

Parish Council Planning Meeting
St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church
4/16/19

Present: Father Theodore Bobosh, Brian Garber, Kerrie Wiese, Heather Weis, Bruce Garber, David Abshear, David Avdakov, David Short, Ann McLarnan.

Opening Prayer and Call to Order

Fr. Ted led "O Heavenly King."

Bruce called meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

David Short motions, Kerrie seconds. Minutes are approved by consensus.

March meeting minutes are tabled until May meeting because they were sent out earlier on 4/16 and have not been reviewed.

Discussion of Meeting Protocols

David Avdakov suggests that we have a Webex or other online system paid for by the church. Brian notes that if he can't make it to the meeting physically, he can't make it to the webex either. Bruce suggests that these types of meetings aren't always ideal because participants are often distracted.

Ann notes that having all council members present at each meeting is a bit aspirational, and we ought to cut people some slack or no one will want to be on council.

David Short notes that the church policy states that council members can miss up to two meetings in the year. We can hold the meeting with a quorum even if some people are missing.

Kerrie suggest that if we know that people can't make it in advance, we can attempt to reschedule, though others state that they need at least a month's notice.

Bruce reaffirms that our chosen meeting date is the 3rd Tuesday of every month, although we may skip June.

Brian notes that if there isn't much to review and it can be resolved over email, then we can do it that way. Fr. Ted concurs.

Priestly Remarks – Forgiveness Sunday Follow Up

Fr. Ted states that he received no negative comments regarding the new bowing protocol for Forgiveness Sunday. It seemed to solve the issues that had been raised, and he did receive some positive feedback.

Parish Planning – Nourishing St. Paul's Body of Christ

- What are the clear and pressing needs of the congregation right now?
 - Brian points out that many new families are joining the church and he doesn't recognize a lot of people. He suggests a meet and greet or something of the sort to help facilitate interactions.
 - Bruce recalls when the Parish would have new families posted on the community board. Bruce will talk to Theresa Lynne about reinstating this.
 - David Avdakov suggests that we may be able to track new families. Then we can reach out to them specifically when we have events.
 - David Abshear suggest that many of the new families who are visiting may feel overwhelmed.
 - Others note this idea would work for families who have joined the church already.
 - David Short suggests a table mix up during fellowship hour to facilitate introductions. Heather notes that this idea would not work for families with young children.
 - Bruce asks about welcome packet for new families. Fr Ted says that's in the wheelhouse of the greeters committee; we used to have two distinct packets: one for visitors and one for new members. Although there is so much information available online and some feel that welcome packets just get thrown away and don't serve a purpose.
 - David Short says that the greeters encourage visitors to pull things off the rack of literature in the entrance; we can put a Parish info guide in there.
 - David Short volunteers to look through OCA website for welcoming info.
 - Ann suggests giving out directories to new members
 - Dave Ad asks if it make sense to have a list of events posted. Heather responds that is does; however, the social events committee is currently waiting to see how the first few events go before publishing the full list of planned events.

