

**Christ the Savior Orthodox Church**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Parish Council Meeting**  
**Sunday October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The meeting was opened with a prayer led by Father John at 11:35 am.

In Attendance:

- Rector: Fr. John Parsells.
- Council: Cheryl Kokkinos, Barbara Kaloroumakis, Beth Dunbar, Joe Dunbar, Joanne Bushman, Ginny Borodulia, Anne Rowe, Pat McAlpin, Tom Mathews, Georgianne Mathews, Vera Yevsukov.
- Virtual Attendees: Don Rowe, Justin DeArmitt, Mirona Bendfeldt.
- Also attending: Daria Parsells, Roberta Dobronz, Nissa Nancy Hall, Alexis DeArmitt, Marian Ridge, Cecilia Wyant, Ella Parsells.

Agenda:

- Review of Previous Minutes
- Report of the Rector
- Report of the Senior Warden
- Report of the Junior Warden
- Report of the Treasurer
- Old and New Business
  - Long-term planning committee
  - Children's safety
  - 2024 Budget
  - 2024 Council Membership

**Review of Previous Minutes**

Father John invited the meeting participants to amend or approve the minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarterly parish council meeting, which were taken by Secretary Vera, distributed via email.

**Motion** to accept the minutes: Pat

**Second:** Beth

**Vote:** All in favor

**Report of Rector**

Father John presented the rector's report (see handout).

- Sunday attendance: averaging 92 people for 2023 (a record high for the parish).

- Recent special events and services included: a successful Choir Workshop; Parish Feast Day celebrated alongside Fr. Christopher Xanthos of St. George; starting Orthodoxy 101 class; CTS representation at the Archdiocesan Assembly; Funeral for Danyella Mary Parsells.

### Report of Senior Warden

- Senior Warden Justin suggesting several ideas for parish fundraising. Namely: implementation of a Scrip program (in which gift cards can be purchased from various businesses, and if used by parish members, the businesses will donate a percentage back to the church). Several council members responding that Kathy Parrish had spearheaded a similar program at Christ the Savior in the past. Ginny stating it was a lot of work but had some payoff, suggesting to speak with Kathy Parrish about it. Justin agreeing to do more research (to determine which businesses are participating, % of proceeds donated, etc.) and speaking with Kathy to refine details of the idea. Father John stating that it may require a lot of buy-in from parish members, but if many people do it consistently it can be worth the effort. Father suggesting to address the topic at the following parish council meeting (December).
- Justin proposing possibility of raffles for fundraising. Several council members and Father referencing previous discussions posed at prior council meetings regarding raffles. Ginny suggesting that it may be worthwhile: it is a one-time project and with good payoff potential. Father offering synopsis on previous conversations regarding raffles: our parish had always withheld from organizing raffles, as they essentially represent a form of gambling.
- General consensus among members and Warden to move forward with alternate fundraising ideas, namely Scrip program at this time.

### Report of Junior Warden

- Junior Warden Cheryl suggesting to determine a date for parish cleanup prior to Nativity. Father John will provide a date, likely to be a Saturday, soon.

### Report of the Treasurer

- Treasurer Barbara presenting documents (see Profit and Loss sheet, Balance sheet).
- Matushka Dunia's party: recovered \$900 from donations out of \$1,625.
- **Important note for counters:** please look for earmarks on donation checks. If present, please indicate the specific purpose of the donation on the sheets to reflect this.
- Note: large insurance bill this quarter (\$9,640 that is paid once a year).
- Barbara stating, with Father John agreeing, that we have a cushion now in operating funds, whereas before we have been in the red. 5 years ago, the PNC account did not hold any money. Now this account holds \$16,000+.
- Net income showing minus \$22,000 overall. Per Father, this is because of expenditure for special projects in 2023 (we are spending money collected in previous years).

- Pat posing question regarding how we are doing month to month, since she has noticed while counting that some Sundays yielded lower than average amounts. According to Father John and Barbara, we are meeting our monthly expenditure and breaking even.
- Ginny asking if is there a way to be informed about financial changes month to month: perhaps an updated profit and loss sheet generated every other month. Father John and Barbara responding that our current policy is to generate a profit and loss document every 3 months (quarterly). If an extraordinary expense arises (e.g. Matushka Dunia's party), that is brought to attention separately and additional reports can be generated as necessary. Thank you to Barbara for her thorough and consistent work expressed by the council and by Father John.

**Motion** to accept the Report of Treasurer: Tom

**Second:** Ginny

**Vote:** All in favor

## **Old Business:**

### **Report of Long-term Planning Committee**

- Co-chairs of committee: Don and Tom. See handout.
- Don has been researching probable companies to determine Wetland Delineation; he received a response from an office in Salisbury, MD. Meeting between specialist and Father John (scheduled 2 weeks from now) will determine steps needed to move forward and obtain delineation. Father looking forward to the meeting, as well as to reporting to the LTP committee, and to the council following.
  - Wetland expense: comes from building fund operating fund, per Father John.

