

Minutes of the Diocesan Council, August 30, 2012
Harrisburg

Present: Archbishop Tikhon, Fr. John Kowalczyk, Fr. Daniel Kovalak, Fr. David Mahaffey, Fr. Nicholas Solak, Fr. Victor Gorodenchuk, Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Fr. Martin Browne, David Yeosock, Doug Yates, Fr. Sergei Kapral.

Absent: Fr. John Soucek, Mark Linnehan.

Opening: His Eminence opened the meeting with the singing of O Heavenly King at 10:26PM.

Agenda: Discussion items first, reports after with questions for each report.

- No objections to agenda.

Minutes

- Clarify p.6 of May minutes -Chancellor sent out documents on escalation – refer to Crisis management
- Fr. Timothy motioned, David Yeosock seconded
- All in favor.

By-Laws

- Previous Diocesan Council meeting agreed to submit any suggestions within a few weeks. Nothing submitted to committee according to Fr's John and Timothy.
- Nothing new in this draft presented by His Eminence except for job descriptions for diocesan administration.
- Need to approve draft bylaws for presentation to the Diocesan Assembly.
- Structure of Administration – by laws reflect consideration of the bishop. This is the direction in which he would like to go.
- Explained in general terms his understanding of the administrative positions.
- Related to legal matters

Comments or proposed changes:

Fr. V.: format of the by laws. Indicate what is new from what is not. All new.

David Yeosock: should we stipulate quarterly audits as is current practice.

- Should auditors attend the full meaning?
- Fr. Mahaffey indicated the OCA practice. Auditors only there if requested because there is a question.
- Fr. Sergei indicated that he thought that the presence of the auditors would be helpful in allowing them to get a sense of what is going on.

Discussion on the status of deacons attending the All American Council and Diocesan Council. Question of the meaning of assigned vs. attached and what difference that should make.

- Legal review: Amendment process. Are by laws binding on bishop?
- Intend to have all of them reviewed by competent legal counsel.
- Fr. Dan suggested we approve subject to legal review and further review by the Diocesan Council if it doesn't.
- David Yeosock move to send to legal counsel for review, to be reviewed by Diocesan Council for presentation at next Diocesan Assembly.
- Fr. Victor seconded.
- All in favor.

Legal Matters

Update

Contact with Stephanos Bibas, STOTS graduate, professor of criminology at U. Penn. Has offered to assist us pro bono unless issues are really involved. Unofficial general counsel as opposed to official. Archbishop Tikhon asked him for referrals in three areas, general law, i.e. property; sexual misconduct and immigration issues. Three most pressing areas for the Church at this time.

No agreements signed with any.

Spruce Law Firm : Matt Kelly met with him and liked. \$100-\$150 an hour.

Main issue at this time would be Diocesan Center

Montgomery, Mc Cracken and Rhodes; Ralph Weideman.

Main issue: Roman Ostash immigration status -

Stephanos has contacted this man, but Stephanos is helping with preliminary paperwork.

Fr. Dan suggested we contact local Congressman to help with this.

Mark Chopko, legal counsel USCCB dealing with issues of sexual misconduct. The Archbishop noted that we do not have any pending cases.

Get advice on related issues, such as Victim Assistance Coordinator. Need to be proactive.

- Victim Assistance Coordinator – RCC has, as well as corporations. 800 number 24/7 available for victims who can refer them and coordinate with OCA office for review. Cindy Davis drafted this. Licensed Social Worker who has worked with Wayne County Children and Youth. Has adapted description from RC diocese in light of OCA PSP. Cindy willing to volunteer to do parts of this. Fr. Kowalczyk has parishioner, working on Ph.D. who is willing to do this pro bono.
- AT is tired of waiting for National Chancery to do it. Has received advice from members of Synodal Commission to do it.

- Discussion on scope. AT idea a person who is on call for those who wish to report and direct/refer people where to go with the complaint so it can be addressed as quickly and effectively as possible.
- Person who is not bishop, chancellor or priest. Make it non-threatening to do this where there is a need.
- This is in tandem with education and other dimensions of parish/diocesan life.

Should we pursue this or not?

