



# SAINT SPYRIDON GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

## ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΣ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΚΑΘΕΔΡΙΚΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΑΓΙΟΣ ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝ



### MINUTES:

General Assembly ~December 5, 2004

Quorum was reached with 50 parishioners present.

### Opening Prayer: Fr. Dean Paleologos

Father Dean began the meeting with the opening prayer, Our Father.

### Introduction by the President: William Kiritsy

William began the meeting by asking for nominations for a chairperson.

### Nomination/Election of a Chairperson: Dino Charalambides

George Maniatis nominated Dino Charalambides. Christina Andrianopoulos seconded the motion. Attendees voted unanimously to have Dino Charalambides preside as the chairperson.

### Reading and Approval of the May 23, 2004 General Assembly Minutes: Anastasia Efstratios

Dino Charalambides asked if any parishioners had questions or comments regarding the May 23, 2004 General Assembly minutes. Dimitri Moschos moved to approve the minutes. Arthur Tsongalis motioned to accept them. Katerina Kambosos seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### Priest's Report: Fr. Dean Paleologos

As Fr. Dean's report was given during his sermon following the Divine Liturgy, this agenda item was tabled.

### President's Report: William Kiritsy

William Kiritsy reported 2004 was a successful, yet challenging year.

He began his presentation by first discussing an overview of the Cathedral's governing structure, as noted at the most recent Clergy Laity meeting. There are nine Archdioceses in the United States. Our Cathedral is part of the Boston Archdiocese. Fr. Dean, naturally, is the Dean of our Cathedral, followed by the Parish Council and General Assembly, and the Audit, Election, and By-law Committees. Under the Parish Council, there are several additional committees: Stewardship, House, Publication and Website, Investment, Budget, Building, Youth, Special Events, Golf, and Grecian Festival. In addition, the Cathedral supports many organizations such as GOYA.

St. Spyridon is extremely well regarded at the Clergy Laity and this favorable position is complemented by Dimitri Moschos, who is a very well respected member of the Archdiocese Council.

However, we will see parish reforms coming from the Clergy Laity in the near future. While more specific details will be forthcoming, one of the immediate reforms we will experience is improved communications from the Archdiocese through electronic vehicles such as Websites and e-mail.

In 2004, we set several short- and long-term goals.

### Short term Goals

- Improve Cathedral communications, which we did with an overhaul of the *Cathedral News*, the launch of a stewardship newsletter called *Stewardship News*, the launch of a Website, and a Meet the Ministries luncheon. The hire of our desktop publisher, Sarah Kyriazis, greatly contributed to our success in this regard.
- Support the Grecian Festival, which we did with an excellent event and one of the most profitable festivals in the Cathedral's history netting proceeds of \$95,000.
- Lower the Cathedral deficit, which we attempted to do by scrutinizing all disbursements.
- Increase stewardship by 20%; we increased stewardship by 7%.
- Support our ministries, which we did by gaining your approval to hire a full-time second priest and by launching new ministries that better meet the interests of parishioners of all ages such The Little Angels and the new dance group, which Dino Charalambides spearheads.

### *Long-term Goals*

Establish a Building Committee for the new family center, which we accomplished with the impressive donation by Charles Kotseas. Now, executing on this is a short-term goal.

- Fully fund the operating budget from stewardship within five years.
- Increase the Endowment Fund to \$5 million.

As you can see, we have an aggressive schedule for 2005. As co-chairs of the House Committee, Luckie Raptis and Sideris Angelou also greatly improved our facilities this year by tackling punch list items one at a time, such as cleaning the kitchen and Nursery School. In addition, we have new curtains on the way for the Cotsidas Auditorium stage area.

However, we have fallen short on some goals. The Computer Lab is on hold, for example; it is a wish list item, and we need to identify the best location for it.

In terms of stewardship, here are the facts: In 2003, we estimated a budget of \$240,000 for stewardship revenue; we came in at \$214,000. In 2004, we estimated \$240,000 again, and we are doing better; coming in at \$230,000. Today, we have 1,357 individual stewards and the average contribution per steward is \$157.

At this point, William reviewed all Cathedral expenses individually based on the budget numbers.

