Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2024

Present – Fr Chris, Jim Stavrou, Elaine Simadis, Gerry Galatis, Leo Bezanis, Liz Christofylakis, Mark Dinos, Peter Kaftanzis, Sue Kouchis, Andy Sampalis, Tony Vouris, Sandy Chakonas, George Lattas, Gus Kapsaskis, Effie Panos, Telly Visvardis, Tom Berchos, Janet Koliopoulos, Demitri Andrikopoulos

Meeting called to order – 6:35pm. Opening prayer by Fr. Chris.

1. Approval of Minutes

Motion – George Lattas

Second – Sue Kouchis

Approved unanimously

1. Pastoral Report

Fr Chris is a member of the Metropolis counsel and was made Vicar of the southside Vicariate. In that he helps to distribute information from the Metropolis to parish priests. He also wants to have each parish calendar to avoid major scheduling conflicts.

Fr Chris will be out of town next week from Monday – Thursday for leadership training.

There was a Clergy Syndesmos meeting today. Clergy was asked to offer at least $500 to Presbytera Bithos following Fr Stephen’s recent death. This was a request from the Metropolis. No decision was made at this time to determine what other gifts/donations will be offered.

On the Metropolis Council, Fr. Chris is on the committee to expand outreach into the communities.

Lent is coming up. We will have Compline Services of Mondays, Pre-Sanctified liturgies on Wednesdays and Paraclesis Services on Fridays. Services will likely begin at 6:30pm.

Young Adult conference came back to the Metropolis over the past few years. Leadership 100 had been a big financial supporter of the event but would not be offering funds this year because of internal matters that need to be resolved. Fr. Chris asked for the parish to give $1,000 to help support the event.

Motion to give $1,000 to the YAL Conference – Mark Dinos

Second – Tony Vouris

Approved unanimously

There will be a wedding reception in the East Room on 3/17/24 and 8/24/24. We want to look over the rental contracts to make sure they are satisfactory. George Lattas to review.

1. President Report

Godparent Sunday was an event that has fallen off in the last couple years. Want to have the event on April 21, 2024.

Mark Dinos and Leo Bezanis to chair the event.

1. Financial Report

Elaine Simadis provided a budget for 2024. It does not include anything for a capital campaign as that group needs to meet and determine its goals

Highlights of the budget include:

* Goal of $425,000 for stewardship
* Note that too much of the budget is reliant on fundraising versus scheduled/known income
* Need to move to a much higher percentage of income to come from stewardship
* Facilities and Operations assessments are approximately $450,000
* Utilities are budgeted at $140,000

A Delegations of Authority policy needs to be created by the Executive Committee.

All contracts and leases to be complied by the office for review – Sandy Chakonas to spearhead that effort.

1. Koraes School Board Reports – Liz Christofylakis with Dean Karolis

* Strategic Plan meeting on 2/5/24 took place with a consultant company – it was a parish event with 80+ people in attendance
* Strategic plan to be distributed within a month
* Enrollment at 198-199 right now
* Working to foster relationships with Marist and Chicago Christian for resources and other purposes
* From a budgetary perspective their budget assumed 190 students which should yield approximately $1.2Million in tuition revenue
* The school has been near a break even for the last two years
* Teacher turnover issues continue to be addressed
* Tuition increase has helped with teacher retention
* Enrollment increase has been helpful to balancing the budget
* Cash flow – there are spike in cash income based on the timing of the Gala and the cycle of tuition payments
* Expansion of the facility is being closely looked at
* This year there has been a security guard on staff – he is unarmed
* There have been some security issues on the property, none of which have place the students in harm’s way. The security issues generally involved parent behavior. There were also a couple of instances of attempted vehicle break-ins in the parking lot
* Locally we are one of a very few schools with an unarmed guard
* Parents have vocalized support for an armed guard
* It is very expensive and the cost to have an armed guard on site would likely double or triple the current cost
* If the recommendation from the School Board is made to have an armed guard, the church would likely be asked to contribute to the cost

1. Stewardship – Sue Kouchis

The three pillars of the stewardship plan with be: clear communication, engagement/envolvement, gratitude and recognition

We will have a goal thermometer.

1. Philanthropy – George Lattas

We were asked by Feed 6 to host another event. We will probably look to package around 50,000 meals. Event to take place March 16 around 11am

We will host 40 residents from Park Lawn Community and serve them dinner. The people who are residents have mental handicaps which are treated at that facility. GOYA may be asked to serve. Event to take place on March 26, likely an early dinner around 5pm.

1. Apokreatiko – Elaine Simadis and Effie Panos

Stacey Vallianatos is the chairperson. Entertainment has been secured. Designed to be affordable. Working on reservations at the current time. Event to take place on March 2.

1. Maintenance Committee – Peter Kaftantzis and Telly Visvardis

For the HVAC project:

* 4 contractors are interested in bidding on the project
* There is mandatory walk thru taking place on 2/19/24
* Bids will be due by 3/1/24
* Committee expects to review the bids, forward to PC with recommendations prior to the next PC meeting
* A vote on the project is anticipated for the March meeting

For the roof repair project:

* Waiting for a manufacturer representative to come and create the scope of work
* Vendors have been identified
* Unlikely to have bids in time for March PC meeting
* A special PC meeting might be called so a timely vote takes place

Baptismal font – did no need to cut the marble. Problem was identified and fixed. Font is tentatively to be re-installed next week.

Hot water tank replacement – it is a project that will be around $15,000. It will involve water pipe upgrades and replacement of the tank.

Landscape work – price for grass cutting in 2023 was $24,700. The current snow plow company will do it for $22,500.

Motion to use Marquez Landscaping for grass cutting for 2024 – Pete Kaftantzis

Second – Tom Berchos

Passes unanimously

A candidate to be a part-time maintenance worker for the church has been identified. He will be interviewed this week.

1. Festival – Mark Dinos, Elaine Simadis

August 17 & 18. Two individuals to be assistant chairpersons have been identified and have shown interest

1. Metropolis RFP Request

George Lattas authored a letter which he read to the PC in which we indicate we do not have space available to house a Metropolis office.

Motion to send letter to Metropolis – George Lattas

Second – Andy Sampalis

Approved unanimously

1. Golf Outing – Jim Stavrou

Fr Chris and Leo to approach another venue as an alternative sight. Potential new chairpersons have been identified and will be approached about interest.

George Lattas points out the level of work that is needed to run the event. Generally, it is not as daunting an event as might be expected.

1. Miscellaneous

New website is expected to go live by the end of the month

1. Committees

Each committee will need to provide prepared reports on a timely basis as identified by the EC. More active committees will need to prepare monthly meetings. Other committees will need to prepare reports on a quarterly basis or as-needed.

Motion to Adjourn – George Lattas

Second Sue Kouchis

Meeting adjourned 9:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Dinos