

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Parish Council Meeting
September 20, 2017

Opening Prayer by Father Paul Christy.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by President Mary Winstead at 7PM.

Members present: Joanna Biliouris, John Demos, Leslie Dombalis, Maria Hicks, Jason Kekas, David Kouba, Sydney Langford, Bob Lyford, Harry Nicholas, Pavlos Pavlidis, Jim Riley, Mary Winstead, Mary Wehbie.

Members absent: Steve Flaherty, Costa Panagos.

Guest: Chris Pappas

Reading of the Minutes: Mary Wehbie.

Minutes were sent electronically in advance of the meeting. Corrections reported. Move to accept the minutes as amended by John Demos. Second Harry Nicholas. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Bob Lyford.

Bob reviewed the changes made on the balance sheet as directed by PC vote in August meeting to reallocate funds to increase return and maintain security of money. He reviewed the profit and loss statement. He notes the decrease in stewardship for the year, although notes that August income was comparable to 2016. On the expense side Bob reports a deficit of \$21000. He does not understand why many individuals give at the end of the year when expenses/bills occur all year long.

John Demos addressed the number of pledges and amount of each pledge. We are behind where we were last year at this time. The records indicated that there are several individuals who pledged in the past, but have not completed pledge forms this year. He is uncertain of the reason. He also reports that overall there are a larger than expected number of individuals who have not given any money this year. He would like to reach out to these individuals prior to budget planning in November.

Several suggestions were made. Mary Wehbie recommends having a "catch up Sunday". This is planned already. Joanna Biliouris recommends having a section in the bulletin that shows high level financial numbers. She recommends adding this information to the bulletin perhaps once per month, using about 4-5 big picture numbers. PC is in agreement.

John Demos wants to be sure that, in the spirit of stewardship, we make an effort to be individual gift oriented. Over the past 7-10 years a concerted effort has been made to focus stewardship as a gift from the heart, not a means to pay the budget. He would like to exercise some caution in using budget shortfall to get parishioners to make donations. We have to balance context and transparency with need to give a sacrificial gift.

Bob reports that Archdiocese Allocation has been recalculated this year. He briefly and simplistically explained the process and formula used to determine this figure. Two year averages of expenses are used to calculate the amount to be assessed. During the previous 2 year block of time, at the time of the last assessment, we had lower expenses. The amount we owe in the new cycle has increased because we have additional expenses, such as pastoral assistant and a choir director. Bob reports that money used to fund ministries is included in the expenses which determine our allocation. Jason would like to reconsider funding ministries in the next budget. Jason feels we have given money to groups with no accountability. John reminds the PC that the stewardship committee, beginning years ago with Tamara Costa as the chair, has worked to promote stewardship to support ministries. He acknowledges that based on current income levels some tightening of budget will have to occur. Historically increased fundraising has resulted in decreased stewardship. The more involvement there is in ministries, the more stewardship should increase. Bob concluded treasurer's reports reporting loss YTD loss of \$21,678.

Motion to approve the treasurer's report by John Demos. Second by Harry Nicholas. Motion carried.

Festival Update: Jason Kekas

Jason reported that our income for the festival was the highest to date, but the overall profit slightly decreased from last year. Total revenue overall is estimated at \$390,000. There are a few outstanding collections. Mary Winstead offered many thanks to Jason for all of his hard work. Jason and a handful of people remained at the fairgrounds Sunday night to complete clean up. Jason reports that he hired more labor for take down. The group thanks Rob Shand who spent many hours at the fairgrounds. Jason noted that volunteers were fewer in number than last year. Dori Shand and Frances Mathes did well with fewer volunteers.

John Demos relayed that he often hears community members state that "If we all donate a specific amount of money, we don't have to do the festival." He feels it is important for PC to speak to the benefit of hosting the festival. While people say they will give an extra donation he does not expect it to materialize annually. We all worked hard, but at the end, it was very rewarding. As Parish Council, it is our responsibility to promote the benefits and rewards.

Jason reports that he had some members of the community communicate to him that they are not in agreement with festival proceeds going to the Diakonia Retreat Center. John Demos also heard some push back in this regard. PC will need to communicate correct and accurate information. Father Paul reported that at Clergy Laity 2017 it was determined that a percentage of proceeds from each festival is recommended to go toward Diakonia Retreat Center debt, but no amount was specified or directed. Jason reports that he has heard that some people are dissatisfied about retiring debt that, in their opinion, was extravagant and less could have been spent. Again correct information needs to be communicated.