Our operating expenses are \$599,000, including the second priest; our receipts are \$500,000, which puts us at a deficit of \$99,000. This deficit number does not include additional likely expenses such as repainting the dome and replacing our 50-year old furnace. The facts forced us to try to cut costs. It is easy to say the Cathedral has enough money. However, at our current pace, there will soon come a day when we will not be able to support our office staff or other much needed services. It is up to us, the faithful, to reach out to our members and to new members.

We need to perpetuate the truth and focus on the facts about the monies in the operating budget – not the hype about the monies in reserves. We need to pool all resources together to achieve milestones such as assisting Holy Trinity as a community and living up to the excellence with which the rest of the country views us.

### *Goals for 2005*

- Raise the level of stewardship understanding.
- Establish uniform procedures and policies for doing business with the Cathedral.
- Identify new sources of revenue and charities for annual giving to be presented at the next General Assembly.

William thanked all for their attention, as it is not easy giving a report in difficult times.

### **Stewardship Report: Dimitri Vasiliadis**

Dimitri's comments were brief but poignant. He said our expectations are not too high. The money we give is for our place of worship; it is where we bring our families. The church is presenting us with a place where we can raise our children together. We should evaluate where we give. It is easy to shop and go on trips. Let's not wait to give until we see what we get in return, rather, let's give from our hearts.

### **Building Committee Report (including introduction of selected architect for master plan): Dimitri Vasiliadis**

Dimitri Vasiliadis presented the progress of the Building Committee. He mentioned we selected an architect, launched a fundraising campaign, created a Building Fund account, and began reviewing sample graphics for communication purposes.

He said since June, the Committee met with four design firms and walked through local facilities such as the Jewish Community Center (JCC) and Becker College Student Center to gather ideas on the building design, functions, and funding possibilities. With William Kiritsy's help, we crafted a Request for Proposal (RFP), which we sent to the four design firms. Three of the four design firms responded to it with proposals. From there, we checked customer references from the three respondents. All references were generally positive. Then, we selected a design firm based on several key evaluation criteria: customer references, chemistry and quality of the design team, price, and ability to adhere to an aggressive schedule. The firm that best met our criteria across these areas was Berry Rio, who was awarded the initial phase of the project – creating the master plan.

At a future General Assembly, they will be introduced and will ask everyone for their input. Though we sent an initial questionnaire to parishioners to solicit ideas, we did not receive many responses. Nevertheless, we plan to have many more opportunities to have you get involved. We want to hear your opinions. We plan to call everyone and will do it twice if we need to. If we still do not have enough responses, we will do this outreach over again. In turn, we hope everyone will give generously.

Outside of the General Assembly, the architects will also meet with subcommittees and ministries in more focused sessions and will conduct these sessions multiple times as well if needed. Once the

necessary information is gathered from all parties, the architects will then present to the Building Committee three proposals. From there, we will choose the most fitting to present to you at the next General Assembly.

Architects need to be paid. Originally, we asked you to appropriate \$30,000 to hire an architect. And, as you know, when we selected a firm, price was a factor. All proposals came in higher than \$30,000. Berry Rio, however, was aggressive, prompt, professional, thorough, and confident they could perform with the Cathedral's best interest top of mind. They originally submitted a budget of \$45,000, however, because of their interest in working on this project, they agreed to a budget of \$37,500. We feel confident with this team and budget, we will have a good master plan with color renderings for you to look at, admire, and most important - donate. The Building Fund has a total of \$66,660.51 in its coffer, with \$15,000 donated by Charles Kotseas, \$15,000 by Paul Kosteas, \$1,815 by the family of Irene Pialtos in her memory, and many other donations and fundraising proceeds.

Q&A

Q: Chris Lekas - Will this auditorium be part of the renovation/new building project?

A: Only the Cathedral proper will remain untouched. The architects will present options for these facilities as part of the master plan.

Q: Angela Raptis - Can you tell us about the architects?

A: They are based in Virginia, but have ties to the Cathedral. Our decision, however, was based solely on their ability to execute.

Q: Aris Felis - When will we have a blueprint?

A: We should have a rough plan approximately 60 days from the middle of January.

Q: Arthur Tsongalis - What will be the format for the General Assembly proceedings with the firm?

