

MINUTES OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL PARISH MEETING- March 3, 2013
St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church

Father Joseph Toroney opened the meeting with prayer. He welcomed the people and thanked them for attending.

Call to Order: The chairman Donna Dimitri welcomed everyone to the meeting. As we were having trouble with the sound system, Donna said we could use some help and recommendations for the purchase of a new sound system.

Minutes of the Fall 2012 Meeting: were presented by Linda Kosta and approved. The motion to accept was made by Linda Biando and seconded by Kathie Costa. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Michele Anderson. Motion to accept made by: Linda Kosta and seconded by John Rubis. All were in favor.

Current Update: \$181,000+ in the investment account. 2013 pledges are up to \$17,000 which is better than this time last year. Hopefully, things are looking up.

Enthronement of our new Metropolitan Tikhon: Peter and Nancy Ghicondey attended this important OCA event. Metropolitan Tikhon is 44 years old and a convert from the Episcopal Church. He has never had his own Church. Comments from our congregation:

- ⤴ Dorothy Tomassini asked if he would be visiting the Churches. Fr. Joe said he felt that the Metropolitan would if invited.
- ⤴ Bishop Nikon has committed to coming to St. John's for our Name Day in November.

Archdiocesan Meeting – February 21, 2013 – Donna Dimitri

- ⤴ Donna attended by teleconference
- ⤴ The work on the Chancellery is completed.
- ⤴ The Archdiocese is in good financial shape with over one million in the bank. This, of course, does not include any real estate.
- ⤴ A/B Nikon wants to establish a “Council of Elders” in each Church The committee to get this program established will be headed by Fr. Dimitri from Detroit. The purpose of this committee will be to bring in members.

Pastor's Report: On hold due to not having a permanent priest.

Sunday School:

- ⤴ Steve Coraluzzi reported that Sunday School made \$113 on the hot dog sale today. The money will be used on things like the upcoming ice skating outing.
- ⤴ Lazarus Saturday will begin with Liturgy at 10 AM. Fr. Brooks Ledford will be here to explain and guide the children through the meaning of the prayers and the actions of the priest. After Liturgy there will be a Lenten Lunch, crafts, and Meshe making.
- ⤴ Most of the children who attend the above event are our regulars. We need to encourage children from the new American community.

- ^ Donna Dimitri thanked Steve and all the Sunday School teachers for their service to St. John's children.

Maintenance and Repair: John Rubis

- Projects that have been completed: Chair lift repair, Sunday School heater, rain gutters and some of the roof, electric code violations, replaced the circuit breaker and took care of other electrical issues. John reminded us that this is where a lot of our money goes – maintaining a 165 year old building.
- Upcoming projects: Caulking and painting the upstairs windows and the large front window.
- Jim Ghicondey asked what we would do if we had a major repair. Donna said we would use our investment account and that God always seems to provide as he did when our heater went bad.
- Tim Pappas commented that the Church is like our homes in that it must be maintained and there will always be repairs needed. For larger items we should have a building fund.

Ladies Club and Choir: Linda Notskas reported that both are functioning while Diane Lescas is on vacation and the Ladies Club is on hold. Linda N. especially thanked Linda Toroney for helping out when Fr. Joe is here.

Election of the Delegates for the Archdiocesan Assembly: Donna will attend as Council Chair and as an Archdiocesan Trustee. In addition, Linda Biando and Michele Anderson will be the delegates. Linda Kosta will be the alternate.

Old Business:

* The most important issue of old business is the decision as to a **full or part-time priest** (F/T or P/T) for St. John's. A/B Nikon is awaiting our reply. Discussion points below:

- The costs involved. Full Time - \$60-70,000 for salary, about \$1600 per month (OCA) for medical if his wife does not have benefits. Part-time would be about half that and no benefits required.
- Tim Pappas – a F/T priest could be here for repair persons, deliveries, snow removal. A P/T priest would not be available. Later, Tim commented that we get P/T progress from a P/T priest.
- Tom Zoidis said that we need to check with their past parish for a reference.
- Stephanie Kosta said a P/T priest would require a lot of help from the Council.
 - Marinella Prifti thinks a F/T priest would be better.
 - Michele Anderson feels this is a turning point for St. John's, we must look to the future and become a church family once again.
 - David Biando feels a P/T priest could do the job.
 - Kathie Costa would prefer a F/T priest so there is someone available for hospital and home visits and funerals.
 - Jola Salavaci asked “What is the selection process?” The answer is that Arch Bishop Nikon has the final say, but does take into account what the parishioners think.
 - Steve Ghicondes stated that it has been difficult to keep the altar filled since September. If we go P/T we would be in a more difficult position.

- Pandora Bendo asked if there are any F/T priests available. Donna replied that we have not started looking yet. The Council was waiting for this meeting to see what the parishioners want.
- Michele A. replied that A/B Nikon will not give us any candidates until we say which way we want to go. Also, we currently have enough of a financial buffer to consider a F/T priest.
- Jani Mara commented that the Church in Albania is under a different See. They do not want to release priests to the US as they have many Churches to fill there.
- Christine Dardaris commented that St. John's needs continuity and stability.
- ✧ **Kathie Costa made a motion to ask the Bishop to pursue a full time priest. The motion was seconded by Tim Pappas. The overwhelming majority were in favor. One was for P/T.** The motion was passed and Donna will inform A/B Nikon.
- ✧ The Weekly Messenger – Jim Ghicondey commented that the communication is much improved. Donna Dimitri has been doing it. Thank you, Donna.

New Business:

- The Search for Full-time Priest: Comments:
 - Mike Dardaris said the selection process will take a long time.
 - Phil Kosta asked if A/B Nikon will send us some priests to interview. This remains to be seen.
 - Tim Pappas feels that the Council must communicate the process to the people.
 - Donna reminded us that Father Brooks Ledford will be here for all of Holy Week and wants to meet with everybody and anybody who would like to meet with him. He is interested in returning to St. John's.
 - Electronic Pledge on our website – Stephanie Kosta said that she used it and it was great.
 - We were reminded to visit our new website at www.stjohnsphila.org.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michele Anderson and seconded by Stephanie Kosta. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
 By: Linda M. Kosta
 Secretary