

ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – September 27, 2022

A regular meeting of the Archdiocesan Council was held on May 27, 2022, at Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City.

The meeting began with prayer and was called to order by Archbishop Melchisedek at 6:30 pm.

Present: Archbishop Melchisedek; Treasurer Alexis Parshook.

Clergy: Fathers Mark Meholick, Stephan Gresh, John Parker, Thomas Soroka and John Mikita.

Laity: Gregory Sidorick, Raymond Steeb, Rebecca Danchenko and Nicholas York.

Excused: Fr. William Evansky (Chancellor), Fr. Michael Senyo (Council Secretary), Fr. Andrew P. Nelko (SW Dean)

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Minutes were distributed prior to the meeting electronically, copy filed. There were no changes or corrections.

Treasurer's Report: The report, including bank balances, income and expenses and investment information was distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Copy filed. Alexis Parshook offered a review. Father Stephan Gresh moved to accept the report. Seconded by Fr. Mikita. Passed.

Report of the Hierarch: See Building and grounds report below

Report of the Chancellor: Due to the Chancellor's absence, the Archbishop presented the Chancellor's report agenda items, distributed electronically beforehand.

Department Reports:

- Building and Grounds – The area of Cranberry that the chancery is in experiences regular energy outages, of varying duration (4-5 times a year, sometimes as long as a day). This has to do with the grid set-up of the area and a broader solution to the outages is not possible. Request was made to purchase a generator for such outages, and a packet with the item in question/costs associated was distributed. The generator was suggested by the building/grounds chair as reliable and worth the expense. The second item discussed was the grounds master bedroom bathroom upgrade, to assist the archbishop with mobility. Ray Steeb made mention of being aware of long-term retrofitting of the chancery (such as an elevator) but indicated this is a needed immediate implementation. Nick York motioned to approve the generator purchase & bathroom upgrade, seconded by (?)
- Parish Development – Ray Steeb raised the question of whether we have (or if Joe Kormos has) any method of review or key progress indicators of the success or failure of this program (suggested end of year progress report from Joe?). Some discussion followed of how to measure the success of such programs. His Eminence expressed the general sentiment that we have and do find Kormos' s services valuable but need to restructure the way we go forward with the programs. The conferences are valuable, but there is a problem of low attendance, with more outside attendees than from within the diocese. If implemented, they are helpful but are often not taken advantage of. Fr. Soroka praised the intentions of the program but suggested the efforts might be better spent

targeted toward the parishes that need/want them directly, rather than generally open but with no mechanism of enforced attendance. The most valuable aspects of the program often come from the one-off, direct focused programs in a parish; a suggestion was to arrange parish development in more of an ad hoc, “menu item” basis, rather than an ongoing salary. A more programmatic approach in particular parishes (i.e., 8-10 week, highly structured), while still paying X amount with Midwest diocese to host seminars, was considered. This approach has the benefit of being more customizable to the parishes that are seeking it, while also broadening the audience. It was also brought up that Joe Kormos’ s skillset should also be focused on parishes in the Legacy Parish Assistance Program. For the Assembly regarding the budgeted 20,000, Nick York suggested to frame it as 20,000 set aside for parish development pending contract renewal with a potentially different arrangement of the program on a per-case basis. Motion made by Nick York, seconded by Rebecca Danchenko (Passed)

- Metropolitan Council: There was continued discussion of the pension plan; training for new members of the board just happened. There seems to be some misunderstanding by the pension board as to the role of the newly appointed MC members; the hope going forward is for better communication, transparency. The role of Metropolitan council on the board is eyes and ears, not in any way leading or making decisions. The market is suffering right now and so are pension investments, though this is ebb and flow of any market. Some suggestion of the need for re-evaluation pension consultants. Hopefully with this measure there will be better oversight now, though there is a long way to go; The **Chancery property** received another new offer for 3.8 million. Estimates keep coming back to a number near 4 million, realistically, though hoping for 6.5. The finance committee is going to propose to His Beatitude that they counteroffer with the hopes of settling near that mark. The Archives are in the process of being moved to St. Vladimir’s seminary.

Unfinished Business:

- None to report

New Business:

- **The Budget for Jan. 1 of 2023;** Assessments are projected to decrease because of 5% early assessment discount (only two parishes didn’t return their assessments early). Income from investments is 4% of the current principle investments. No current seminarians, so scholarship investment won’t be affected. Built in 6% raises for staff & His Eminence, hoping to lead by example for parishes giving priests raises. Other admin. expenses are based on last year’s numbers, rounded. Emergency supply clergy is budgeted for \$1,000. LPAP expenses are at \$25, 000; there was almost \$40,000 over the last twelve months because of a \$13,000 anonymous donation, run through the diocese. The lowered LPAP budget for 2023 (\$25000 rather than 50) is because of decreasing from two potential parishes in the program to one eligible parish. The bathroom upgrades are not reflected in the 2023 budget, though the generator likely will be. Charitable grants and gifts: \$1000 to the St. Constantine Pittsburgh school; \$1000 for the Neighborhood Resilience Project. We are encouraging collections for the Diocese of Alaska and Mexico directly from the parishes in the diocese. General expenses of

Diocesan education and metropolitan council (OCA) were discussed. As noted by Ray Steeb, this proposed budget is a deficit budget, despite the bare bones approach. There is a need for the parishes to step up; given that the early assessment discount was only implemented this year, we don't yet have a sense of how much it helps in the long haul, though it was certainly helpful in getting the assessments sent in properly and in time. Motion to approve the budget: Nick York, seconded by Fr. John Mikita. Passed.

- A motion for a gratuity of at least \$3000 to the Monastery sisterhood to thank them for hosting His Eminence during his recovery was given by Nick York, seconded by Fr. Gresh, passed.
- With no further items to discuss, Nick York moved to adjourn, seconded by Fr. Gresh, passed by all.

The next meeting of the Council will be the diocesan assembly, Nov. 5th, at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Allison Park. The meeting closed with prayer and the singing of It is Truly Meet.

Respectfully Submitted,

Priest John Parker
(Acting) Secretary

Archbishop MELCHISEDEK
Diocesan Hierarch

Archpriest William J. Evansky
Diocesan Chancellor