A: We will set an agenda for the "town hall" and will work hard to ensure an orderly meeting, where everyone has an opportunity to speak.

Dimitri Vasiliadis also spoke briefly in Greek summarizing the discussion and saying it is much easier to spend his own money than the Cathedral's money.

#### **Treasurer's Report (including review and approval of 2005 budget): George Maniatis**

George Maniatis thanked all for attending. Thanked Meg Tsambouniery for her help preparing the budget and thanked Alexandra Economou for her assistance as well.

We reviewed the proposed 2005 operational receipts. Dimitri Moschos suggested we should consider a suggested pledge and consider instituting a \$3% raise for the staff to be funded by the increase in stewardship.

George Maniatis noted we have a suggested pledge, which is \$300 for seniors and \$470 for families.

Discussion ensued and Aris Felis suggested we have a minimum pledge. Christina Andrianopoulos suggested we discuss this under new business. Arthur Tsongalis motioned to have a final, suggested minimum pledge presented at the next GA. Steve Zoulas seconded the motion. George Maniatis suggested an amount be proposed. Arthur Tsongalis accepted the amended motion, but suggested the Stewardship Committee and Parish Council decide on the specifics, such as the amount and consequences if a parishioner does not meet the minimum pledge. The motion passed.

George Maniatis mentioned a detailed report of 2004 Grecian Festival actuals will be made available the next day in the Cathedral office and will also be mailed to parishioners with the 2004 budget report so everyone can see the figures, especially those parishioners who worked the booths so they can determine how their station contributed to the net proceeds of the event.

In terms of disbursements, George Maniatis thanked Chris Fourkas for snow plowing, which saved the Cathedral \$10,000.

George Maniatis motioned to use the Grecian Festival account to offset the deficit. Arthur Tsongalis seconded the motion.

Dimitri Moschos made a motion to increase the wage line item for full-time Cathedral employees by 3% to \$167,000, with the additional monies coming from the Grecian Festival account. Christina Andrianopoulos seconded the motion.

Dimitri Vasiliadis said we presented a budget without an increase to this line item not because we wanted to do it that way. He said the Parish Council's thought is that all of our employees are worth a lot more than we compensate them – from Fr. Dean to the Greek School teachers to the office staff. But, we faced a tough decision this year and after countless hours of debate, took a tough position because we needed to present to you a balanced budget.

A parishioner amended Dimitri Moschos' motion to include all employees, not just full-time employees. Dimitri Moschos accepted. George Fotiadis emphasized the General Assembly is increasing the wages line item by \$6500, however, the Parish Council will disburse these funds as they see appropriate. The total amount in the Wages line item should be \$228,500.

William Kiritsy echoed Dimitri Vasiliadis' earlier comments and said we wanted to reduce the deficit in preparation for the hiring of the second priest. We contemplated, at length, a small increase of 2-3%. However, given we would have had such an excessive deficit, we could not, in fairness and due diligence, present that budget to you. We are now taking out of reserves to pay for this increase. If we increased our revenue, we would not need to worry about funding staff raises from reserves.

With the added \$6,500 to wages, we need \$51,000 from the Grecian Festival account to balance the budget. Parishioners voted on this and the motion passed. Parishioners then voted to approve the 2005 budget, which also passed.

Mike Dionis reiterated the Parish Council elects to award all, some or no wage increase. The GA has merely allocated money for wage increases. If the Parish Council votes not to increase wages, it does not have to. The General Assembly is not approving a 3% increase; rather, the GA is approving added funding for the Wages line item from Grecian Festival account.

#### **New Business Stated Motions:**

##### *Motion A*

Motion by the House Committee to appropriate a total of \$30,000 from the Grecian Festival (\$10,000) and the Capital Improvement (\$20,000) accounts for the painting of the Cathedral Sanctuary Domes.

As co-chair of the House Committee, Luckie Raptis said it has been 10 years since the domes have been painted. We estimate the cost to be around \$23,000, which should prevent further disrepair.

William Kiritsy amended the motion, saying any remaining funds will be put back into Capital Improvement account. Arthur Tsongalis seconded the amended motion, which passed.

George Fotiadis motioned to appropriate up to \$30K from the Grecian Festival account to be used first and then use the Capital Improvement account for any balance. Charlie Fotos seconded the amended motion and it passed.

