

SAINT SPYRIDON GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
GENERAL ASSEMBLY- January 4, 2004

The General Assembly was called to order at 12:30 with an opening prayer. Fifty parishioners were in attendance.

Election of a Chairperson- Nickolas Moudios was elected as Chairperson for the General Assembly.

Approval of previous General Assembly minutes- Nickolas Moudios asked all in attendance to review the previous minutes. Nick identified a typo on page 1 line 2 that should read "Approval of the June 10th, 2003 General Assembly minutes." Charles Fotos motioned to approve the minutes. Aris Felis seconded the motion and it was approved.

President's Report- Due to illness of Nicholas Petralias, Dino Charalambides Vice President provided the President's report. Dino highlighted some of the accomplishments of the Parish Council over the last year. After the resignation of Lisa Ayotte, the Parish Council revised all the job descriptions for the office staff positions. The job descriptions facilitated in the hiring of Meg Tsambouniery Office Administrator, Sarah Kyriazis Desk top Publisher, and Taki Bezas Custodian. An emergency buy of classroom and auditorium furniture was made as a result of the City's breaking of the lease for the Doherty Satellite program. 2003 saw the reemergence of a St. Spyridon dance group. It is anticipated that the dance group will perform during the next festival. Sunday school enrollment was up from prior years with over 300 children attending. The classes now continue through the 12th grade, where in the past children graduated in grade 8. Greek School also is doing well with just under 100 children attending classes. The golf tournament was again a huge success. Some of its proceeds will go toward the payment of the classroom and auditorium furniture buy. Dino foresees a bright future for the Cathedral, evidenced by the influx of younger parishioners to the Parish Council and attendees of the General Assembly. Short term goals for the future include the establishment of a Web Site for the Cathedral and the offering of an automatic deduction for direct payment of stewardship from parishioners checking accounts. A long term goal would be the building of a Community Center for the youth.

Treasurers Report- George Maniatis thanked the Budget Committee, Meg Tsambouniery, and Chris Fourkas in helping him prepare the Treasurers report as well as the ladies who did the mailing. George also wanted to express his thanks to Chris Fourkas on behalf of the entire Cathedral for filling in after Lisa Ayotte's resignation. George also thanked Alexandra Economou for picking up additional duties during that time. George went through the receipt and disbursement accounts highlighting areas of importance. Total 2003 receipts were \$443,597 disbursements were \$514,312 with a resulting deficit of \$70,715. Interest from the Endowment fund was used to cover the

deficit amount. Nickolas Moudios then explained that one of the main reasons we are here today is to approve the proposed 2004 Budget. Budgeted amounts can be changed by line item through motions approved by the General Assembly. Dennis Dionis asked how many paid members we have. The Cathedral has approximately 1,200 paid members, with approximately 1,800 households on the Cathedral's mailing list. Dennis asked why line 6102 Archdiocese Stewardship was increased by \$10,000 from \$50,000 in 2002 to \$60,000 proposed for 2004. George stated that the Archdiocese expects that all churches in the Diocese provide 15% of their total operating budget as Stewardship. Our actual amount due this year was over \$73,000. The Parish Council debated this line item for an extended period of time finally agreeing at the \$60,000 amount. Chris Fourkas on behalf of a request from Father Dean motioned that the Archdiocese Stewardship account be increased by \$3,000 from Father's discretionary account. The motion was seconded by Anastasia Efstratios. James Bazoukas and Aris Felis both stated that they didn't feel it was appropriate to utilize Father Dean's discretionary account to cover this. Tony Anastasion asked what the consequences were for not providing the full amount requested. Dino Charalambides said that a North Carolina parish had their Parish Council removed by the Archdiocese and replaced by Archons. Dino Charalambides amended the motion to read "to increase the Other Donations receipt line to balance line 4199 appropriately." The amended motion was seconded. Dino, William Kiritsy, Michael Christakis and others felt that we should meet the Archdiocese's 15% amount which represents approximately \$73,000 for this year. Nicholas Moudios, Sideris Angelou, and others felt that first and foremost we have a responsibility to be fiscally responsible to our parishioners. The amended motion and original motion were both defeated.

