

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting – January 14, 2014
St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church Parish Council

The Council Chair, Donna Dimitri, opened the meeting at 7:00 P.M sharp. Father Brooks Ledford asked the blessing on the meeting.

Roll Call: Fr. Brooks, Donna Dimitri; Pete Ghicondey; Michele Anderson; Linda Kosta, Linda Biando, Jani Mara. Diane Lescas was absent. **Auxiliary members present:** Steve Ghicondes, Linda Notskas, Dorothy Tomassini, and Tish Klus. Steve Coraluzzi, Sunday School Director was absent.

Secretary's Report: The December 2013 minutes were presented by Dorothy T. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Pete G., seconded by Linda B. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report:

Michele Anderson presented the treasure's report from November 2013. The motion to accept was made by Linda B. and seconded by Pete G. All were in favor. Then Michele presented the December report which was approved by a motion from Linda B, seconded by Jani. All were in favor.

Comments and questions: Pete G. expressed that PayPal cost \$125 last year. Is it worth it to continue? The consensus was that it is and that we should publish the website more – add it to the envelopes and contact Vraim to add it to obits when the family asks for donations to the Church. Pete also commented that a transfer from the checking account to the investment account should not be expressed as an expense. It really misrepresents the numbers. Michelle will try to figure out another way to show transfers on the reports. Account for the Homeless Ministry: Start up money was donated by a parishioner. A motion to set up this separate account was made by Linda Biando and seconded by Jani Mara. All were in favor. Anyone requesting use of some of this money will have to have approval of Counsel.

Chairman: Donna Dimitri.

⑩ Church Hall: On New Year's Eve, the hall was rented by Ariana Grabovari and friends. Donna was the council sponsor. Everything went well and the hall was left in good condition. A request for February 9 for a Baby Shower has been submitted by Jona Jano. She requested a reduction in the rental cost to \$150 since there will only be about 30 people. Pete G. took over so Donna could make a motion to reduce the fee. It was seconded by Linda B. Five were in favor and one opposed. Father feels the using of the hall is a good way for him to meet and greet many new people. He will be sure to visit during the shower. Donna will be their Council sponsor.

⑩ Sound System: This was again a problem last Sunday during the first part of the Icon Auction. Next month we will have a presentation on a possible new sound system.

Vice-Chair: Pete Ghicondey

⑩ Pete officially announced and welcomed his new Web Master Associate, Tish Klus. Peter and all of us are very grateful for Tish's help as she has extensive experience in graphic arts and web development.

⑩ Jani mentioned that the Albanian language on www.stjohnsphila.org is a little off. Jani will work with Tish to improve. The original translation was done via the web and does not always meld with the Albanian spoken today.

Pastor's Report: Fr. Brooks

⑩ **Home Blessings:** Father is starting on Delaware County tomorrow. He will stay in each county until he sees everyone. This year especially, he feels it is important to meet with the parishioners to get to know them better. It may take some time. He will not be doing home blessings on Sunday PM or Monday. He will mostly be doing home blessings after 2 and into the evenings as so few people are home during the day.

⑩ **Open for Prayer:** Father will be spending the mornings at Church to be open for the noon time prayer hour which was previously established. A new sign has been donated by Mike Cosmo

⑩ **Newsletter:** Our first newsletter in some time which was written and published by Father, His family and Donna. It is very good start. Some ideas for future newsletter: Each month a different Council member will write a column. (Donna did the first one; Pete is next.) The Sunday School children will submit different items for the newsletter. Linda K. and Steve G. suggested a "Parishioners News" column which could contain births, deaths, weddings and other human interest stuff – high school, college graduates and so on. . People really like to know what is going on in the parish.

⑩ **Distribution of the Newsletter:** Currently the Newsletter is being distributed via email with extra copies in black and white at the Candle Stand. However, several of the Council, Auxiliary Council members and Father feel some should be mailed to people who do not have email. The list can be taken from the current list of non-email availability and since there is not a huge list, it could be mailed first class. It would not be in color as it is in emails. The cost is just too much.

⑩ **Pledges Members in the Newsletter:** In this first newsletter, the names of the pledges from 2013 were printed. The plans were to do the Christmas and Easter donations in the future. Although Father Brooks was not thrilled with the printing of pledged names, he was more upset about the other donations. Fr. said, we should give to the Church willingly without having to be patted on the back every time. The conclusion was to print a general thank you for Christmas and Easter and to revisit the printing of pledged names in November of 2014.

Sunday School: Steve Coraluzzi Via Email

⑩ Ice skating is scheduled for Feb 23 from 1:00 to 3:30 at the U of P Class of 23 rink. We will be inviting our parishioners and extending the offer to St Peter & Paul's to join us. The cost for skating ticket, skate rental & food will be \$3.00 per adult, children will be no charge.

⑩ Our Christmas play went well and we have Sandy Fiss to thank for arranging practices, costumes and play content.

⑩ Special thanks to Bill Bortner for supplying our Christmas arts and crafts project. The kids made snowflake Christmas ornaments and had a great time doing it. We did run into several snags (snow and no ribbon) and were unable to get them on to the Christmas tree. I will be better prepared next year.

-Sunday School flood has been cleaned up thanks to Tim Papas and Donna Dimitri.

⑩ Next hot dog sale will be January 26.

Building Maintenance – Donna (position still open!) - no report

Stewardship: Linda Biando: Father will rework the letter and the pledge mailing will be out around February 15.

Old Business:

- ⑩ Linda Biando and Father: Father spoke with Gus Cokos about a solution to seeing who is at the door. He has a simple. Low cost option. The money had been allotted and Gus will be contacted to proceed.
- ⑩ Sexual Harassment Policy: All council members must sign tonight.
- ⑩ Baptism of Christ was a busy day, between the Blessing of the Water and the first part of our Icon Auction. Dorothy noted that this original great idea to use pre-filled bottles came from the late Cathy Anderson. May her memory be eternal. Cathy is the mother of our current treasurer, Michele Anderson.
- ⑩ Outside Sign: Steve G. is turning over the responsibility of researching this project to Father.
- ⑩ Christmas Mailing: Steve G. commented that several people mentioned that they really liked the Nativity Icon magnet that was included in the mailing.

New Business:

- ⑩ Cranford situation: There was a nice article in The Philadelphia Inquirer about Cranford's dedication to the homeless and his continued work in spite of the financial and health difficulties he has been experiencing the last two or so years. St. John's gave him \$671.00 last year and continues to support his mission.
- ⑩ Albanian Women's Day dance is on March 8 in the Church Hall from 7 PM to 11PM. Donna said she hoped all the Council members would support this event. The cost is \$40.
- ⑩ Choir during Diane Lescas' vacation: Linda Notskas will lead and it is hoped all the choir members will be more prompt.
- ⑩ Pascha Preparation:
 - On Cheese Fare Sunday, March 2, the Council will provide a meatless luncheon after Liturgy.
 - Donna will order the red egg dye and the Pascha stationary for our mailing.
 - The first Pre-sanctified Liturgy will be on Wednesday, March 5. Lenten pot luck to follow.
- ⑩ Clocks: Spring back on Sunday, March 2. A notice will go in the Weekly Messenger.
Next Council Meeting is Tuesday, February 4th at 7PM.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michele Anderson, seconded by Jani Mara. All were in favor, whereupon the meeting was adjourned. The meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Kosta, Secretary