##### *Amended Motion A now reads:*

Motion by the House Committee to appropriate \$30,000 for the painting of the Cathedral Sanctuary Domes. Up to \$30,000 in funds will first come from the Grecian Festival account. Any additional required funds will come from the Capital Improvement account. All remaining funds will be placed back in the Capital Improvement account.

##### *Motion B*

Motion by the Building Committee to appropriate \$20,000 from the Family Center Fund for additional consulting fees and general printing, postage, and fundraising expenses to be incurred by the Committee.

George Maniatis said we have \$30,000 because of the donations of Charlie and Paul Kotseas. We are now looking to spend the money and do what was promised.

George Fotiades said he discussed this motion prior to the meeting and concluded this General Assembly approved the new building/alterations to the existing facilities previously and as a General Assembly, we also agreed to establish a fund and appropriate monies to hire an architect. All these steps have already been approved. Now, the money we need for the architect is slightly more. We have it because it was donated. Therefore, there is no need for the General Assembly to approve the appropriation of this \$20,000.

Dimitri Vasiliadis said we appropriated \$30,000; the cost for the architect is \$37,500 and the money is in the account.

George Fotiades moved to table the motion, which was seconded by William Kiritsy. This motion was tabled and should be removed from the General Assembly agenda going forward as it does not require any additional action.

*Motion C*

Motion by the Parish Council to appropriate \$11,000 from the Grecian Festival account for the payment of heating and plumbing work performed by a heating vendor in September 2003.

William Kiritsy said before September 2003, we had a leak coming from one of the heaters under the Cathedral. At that time, the Parish Council President opted to have the rest of heaters replaced along with the faulty one. However, the Cathedral office never received a detailed bill from the vendor until two months ago. The 2004 Parish Council refused to pay this bill until we saw what service was specifically performed, which the vendor never provided until recently. Now that we have this detail, we need to pay for the service rendered. The motion passed.

*Motion D*

Motion by the Parish Council to appropriate and allocate \$45,000 from the Grecian Festival account for the compensation of the second full-time priest or deacon for 2005.

George Maniatis mentioned the \$45,000 for the second priest would include the \$15,000 that would have been used to compensate Fr. Clapsis in 2005. Arthur Tsongalis asked: does the \$45,000 include health and pension benefits? George Maniatis answered no - with those benefits the bottom line cost to the Cathedral is \$60,000.

George Fotiades asked for clarification. George Maniatis answered that we did not budget for Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis in 2005, but the 15,000 from his salary, plus the \$45,000 would need to cover everything.

Mike Dionis asked: how much is left in the Grecian Festival account and how would the new priest be paid after 2005? George Maniatis answered with the figure and said funding the ongoing salary would need to be discussed at the May 2005 General Assembly.

Tony Anastation asked: are we compensating the new deacon? George Maniatis said the Cathedral is providing a stipend to him for each visit to cover his travel expenses and noted the stipend is included in 2005 budget.

Arthur Tsongalis asked: should we amend the motion and state the funding needed for the second, full-time priest is \$60K? George Maniatis motioned to accept an amended motion, but one that states we need an additional \$45,000, since \$15,000 is in reserves. Arthur Tsongalis accepted the amendment and the motion passed.

*Motion D now reads:*

Motion by the Parish Council to appropriate and allocate an additional \$45,000 from the Grecian Festival account for the compensation of the second full-time priest or deacon for 2005.

**New Business: William Kiritsy**

George Fotiades said the budget does not include adequate detail; we need additional data; namely, we need the numbers for the prior year, the actual year, and the proposed new budget year.

George Fotiades then motioned that all subsequent budgets proposed to the General Assembly include this information. Al Matulaitis seconded the motion and amended it such that this history also be mailed with the GA agenda. The motion passed.

Mike Dionis mentioned he is impressed with the new deacon, and hopes we can persuade him to become our second priest once he is ordained.

**Old Business: William Kiritsy**

No old business.

**Adjournment and Closing Prayer: Fr. Dean Paleologos**

Fr. Dean led attendees through the closing prayer. Aris Felis motioned to adjourn. Steve Zoulas seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:08 pm.

Respectfully,  
Anastasia Efstratios  
2004 Parish Council Secretary