## **New Business:**

### **Children's Safety**

- Ginny expressing that she has been concerned about children's safety in and around the pool; earlier this year, her son-in-law has had to rescue child from the pool. Ginny believes we should protect the church and children.
- Father John responding that the parish has determined that having an outside-certified lifeguard would be ideal (established this at the last annual meeting). We have not always been able to procure a 3<sup>rd</sup> party lifeguard; on the Sundays we have not had that we have asked parents to be vigilant of their children. In order to modify lifeguard rules and make suggestions to our policy, it would have to go to parish body first. Father John stating that we will have an opportunity to discuss this at the annual meeting in December.
  - Barbara suggesting if no lifeguard is present, the pool should be closed; several members agreeing. Anne suggesting posting of signs to call attention to safety.
- Ginny posing the question of whether it is possible to install mirrors in parking lot, or some alternative way to better spot children in this potentially hazardous area. Daria suggesting implementation of a parent sign-up sheet to watch kids outside. Several others

agreeing that parking lot safety has caused some concern. Father stating that we need to find balance between freedom of parents to allow children to be children and not to be negligent and keep children safe. We need to tighten up guidelines rather than creating a lockdown situation; desiring to keep church an inviting place for children.

- Georgianne suggesting (also brought up by Anne and Daria), that someone be designated as responsible for watching kids in the parking lot: sign-up may create accountability. Several council members agreeing. Father John agreeing that this could be useful; will plan to refresh everyone on safety guidelines at upcoming annual meeting.
- Roberta stating that gates at church courtyard should remain closed: she has noticed several times that they were open; children may be wandering off into the woods. Georgianne suggesting perhaps automatically closing/locking gate; Don and several others agreeing.

### **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors Ambassador Position**

- The OCA is calling for a “Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors Ambassador” at each parish. This role stems from a fundraising initiative of the Diocese and will require communication/presentation of information to the parish from the OCA. This position may also require Benefactor Committee attendance (likely via Zoom).
- Father John asking who would be interested in the ambassador role. Barbara volunteering for position, as she will be passing on the role of Treasurer in February 2024. Tom suggesting to make the ambassador role available as an option parish-wide. All agreeing to make the availability of this position known and open to the whole parish body at the upcoming annual meeting.

### **2024 Budget**

- Father John presenting Budget for 2024 (see document). Father reminding members that there are 3 meetings (at several levels; drafted by finance committee, etc.) over several months to look at budget, revise, and make it ready to present at the annual meeting (after which it will be sent for approval by His Beatitude).
  - Father stating that he hopes not to increase stewardship of members until we have annual meeting. This way, parish members can decide themselves (i.e. “buy-in”) if they want to increase stewardship to meet growing demands.
  - The growing demands are the reason for the deficit of \$1,500. Justin stating that last year this deficit was close to \$10,000. Hence, Father John stating that we are doing well. We will likely balance our operating budget by the end of the year.
  - Cost of living adjustment is projected to be 3.2% in 2024. Separate from this, the OCA is recommending a 2% increase in clergy pension on the employer side (this is not reflected in the current budget document, since this is a new recommendation).
  - “OCA Assessments” amount doubled in the last year (2023). On the current budget, it is in the same amount as last year, since we do not have numbers for

2024 at this time. Father John will amend this amount when more information is available.

- Georgianne asking how “visitor” status (under stewardship) is determined. Father responding that we have many people coming once a year – or seasonally; typically, they are placed in the visitor’s category (as opposed to member category); frequency of visitation sometimes makes it difficult to assign the donation category.
- Father John announcing that in 2024, several tasks in the priest’s role will be delegated to the choir director: Alexis DeArmitt. Father proposing that a portion of priest’s compensation go to the choir director’s compensation for these delegated tasks. This would be a budget-neutral change. A finance committee decision was not made since the spouse of the choir director is on said committee.
  - Ginny posing the question whether the choir director is an independent contractor position. Father John responding that she is indeed an independent contractor (the church does issue her a 1099 form for tax purposes).
  - Don suggesting that the list of responsibilities for the choir director would be available for the parish council to review, so that compensation would be more quantifiable; Father agreeing that this will be provided once discussed between him and Alexis (will include a modified list of items, so that a system is in place for the future), along with the revised budget in time for the December council meeting.
- Georgianne asking whether we should be encouraging donations to the building fund now, whilst not reducing donations to operating fund? In other words: encouraging the desire to build, while still emphasizing the importance of maintaining regular donations in the same amounts to “keep the lights on.”
  - Several council members agreeing. Father John agreeing and emphasizing that first we want to make sure we are currently balancing our budget effectively. The LTPC plays a role in addressing maintenance and church body needs. Father feels that we should not begin building until we have a maintenance account that can take care of existing structure and facilities.

**Motion** to accept the budget: Georgianne

**Second:** Joanne

**Vote:** All in favor

## **2024 Council Membership**

- Father John announcing that Don and Anne Rowe will be retiring off of the council and moving to Florida in mid-November; they will be coming off their respective terms a bit early. Modifications will be made for counting schedules, and for Don’s work/contribution to the LTPC. Father John thanking them for their multitude of efforts on council and in the parish: the parish will offer leave-taking before their relocation.

- Father John encouraging attendees: if you have people in mind to serve on the council, let him know. List of people who are coming off is available on the church website – will be distributed.

Joanne moved for adjournment, Tom second, approved. The meeting closed with a prayer at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vera Yevsukov, Secretary