of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 each territorial diocese with the exception of Canada, Mexico and Alaska shall remit its annual financial obligation for the work of the Synodal Chancery according to the following formula:

Dioceses contributing at a rate greater than 34% of their “net operating budgets” shall decrease their annual diocesan financial obligation by 2% annually from 2019 through 2022, not to fall below 34%.

Dioceses contributing at the 34% rate of their “net operating budgets” shall continue to remit their annual financial obligation at the 34% rate from 2019 through 2022.

For the budget years 2019 through 2022, the Archdiocese of Canada and the Diocese of Alaska shall remit their annual diocesan financial obligation at the rate of 10% of their net operating budget.

The financial arrangements of the non-territorial dioceses (Romanian Episcopate, Albanian Archdiocese, and Bulgarian Diocese) are based upon agreements made when they entered the OCA and are within the competency of the Holy Synod, subject to periodic review.” CARRIED with 20 votes in favor and 6 opposed.

- K.2. MOTION HOFFMAN/HATFIELD - To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to increase the 2018 operating budget by \$38,500 for renovations to the OCA Chancery building (to include roof replacement - \$20,000; driveway paving - \$4,500; window replacement - \$6,000 and a new front door - \$8,000), to be funded from the unrestricted bequests from the estates of Julia Nazak and Larissa Kondratick (total \$38,907) received in 2017. CARRIED.
- K.3. MOTION DRESKO/WATT – To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee amending the 2018 operating budget in the following manner:
 - a. Increase the Diocesan Support revenue by \$20,000 to reflect updated 2018 diocesan projections based on information from the diocesan treasurers;
 - b. Increase the Operating budget for St Catherine’s Representation Church by \$21,500 to reflect the increased cost of the new rector at St Catherine’s (\$11,500 of this increase represents one-time expense in 2018 for relocation of the rector’s family to Moscow and four-month apartment rent expense while their permanent residence is being renovated). CARRIED.
- K.4. MOTION GRABAN/DANCHAK - To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee releasing the bequest from the estate of Father Alexander Pihach (\$36,880) to be used to renovate the Moscow apartment for the OCA Representative to St Catherine’s Church in Moscow. CARRIED.
- K.5. MOTION HATFIELD/SCHULTZ - To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to take \$150,000 from the Missions Endowment at Philadelphia Trust Co and invest this sum in a 5-year deposit at OCCIF (Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund) at a rate of 2.75%.

In discussion, questions arose regarding legal aspects of this transaction and the motion was tabled pending further information from the Legal Committee.

Following a short recess at 3:26 PM, the session resumed at 3:47 PM.

M. External Affairs Report

Protopresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, delivered an oral report on the various activities of the Orthodox Church in America through interaction with other Orthodox Churches, non-Orthodox bodies, government officials and other organizations. He particularly highlighted the fruitful contacts with the Moscow Patriarchate and other Orthodox Churches during the celebrations in Moscow in December. He noted the importance of the appointment of Father Daniel Andrejuk as the new OCA Representative in Moscow. Bishop Daniel provided further details on the current status of St. Catherine's Church in Moscow.

N. Department Reports

N.2. Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries (attached)

Archpriest Christopher Rowe, Project Manager, presented the Department's attached report via conference call. Father Eric Tosi provided additional information on OCA participation in scouting programs. In discussion of the report, a skills inventory was suggested to enhance the work of the department.

M. External Affairs Report (continued)

Bishop Daniel resumed his report on the OCA Representation Church in Moscow and indicated that the Advisory Committee for Saint Catherine's Church appointed by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon last summer, which includes Fathers Leonid Kishkovsky and Nazari Polataiko as well as Melanie Ringa and Bishop Daniel, would continue its work in facilitating the supervision of the OCA Representation Church. Bishop Daniel reported that Father Andrejuk is grateful for guidance from the Committee as he begins his ministry in Moscow. Fr. Kishkovsky continued his overview of external church relations outlining the situation of several Orthodox Churches and the status of ecumenical organizations.

N. Department Reports (continued)

N.2. Liturgical Music and Translations (attached)

David Drillock, Department Chairman, presented its attached report. He noted the growing number of music downloads and liturgical texts on the OCA website. He expressed particular satisfaction with the success of the online choral conducting courses that are offered by the Department. Questions and discussion ensued.

The day's sessions were adjourned at 5:28 PM.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2018

The morning session was opened with prayer at 9:05 AM.

P. Pension Board Report (attached)

Father Eric Tosi delivered the attached report submitted by Father Gleb McFatter, Pension Board Chairman. Father Jillions indicated that every effort is made to ensure that all those who are eligible are enrolled in the OCA Pension Plan. In discussion, Metropolitan Council members requested that a Pension Board member be present at its every meeting to answer questions and provide information.

K. Treasurer's Report (continued)

Melanie Ringa and Father Martin Watt provided further information on the following motion that had been tabled the previous day. Judge Lanier indicated that there were no legal impediments to the resolution.

K.6. MOTION HATFIELD/MIKHALEVSKY - To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to take \$150,000 from the Missions Endowment at Philadelphia Trust Co and invest this sum in a 5-year unsecured promissory note with OCCIF (Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund) at a simple interest rate of 2.75%, to be paid quarterly. CARRIED with 17 votes in favor, 0 opposed and 5 abstentions (Dresko, Graban, Lane, Vitko, Watt).

All but one of those abstaining indicated that they have a financial or fiduciary connection to the OCCIF (Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund).

Q/R. Strategic Planning/Open Discussion

A wide-ranging discussion on various issues took place focusing largely on the attached *Questions for Reflection* distributed by Metropolitan Tikhon. Notable topics included the vision and identity of the Orthodox Church in America and preparations for the upcoming celebration of the 50th anniversary of our Church's autocephaly. It was generally agreed that events and other undertakings in conjunction with the anniversary should encourage both reflection on our past and a look forward towards the future. Other points raised included:

- The need for updated parish education materials
- "Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:" experience in some dioceses is showing success
- The need to face an emerging clergy shortage
- Support for the "1% resolution" from past AACs, calling all parishes to give at least 1% of their budget to support theological seminaries
- Encourage and support candidates to attend seminary
- Assess need for consolidation of dwindling congregations in some parts of the country
- Call for systematic strategic planning, especially in theological education, to address vocations, clergy shortage, alternative forms of clergy formation, funding of seminaries
- Articulate a path forward for Orthodox unity in North America
- Re-evaluate the aims and membership of all departments, including External Relations"

T. Adjournment

Council members were reminded that the next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council is scheduled for September 18-21, 2018. In concluding remarks, Metropolitan Tikhon thanked Council members for a productive meeting and declared the meeting closed.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 12:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Liberovsky,
Recording Secretary