- David Yeosock; yes and go with Cindy. Bishop needs legal counsel. Preparedness is essential.
- Fr. Victor suggested a step by step process for VAC.
- His Eminence provided context for current situation in response to question from Fr. Dan Kovalak:
- ORSMA which now is Fr. Jillions, and SMPAC, group of six people who are advisers who came out of the settlement of the Paul Sidebottom issue.
 - Synodal Commission established for Canada
 - Each case requires a response team.
- Office does not necessarily respond to every case. Questions about what SMPAC should be doing. Original mandate was to revise PSP's, appointed by Metropolitan to do so. They expanded scope because of the complexity of the issues.
- Legal, Crisis Management, SMPAC and chancery officers involved in addition to the Synod. Fr. Dan suggested using third party counseling entity as the OCA did in the past. No longer use them as a cost issue. Contract on case by case basis.
Position summary is ok. Duties and responsibilities disputed by council member as replicating the national structure which is considered unnecessary replication.
Fr. Dan suggested webpage and publish PSP and put info there.
Discussion of title.
Moved for position as summarized and with deletion of third party referral by Fr. Dan, seconded by Fr. David. Approved.

Continuing Clergy Education

Draft of program

Wanted a formal program of clergy continuing education. Fall program organized, continue in the Spring. Require hours and provide means for fulfillment.

Comments:

Meaning of full time assigned clergy.

All the clergy who are assigned.

Proposed number of hours:

- D. Yeosock mentioned that Engineering is 22 **credits** a year.
- This proposal is 24 **hours** per year.

In the context of annual review of clergy which archbishop intends to commence with chancellor and dean.

Fr. Mahaffey raised question of consequences for those who don't attend.

Discussion on clergy accountability.

Questions about what counts for credit: list provided, if you find any additional programs seek approval of the bishop.

Funding needs to be hashed out.

Reports:

Archbishop's Report

Questions:

- PNC retreat
- Revitalization Committee: Meeting again, workshop for clergy on PHIM, integration of three tier parish model. Will have meeting to formalize.
- Fr. Victor mentioned doing the clergy workshop in the deaneries.
- Clergy retreat: Fr. Mahaffey will check with Franciscan retreat in Bethlehem
- Fr. Dan wondered about OCA status in the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of North America (?). No change.
- Any subsequent meetings with ROCOR? No. Not since Memorial Day.
- Updating of PSP's – no word on it.

Chancellor's Report

- Purchase of vestments. Not yet.
- Question on Nanticoke Relief Fund from Fr. Tim. \$1100 given by Fr. Tim to Fr. Adam, no acknowledgement. Funds given directly to Fr. Adam or the parish are not reflected on diocesan list as they did not come through the diocese.
- Vocations Department: October was Seminary month.
 - More organized and concerted effort
 - Requires attention

Treasurer's Report

Cost of AAC: Fr. Kovalak suggested that payment of diocesan assessment not be made until a budget for the Council is presented and approved by the Metropolitan Council.

Metropolitan Council Representative Report

- David Yeosock read the prepared report. See attached.

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- Financial Development: met with Bishop Michael who shared ideas based what he has done in Diocese of NY and NJ. Still waiting for minutes for that meeting. 20 weeks and counting.
- Fr. David on Internal Governance and is Chair of Ethics Committee:
- Much time has been spent on issues related to administrative difficulties in central administration.
- Synodal letter regarding the resignation was very helpful. There had been a genuine effort to uphold MJ.
- What is his status? Archbishop indicated what Metropolitan Jonah is, a retired Metropolitan Archbishop attached to St. Mark's in Bethesda, and what he is **not**, suspended or deposed.
- Discussion of responsible communication.
- Accountability for decrease of assessment proportion as voted on at the AAC
- Proposal that our diocese oppose any move to proportional giving without inclusion of the ethnic dioceses.
- Met Council representatives will express our displeasure with the tardiness of the Chancery in providing information on National Assessment.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Meeting November 29 after continuing education.

Lectures in Williamsport.

Fr. Tim motion to adjourn, seconded by David Yeosock.

Meeting closed with singing of It is Truly Meet at 4:15PM.