- Bruce asks if someone ask for emails? Fr. Ted confirms. Ann notes that there's also a subscription for emails.
- Heather – quick note about addressing parents: people are still upset about the letter not being addressed and we need to make this a community effort to embrace families.
- Kerrie brings up a concern about the Sunday School Classrooms. Unsupervised children are going into the classrooms during liturgy. Supplies are being utilized and ruined, making it difficult for the teachers to teach effectively after liturgy.
 - Kerrie notes that this is often very young children and suggests drafting a letter asking the parents to respond to this situation.
 - David Short recalls that Tammy Abshear set up the classroom for her class this previous Sunday, and a child came in during liturgy and messed up the preparations. This is an ongoing conundrum of how to address these issues while embracing the families.
 - David Abshear notes that he sometimes sees young kids in the sanctuary without adults after liturgy.
 - Heather suggests talking to parents directly first. Then, if the issues continue, we can address parents in a letter.
 - David Avdakov asks if we can we lock the doors to the classrooms. Ann responds that the doors do not lock.
 - David Avdakov also asks how often this occurs. Heather, Kerrie, and David Short respond that it occurs frequently.
 - Fr. Ted concurs that we should talk directly to the parents and families involved and say we need your help to solve these issues. He doesn't see making general announcements to the parish as effective for this.
 - David Abshear notes that Tammy did talk to the parent and it was well received.
 - Heather asks who will be responsible for these conversations?
 - The general consensus is that the Parish Council members will address these concerns as they arise.
 - David Short suggests creating proper use guidelines for the classrooms that can be an aid in these discussions as a future agenda item; Heather suggests posting them in the classrooms.
- What are the greatest opportunities in the community? – Not discussed
- Planting a Parish in Middletown discussion – David Abshear asks to discuss this item. Ann notes that the Bishop suggested it, but it would be tricky to do because of the Greek church in Middletown. Perhaps Oxford would be a better option, but Middletown has a Greek Parish. Essentially, this is an idea that the Bishop had, but we aren't moving on it at this time.

Financial Report – March & 2019 YTD

Kerrie states that we are doing good. We are ahead of the game 15% contributions of the operating budget; She has no concerns; we paid out charity, so some expenses are a little higher. Things are a little offset due to when things come in.

- Bruce notes that the choir wants to eliminate cords in the choral area.
 - David Short states that the Fire Department suggested not having daisy chained plugs. Risk committee wants to have power solutions there without drilling into the floor. He notes that there was an idea to replace the corded lights with battery lights, but he'd like to find something that can keep the lights we have. David Short is looking into it.
 - Bruce notes that he is worried about Fr. Ted censing. He got the rechargeable batteries for the battery-operated lights. However, some choir people don't like the blue light from the battery-operated lights.
 - David Short notes that we need to be careful with what we might buy because battery-operated lights can be expensive, and the lights we already have are good.
 - Heather says we can reach out to Victor regarding the electrical question.
- Camp funds – Bruce states that we have committed to sending two kids to camp this summer.
- Investments: David Avdakov suggests that we put some of the funds from checking into an earning fund.

He suggests Cruise Investments – we can invest in CD's that are more liquid than a local bank, but we could earn an interest rate from 2.5-3% that is FDIC insured. He manages money for a number of churches. Depending on the size, many have a significant investment in stocks. This would be a safe way to earn some income.

- David Short asks if Fr. Ted knows what the standard for the diocese is. Fr. Ted says there really isn't one.
- Brian asks how liquid the accounts are. David Avdakov notes that we should truly hold them until maturity. He says we can set up a ladder of \$5,000 blocks that mature at different times, starting at 18 months.
- David Short asks if there a reason why we have so much money in checking. Kerrie says no, not really. David Short suggests that we can potentially move those funds, which Kerrie agrees is a good idea.
- Bruce suggest we focus on this next month.
 - David Avdakov will prepare proposal for next meeting, detailing the investment plan, any fees involved, and the potential for discounts. He notes that he has worked with this firm for a long time and they are steady.
 - Kerrie will prepare a history of significant payments to see what we might need to keep in savings/checking, note any earnings on our current accounts, and provide a list of future expenditures. She will also note any fees that may be incurred for moving money between accounts.
- Bruce notes that John wants to redo the Women's Bathroom.
 - He will likely use a contractor and estimates it will cost \$15,000.
 - Kerrie notes that we were moving money aggressively into the building improvement fund because of things on the improvement list, but we weren't really spending it, so she backed it off.
- David Short moves to accept financials. Bruce seconds. Heather thirds. The motion is passed and the financial report is accepted.

