

Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
Diocesan Council Meeting Minutes
7 February 2009

A meeting of the Diocesan Council took place at the Cranberry Township Diocesan Center on February 7, 2009. Archpriest Paul Ziatyk, Diocesan Chancellor, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM with opening prayer.

The following Diocesan Council members were present for the meeting in addition to the Chancellor: Archpriests/Priests Igumen Patrick (Carpenter), W. Evansky, D. Hendershot, J. Kopcha, A. Matychak, J. Wargo; Deacon J. Mell; Messrs. S. Daniels, E. Markoff, G. Nescott, G. Sidorick, R. Skvir.

1. Fr. Ziatyk reported on the following topics and invited discussion:
 - A. With the exception of the Homestead parish that has not remitted financial assessments for two years, all diocesan parishes are fulfilling their obligations.
 - B. Scholarship and other charity aid offered by the diocese has been withheld due to a low figure in the diocesan checking account. (Response to the Diocesan Appeal has been low at this point in time.)
 - C. The kitchen project (\$56,000 approximately) is 99% completed; the plumbing work being done on various levels of the home is also done (\$8,000)

Motion: That funds from the property accounts be used for the entire cost of the house repairs and that any funds expended for this purpose thus far using the NexTier Bank account be returned to that account. (G. Nescott/Igumen Patrick (Carpenter)
(Motion passed unanimously)

- D. Cleaning of the residence is proceeding one room at a time with a crew under the direction of Fr. Ziatyk; drapes are being cleaned although somewhat showing their age; the second floor will be cleaned once the first floor is done; upgrading the basement was discussed with the decision being to delay until later.
- E. March 22 (5:00 PM) is the date/time for the Diocesan Lenten Vespers at the Allison Park Cathedral; Bishop TIKHON will preside and be the homilist.
- F. A diocesan mailing and newsletter will be forthcoming with the Lenten schedule included among other information.
- G. Lenten Retreat will be held at the South Side (Pittsburgh) parish on April 4; Bishop TIKHON will be the speaker.
- H. All deaneries are encouraged to participate in their local pan-Orthodox Sunday of Orthodoxy services in the various areas of the diocese.
- I. We will gather at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City, on June 17, the anniversary of the repose of Archbishop KYRILL; the grave stone should be installed and ready to be blessed that day; estimated cost of the marker is \$9,600; discussions are ongoing with the Bulgarian Diocese about the headstone charges.
- J. Fr. Ziatyk asked Fr. Evansky to update the Council about some upcoming events in the diocese sponsored by the Diocesan Youth Committee and/or the FOCA Pittsburgh District ---

- * June 14 - Gateway Clipper dinner cruise (6:30 PM departure)
- * June 29 - Youth retreat - Holy Transfiguration Monastery

- * August 20 - 7:05 PM - Washington Wild Things baseball game (including buffet meal) - Washington, PA
- * September 19 - A day of Christian service - Junior Diabetes Walk-a-Thon - Schenley Park, Pittsburgh
- * October 18 - 2 PM - FOCA Pittsburgh District Convention - Holy Ghost parish, Ambridge
- * A “meet-and-greet” for the new hierarch and the youth of the diocese will be planned as circumstances permit.
- * It has been announced that Pittsburgh will be the site of FOCA National Convention during the summer of 2010 (Further information about all of these items will be forthcoming.)

2. A substantial time was then spent in the meeting to discuss the vacant episcopal see of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA. It was noted that very little official information has been received from the Locum Tenens and the Holy Synod concerning the formal election of Archimandrite Melchizedek as our new ruling hierarch. Much concern was expressed due to rampant rumors being heard from many sources. It was noted that the laity of many parishes (as well as the clergy) are confused and concerned since virtually nothing has been communicated since the Extraordinary Assembly in November 2008. It was noted that much of the excitement and good will generated by this overwhelming first ballot nomination has dissipated among the faithful and clergy of the Archdiocese already.

MOTION: (G. Nescott/ S. Daniels) That a written letter be prepared and sent to the Locum Tenens (with a copy forwarded to the Metropolitan) expressing the Diocesan Council’s concern about the lack of action on the consecration of the new diocesan hierarch and that specific mention be given in the letter about concern for the future of the Archdiocese; this letter to be co-written by Mr. Gregory Nescott and Archpriest William Evansky with input from the other Diocesan Council members.
(*Motion passed unanimously*)

It was then decided by unanimous voice acclamation to send a copy of this letter to each of the parishes in the Archdiocese after it was sent to the Locum Tenens.

3. Fr. Ziatyk expressed concern that he has not been able to get action on completing the missing diocesan audits. The Council agreed that this must be done. Fr. Ziatyk will continue to work with the elected auditors and report back to the Council.
4. Fr. Hendershot then presented a written treasurer’s report; discussion followed.

MOTION: (G. Nescott/ E. Markoff) That effective April 1, 2009, all diocesan appeals be part of the diocesan newsletter mailings and that the mailing include one return envelope for donations.
(*Motion passed unanimously*)

MOTION: (G. Nescott/ Igumen Patrick (Carpenter)) That all accounts of the diocese require two signatures on checks and that the authorized signatures be only those of the chancellor, treasurer, or diocesan council secretary (acting secretary).
(*Motion passed unanimously*)

5. Despite the uncertainty of the situation, the next topic of discussion was planning for a possible episcopal consecration. Fr. Ziatyk noted that he recently had asked Fr. Paul Suda, Cathedral Dean, to form a committee about this shortly.

MOTION: (Igumen Patrick (Carpenter)/ R. Skvir) That the Diocesan Council set a preliminary budget authorizing an expenditure of up to \$25,000 for the consecration/ enthronement, including such things as episcopal vestments, banquet facility down payment, hotel accommodations, etc.
(*Motion passed unanimously*)

6. Igumen Patrick (Carpenter) mentioned to the council that the St. Michael's property no longer has fire insurance coverage since it is not eligible, but that liability insurance coverage continues. He also mentioned that another group had made informal inquiries about the property; he told them to submit a written proposal for future consideration by the Diocesan Council.
7. Fr. Ziatyk commented that the Late Vocations Program is on hold until a new hierarch arrives; a new class is ready to begin the preparation cycle.
8. Fr. Matychak reminded the council of a motion made at the Diocesan Assembly concerning the formulation of a "Parish Aid Committee."

MOTION: (S. Daniels/ G. Sidorick) To appoint Fr. J. Matychak as committee chair and authorize him to appoint other committee members; he will then report back to the council concerning this matter for future deliberation.
(*Motion passed unanimously*)

MOTION to adjourn (12:15 PM) was made (E. Markoff/ G. Nescott) and *passed unanimously*.

(No future meeting date was set at this time.) The meeting closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

// signed //

Archpriest William Evansky
(Acting) Diocesan Council Secretary