Charles Fotos questioned why the Greek School payroll received a higher raise than the Nursery School which continues to make money for the Cathedral. George Maniatis stated that Nursery School teachers and Greek School teachers were given the same percentage increase for 2004. Dino Charalambides added that although the Greek School is not a money maker, the Parish Council considers the Greek School to be a stewardship for the community. Additionally the Nursery School benefits a small number of parishioners families while the Greek School benefits over 80 parish families directly.

George Fotiades stated that the Nursery School account for extended day doesn't include a disbursement but does include a receipt. Additional funds received for extended days are paid with 2/3 going to teachers 1/3 going to the church. George motioned to show the \$2,000 disbursement. Dino Charalambides seconded the motion and it was passed.

James Bazoukas questioned whether some expense amounts would be different now that the Worcester Public Schools have left. Nickolas Moudios said the expenses are still billed the same way to the church. James Bazoukas questioned the FICA amount as it appeared to be lower proportionally than the increase in wages. Chris Fourkas stated that he believed the FICA increase to be correct. James Bazoukas questioned why there was an increase to \$10,000 for line 6402, Special Events. Dimitrios Vasiliadis responded that the special events committee is working on a major event to take place this year requiring the funding.

George Fotiades motioned to accept the 2004 Budget report with a \$2,000 increase of the disbursement amount. Betsy Langas seconded the motion and it was passed.

George Maniatis motioned to allocate \$75,100 from the Endowment Interest Fund to cover the deficit. James Bazoukas seconded the motion. A question arose as to how much money was in the interest portion of the Endowment Fund. George Maniatis stated that it was over \$85,000. The motion was voted and passed.

Stewardship Committee Report- Michael Christakis reiterated his belief that we should increase our commitment to the Archdiocese and provide the full amount they request each year. Michael indicated that our annual Budget of \$500,000 could and should be easily obtained through Stewardship. If we all gave \$300 per year we could easily cover our budget and put all the money from the weekly collection or Festival to assist worthy causes like Holy Trinity, St Basils Academy, and others. Proceeds from Festivals and other activities should not have to go towards balancing the budget. Michael indicated that we may need to rethink and look at the possibility of having a recommended minimum for stewardship. We need to provide further Ministries to the Parishioners. In order to accomplish this we need either a Deacon or additional Priest to assist Father Dean. We need to ensure that all our scriptural based writings concerning Stewardship are provided in both languages. The language issue is very difficult. Michael stated that he is aware of 50 families that have left our Parish due to the lack of English in the services. The next Stewardship chair will need all our assistance to get the job done. Michael thanked the help he received from Dino Charalamibes and George Fotiades over the last 2 years. George and Dino both indicated that Michael did the best job of any Stewardship chair in our history and should be commended for his efforts. Dimitrios Angelis thanked Michael for his report, and agreed that we need to change peoples mind set, only an amount equal to one coffee a day by our parishioners would allow us to make our budget. Ralph Masterjohn said that we were all giving \$1 for candles or collections in the 1940's. At that time we were making \$12 per week. We need to educate people to get in the habit of placing \$5 in the tray instead of \$1.

New Business Agenda Motions

Michael Dionis as House Committee chairman read and motioned the following three items put forward by the Parish Council.

a. "Motion to allocate \$14,900 from the Grecian festival Account to cover the replacement cost of 25 folding auditorium tables and 80 classroom desk/chairs." Chris Lekas seconded the motion. Michael stated that due to the departure of the Worcester Public Schools there was an immediate need to purchase replacement furniture prior to the start of Greek School and Sunday School. With the assistance of George Manitias and his employer, Group Comm the Cathedral was able to purchase the 25 folding auditorium tables at cost. The city of Worcester anticipated that we would pay approx \$900 for each table, we were able to purchase them for \$400 each. The classroom desk/chairs were purchased through a lead provided by the City Manager's office. The desk/chairs are the highest quality available to schools. Forty of the desk/chairs were purchased at cost with the remaining forty purchased at a 40% discount. The \$14,900 amount represents the balance of payment due as a number of parishioners donated funds

directly for the furniture purchase. The \$14,900 amount is being covered entirely by proceeds made during the golf tournament this year. Golf proceeds are deposited in the Grecian Festival Account. The motion was voted and approved.