Old Business

- Building upgrades and required equipment replacements
 - camera replacement- [The Risk Management Committee is working with our alarm service provider to get a quote on this. The person that came out to review the facility and develop a quote has left the company and we have another walk through scheduled on Wednesday, 03/27. In process](#)
 - high water bill, again- Bruce to investigate; Bruce has been checking it. Perhaps will bring in dye to check everything. He's working on it. Kerrie states that water YTD is within budget. Gas and electric is high.
 - Parking lot lights- not working due to shorted wiring- Bruce to investigate. Bruce called Larkin electric to check and had not heard back.
- Standing Committee Leaders- **For Your Information – Post this on board**
 - Parish Administrator- Erin Caldwell
 - Church School Committee- Kerrie Wiese
 - Facilities Committee- John Brausch, Bruce Garber, Dominic Barone
 - Fellowship Committee- Andrew & Evginia Watson, Dave Fenner
 - Greeter Committee- Maria Brausch
 - Mission Committee- Dave Short: [Rich Helfrich, Maria Brausch, and Matthew Jobst are willing to server on this committee. I will be putting together a charter for the committee and provide it to the Parish Council when completed. We will be looking to bring the St. Vincent de Paul activity under this committee. We are also planning to do an IOCC trip this year..](#)
 - Out Reach Committee- Matthew Jobst
 - Risk Committee- (Dave Short, Jeff Wiese) FYI- new safety members
 - Social Committee- Heather Weis, Erin Caldwell and Alyson Turri
 - Worship (Choir) Committee- Chip Pritchard
- Bishop Paul visit planning- will work on in May-June

- Agenda – he is coming in August
- Lodging -- we shouldn't need to reserve hotel rooms until June; his visit will not interfere with air show, so hotels should be open.
- meeting with council
- meeting with youth
- dinner
- Parish Policy & Procedure- Council members to read & sign Sexual Misconduct Form
 - Mary Kay has form. David Sort will reach out to Mary Kay to ensure that everyone has signed for this year.
 - David asks all council members to follow the link he sent to the OCA to read the Sexual Misconduct information. Everyone needs to read it.
 - Fr. Ted notes that we need this so that the Parish Council knows what to do in the event of a complaint or issue.
- Bruce asks about items we need to send to the diocese. Fr. Ted says that we are up to date on the items we need to send to the diocese. They will request items and we will send it in by the deadline
- David Avdakov asks if need to file taxes. Kerrie says that Laura Avdakov has that information, so David Avdakov can look into it and talk to Laura.
- ALICE training Seminar for Diocese Parishes- [Our insurance agents are working with the Miami Valley Crime Prevention Association to schedule this on June 8th. We would like to use the fellowship hall to hold this. I will be reaching out to them this week to see where they are on getting the word out.](#)
 - Fr. Ted has not heard anything.
 - David Shorts states that the target audience is the risk committee, priest, and parish council president.
 - David Short notes that there is also a Parish-wide crime prevention education program. After the initial Alice training, he will report back and we can consider that.
 - Bruce notes that the way things were handled with Ellie Cross went really well.

New Business

- Insurance letter- Bruce and Fr. Ted discuss a letter that we received noting coverage options; there are more things we can take advantage of. There is one thing we need to decided whether we add the coverage on, but the letter is not present, so we'll add it to next month.
 - We do get the risk committee discount.
- Church School start time discussion- should we start earlier than 11:45? [Youth group starts at 11:30, however, they do get to eat in the classroom.](#)
 - Kerrie states that this was decided at the Church school teacher meeting. We want to keep it at the 11:45 AM time for various reasons;
 - Kerrie notes that the last day of lessons are on May 19th and we will have the final party on the 26th. We will have pizza for the parish instead of ice cream.
 - Someone needs to talk to the Fellowship Committee about providing salad to go with the pizza. Kerrie?
 - Fr. Ted states that Mary S. wanted to do the Talent Show on the 26th. Fr. Ted will ask Mary S. about moving the talent show to the 19th due to church school celebration.
- Serving young families ideas
 - Wills, POA, estate planning workshop- in process by Social Committee – will be in June due to scheduling conflicts
 - Speakers- Fr. Joseph of Annunciation Parish with baby sitting provided – Heather states that the Social Committee is focusing on community building instead of education in our events.
 - Helping parents communicate Orthodox ideas with their children – Bruce suggests that perhaps Fr. Ted can recommend books. Fr. Ted notes that most parents find things online. Heather notes that the young parents have a pretty good network within the Parish for book recommendations.
- Community outreach