Next year Jason will try to negotiate full take down crews to assist with breakdown and tablecloths cleaning and folding. Everyone is tired from the weekend and few hands were available for this task. Frances and Dori had a running document of recommendations for strategic and tactical improvements. Mary Wehbie recommends full disclosure of the amount of money that was spent on labor in the festival reporting. Jason has a few donations still coming in—donations toward gyro and few other items. He tentatively expects a \$145-150,000 profit. He reports increased expenses for advertising and labor combined with decreased sponsorship for the ad book. The decrease in ad book sales was expected due to concurrent collections for clergy laity sponsorships and event purchases. Increased advertising helped. Participation in festival decreased as NCSU game started, but crowds were still good. Jason thanked Jeff Winstead for working with highway patrol to insure good traffic flow. Charities advertised for us on their webpages and Facebook pages.

Chris Pappas: Kitchen Renovation

Permit has been resubmitted and it is ready for pick up with an extension to November 1. Chris reviewed the next steps in the proposal to renovating kitchen. Goal is to present to PC in October and General Assembly in November

Motion to follow plan outlined by Chris Pappas in the attached document, obtain permit (\$1800) and report back to PC at October meeting by Mary Wehbie. Second by Harry Nicholos. Motion carried.

Chris also updated the PC regarding mold in the basement. Our insurance company assessment is that mold is superficial. Based on this assessment the perimeter walls will be wiped down with appropriate materials. Many, many thanks to Chris Pappas for the time and expertise he continuously offers our church.

Sydney Langford had a few items brought to her attention that should be addressed. The pole lights in parking lot are turned off. The area is very dark and days are getting shorter. Chris said that this should be reported to the electrical company. This has been done once already. Crepe myrtle trees block the lights in the front of the church. These need to be trimmed by landscaping or Brian Schwartz. The lights over the icon outside the church are also out. Lights are halogen and tend to burn out easily. Replace with LED flood lights and they will last longer. All fixtures will be switched eventually with LED.

Jason has 2 projects of the upcoming months. The first is to go downstairs and completely clean out the basement and take items to storage. The second is to go to the storage unit and organize and label all crates. Jason has agreed to chair the festival next year. He will communicate work dates.

80th anniversary: Leslie Dombalis

A check has been send to pay for tent. All ministries have been contacted to invite them to prepare an exhibit for the museum exhibition to be created in the fellowship hall: AHEPA, Philoptochos, Sunday school, Greek school, Greek dance, etc. The head of each respective ministry is to organize their space. Moussaka, pastitsio, and gyro meat are left over from the festival. Despina Café will be preparing meats with \$1500 allocated for this purpose. Participants

can bring a side and dessert. Deadline is October 8th. RSVPs are to be made to the office. A note is in bulletin and a table will be placed at coffee hour.

Father Paul Christy's Comments: Fr. Paul

Father Paul Christy thanked Mary Winstead for the birthday cake. Directories have been ordered. 220 are free. 330 were ordered. Each person who signed a stewardship pledge form will receive a book at no cost. \$5 fee for those who did not sign pledge form. \$10 for those who submitted picture and did not have company take their pictures.

There will be a group driving to Diakonia Retreat Center to see the new Panagia Chapel on the grounds and to see if our new sanctuary can be built according to cost effective methods that were used to build it. About 10 individuals are going. Father reviewed specifics.

President's Comments: Mary Winstead

Betsy Higgins obtained a quote to replace the carpet in the pre-kindergarden and kindergarden rooms in the Sunday school wing with money allocated in the Sunday school budget. The quote to replace is \$1212 and she would like to schedule ASAP. Joanna Biliouris requested that work be coordinated with preschool. Mary Wehbie would prefer money be allocated from an alternate source, not Sunday school budget, as this should be for educational purposes. Bob reports that funds are available in property and maintenance account.

Motion to carpet the prekindergarten and kindergarden room at a cost of \$1212 with funds from property and maintenance accounts by John Demos. Second Harry Nicholas. Motion carried.

PC elections are coming up in December. Harry Nicholas and Joanna Biliouris completed two terms and will not be eligible to serve an additional term. Father Paul will update PC members with details of who remains on PC and who has completed their term.

The alarm system is not working and will not be set tonight. Rob is working to have it repaired.

Bob Lyford will determine the date of a 2018 budget meeting in October. Amalia Kythas, John Demos, Bob Lyford, and officers should be in attendance and any PC members who would like to attend are encouraged. If any PC member is a liaison to a ministry with a line item, please contact the ministry leader and request submission for 2018 funding.

Philoptochos will pass a tray for assistance to hurricane victims. Money collected will be sent to Metropolis of Atlanta Philoptochos to be distributed to those affected in our metropolis.

Heather Ford agreed to be in chair the newly formed risk management committee. The objective of the committee will be to review whether we are in compliance with, in part, safety laws, harassment policy, insurance requirements, fire extinguishers, and other areas presented at Clergy Laity Risk Management seminar. David Perryman works in Human Resources and may be interested in participating on this committee. Mary Winstead requested that PC encourage parishioners with a background appropriate to this topic to join the committee.

Old business: No topics to discuss.

New business: No topics to discuss.

Motion to adjourn at 8:15PM by Harry Nicholas.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wehbie