b. "Motion to allocate \$8,500 from the Bellos Interest Income Fund for the purpose of repairing/replacing the deteriorating copper eaves and gutters on the Cathedral." The motion was seconded by George Fotiades. The eaves and gutters were installed in 1952. Over time acid rain and the elements have caused small pin holes to form. Eventually water will make its way into the Cathedral through the walls and/or ceiling. Going forward on this would be preventive maintenance and likely stop a more costly repair bill in the future. The motion was voted and approved.

c. "Motion to allocate \$2,500 from the Bellos Interest Income Fund to purchase a pallet of replacement roof tiles for the Cathedral." The motion was seconded by Aris Felis. Every year the Cathedral replaces 4 or 5 tiles broken during the winter months. There are only a few tiles remaining in the pallet that we have been using. The tiles can only be purchased by the pallet. The motion was voted and approved.

d. Dino Charalambides motioned that "effective January 2005, all monies collected from the baskets be donated to charitable organizations and are no longer to be utilized for the General Operating Expenses of the Cathedral." William Kiritsy seconded the motion. Chris Lekas stated that he felt this was premature considering we have a deficit of \$75,000. James Bazoukas said we need to have fiscal responsibility, we can't continue to increase our deficit. We need to prove our ability to reduce the deficit first. George Fotiades agreed, it's a good thought but we don't have the money. George mentioned the possibility of adding a second basket each month for a charity. Dino Charambalides stated that he believes in this motion and if people have a reason to give they will. William Kiritsy said that he had gone back and forth on this issue. We need to be fiscally responsible but the collections will never cover the costs associated with the church, we must change our mindset so that stewardship becomes the driving force. Erin Moudios said she was in favor of the 2 basket recommendation proposed by George. Tony Anastasion recommended that we try no baskets for a test period to see if it works. Aris Felis said that this was tried in the past when he was Parish Council President, it didn't work and the basket had to be reinstated. Ralph Masterjohn remembered that when he first came to St. Spyridon in the 1950's that he was surprised that there were no baskets; he was told that they didn't need to as all monies to run the church were provided through Stewardship. George Maniatis said that fiscally we are not ready. We need to go after the people who don't attend church regularly; it is those people that will allow us to make the \$500,000 stewardship amount. We all need to network to bring our relatives and friends not involved with the church back into the community. George Fotiades amended the motion to read "beginning January 2004 the Parish Council identifies one working charity each month to collect a second basket with all monies to be donated to said charity." Dino Charalamnbides seconded the motion. Erin Moudios noted that they should not conflict with other 2nd baskets that the Philoptochos passes. Nickolas Moudios stated that he was against the motion even as amended. If the Parish Council wants to do this they can do it without GA approval. Michael Christakis stated that his belief is that if we have just one giving of Stewardship instead of numerous basket and candle donations it will be easier for people and they will give much more for

their yearly Stewardship amount. Nickolas Moudios asked for a vote. The amended motion and original motion were both defeated.

New Business Items

George Fotiades motioned that the Parish Council include an agenda item for the next General Assembly, recommending the number of parishioners in good standing required for a quorum of the General Assembly. There has been confusion in the past, is the number of parishioners required 33, 50 or some other number. Charles Fotos seconded the motion and it was passed.

Tina Neidbala motioned that the Spring General Assembly be scheduled for May 2, 2004. The motion was seconded by Aris Felis and passed.

Steve Zoulos motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sideris Angelou seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 4:15.

Michael Dionis
Parish Council Secretary