- Cookies for St. Vincent-DePaul, March 29 at 6:30 PM – Bruce notes that this event went well and had good turnout. We'll do this again
- Serving shut-ins: how can we best serve them? Perhaps via recordings?
 - David Short notes that Steve Richey wasn't really interested in electronic versions of the liturgy; maybe we can reach out to people and see what they want. Perhaps we can print out the blog. First we need to understand their needs. Many in the council agree with this.
 - Fr. Ted notes that there is a physical mailing list for the bulletin that serves shut in's, and Fr. Ted takes Communion to those who request it.
- Parish Feast ideas- comments anyone? June 29th
 - Fr. Ted says we'll have Vespers Friday night and Liturgy Saturday morning. Historically Fridays have not been well-attended, though we have often focused on the Vespers service as our celebration time.
 - Heather suggests having a low-key event on Friday after Vespers, like a bonfire with smores.
 - Many people wonder if it's worth it due to poor attendance.
 - Heather notes that VCS at the Annunciation is that week (June 24th-28th), but Fr. Joseph plans to encourage VCS participants to attend the Saturday Liturgy.
 - David Motions to plan for the event on Saturday only.
 - Kerrie notes that many people are on vacation that week and we should focus on Saturday.
 - Heather will take on Parish Fest Day planning with Social Committee. She will bring report to May meeting.
- David Short asks all council members to follow the google drive link he sent so that we can confirm the link is working. Everyone needs to check the link and email David Short to confirm that the link works for them. The items he posted are edifying for us as council members; These are the kinds of articles that give us ideas on how to reach out to the community.
- Kerrie notes we are looking for counters. Mark Pearson sent her names, so she will approach the people he suggested.
- Final comments:
 - Fr. Ted notes that someone mentioned that we don't have enough chairs in the hall because some have broken. So maybe we want to buy some.
 - Another parishioner wondered if we are going to treat the lawn with lawn care treatment. Our care person just mows and mulches but does not use chemicals.
 - Bruce states that we should so the weeds don't overrun the grass.
 - David Short suggests using non-toxic chemicals. David Avdakov concurs. He will send a link to Bruce who will check in with John Brausch.
 - Kerrie brings up water damage in her classroom. She and Bruce will discuss.

Closing Prayer: St. Simeon's Prayer

Bruce adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM and council members toured the women's restroom to note potential issues.

Action Items

All Council Members

- Follow the link David Short sent to the OCA website to read the Sexual Misconduct information.
- Check the Google Drive link David Short sent and email David Short to confirm that it works for you.

Bruce Garber

- Talk to Theresa Lynne about reinstating New Member profiles on the Community Board in the Fellowship Hall.
- Look into insurance letter to see what options we need to review. Add the details to the May agenda.
- Post Standing Committee Leaders on one of the Community Boards.

David Short

- Look through OCA website for welcoming info that can be placed on the Greeter's Table.
- Look for power solutions for the choral area.
- Reach out to Mary Kay to ensure that everyone has signed the Sexual Misconduct Form for this year.

David Avdakov

- Prepare investment proposal for next meeting, detailing the investment plan, any fees involved, and the potential for discounts.
- Talk to Laura about whether the church needs to file taxes.

Heather Weis

- Plan Parish Feast Day with Social Committee. Prepare report for May meeting.

Fr. Ted

- Fr. Ted will reach out to Mary S. about moving the talent show to the 19th due to church school celebration.

Kerrie Wiese

- Prepare a history of significant payments to see what we might need to keep in savings/checking, note any earnings on our current accounts, and provide a list of future expenditures. She will also note any fees that may be incurred for moving money between accounts.