



SAINT VASILIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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St. Vasilios General Assembly Minutes of Meeting August 4, 2009 (continuation of June 15, 2009 meeting)

I. Call to Order:

Mr. Venios called the General Assembly to order at 7:20 p.m.

II. Opening Prayer:

Fr. Chris led the General Assembly with a prayer.

III. Selection of Moderator of General Assembly:

A motion to elect Victor Fanikos the General Assembly Moderator was made by Angelo Scangas and seconded by Jason Panos. A motion to close nominations was made by Dr. Marinakis and seconded by Jason Panos. The motion to close was approved by unanimous consent. The motion to elect Victor Fanikos as Moderator was approved by unanimous consent.

Mr. Fanikos outlined the following rules and procedures for the meeting, as follows:

- That we all use decorum, be courteous and respectful
- All questions and comments must be made at the microphone after being recognized by the Moderator

IV. Old Business

Spero Venios explained that the purpose of this General Assembly is to discuss and vote on the cost saving and revenue enhancement measures as proposed at the June 15, 2009 General Assembly. The proposals are as follows:

- Charge tuition for Greek School
- Summer furlough for part-time secretary
- Custodian to work part-time during the summer
- Petition the Metropolis to reassign the assistant priest

Prior to voting on the proposals, Mr. Venios discussed the stewardship statistics that were included in the handouts. Mr. Venios reported the following statistics as of July 31, 2009:

Total pledges	\$320,567
Total collected	\$269,681
Total outstanding	\$50,886

Average pledge \$449
 Most frequent pledge \$500

Remaining Stewards:
 Families 541
 Retired 259

Number of pledges by range:

\$0-\$100 97
 \$101 - \$299 105
 \$300 - \$499 237
 \$500 - \$749 203
 \$750 - \$999 17
 \$1,000 - \$1,499 38
 \$1,500 + 17

Mr. Venios clarified that the total collected was actually \$288,000 through July 31, 2009. Regarding the expense cutting proposals, Mr. Venios noted that we will only realize partial cost savings in 2009 given that summer is almost over and any clergy re-assignment would not be immediate. Mr. Venios noted that he has received suggestions to use Supply Priests for the second liturgy in lieu of a full-time assistant Priest, but Mr. Venios commented that there is a shortage of priests and there is no guarantee that Supply Priests will be available.

Clay Anastopoulos asked if retirees are considered stewards. Mr. Venios answered yes and made the distinction between a) possible pledging stewards and b) stewards in good standing who may be considered exempt but who still need to be counted as stewards and as those whom the church services. Fr. Panteli further explained some of the services we provide to retirees.

Dean Kostas wanted to make a motion that we use the term “exempted” instead of “gratis” when referring to retirees. The moderator informed Dr. Kostas that no new motions can be made at this meeting of the General Assembly.

Costa Partaledis then discussed the July 2009 Statement of Income and Expenses, which was included in the handouts, noting the following for stewardship monies received and net income:

	July '09	July '08	YTD 2009	YTD 2008
Stewardship	\$32,960	\$31,015	\$288,352	\$296,993
Net Excess (Deficit)	\$(9,548)	\$(19,460)	\$(418)	\$9,970

Mr. Partaledis further noted that stewardship for June and July 2009 was \$70,460 compared to \$54,010 for June and July 2008, which shows a favorable trend. Mr.

Partaledis noted that expenses have remained fairly consistent and approximate the budget.

Sophia Nanis asked what is the estimated full year revenue and expenses for 2009. Nick Collins replied that total income is forecast at \$555,000 of which \$400,000 is estimated for stewardship, and expenses are forecasted to be \$675,000, thus creating the \$120,000 shortfall which was discussed at the June assembly. Mr. Collins explained that the shortfall would be partially reduced by functions income, savings in printing costs, and Greek School tuition if such proposal is approved.

James Demotses observed that in certain months in 2009, there were losses in the Statement of Income and Expenses. He asked did you lose money in 3 out of 7 months during 2009 to date. Mr. Venios answered yes. Fr. Chris suggested that the question asked should have been did “we” lose money, not did “you” lose money. Mr. Demotses inquired about the increase in utilities Feb-April. Mr. Partaledis noted it was due to increased heating costs.

Steve Kalivas observed that while we have made transfers from savings in the past, the dollar amount of transfers has increased.

Dr. Kostas asked about the results of the stewardship telethon, and whether we will have another telethon. Kirsten Nikola replied that she is compiling the telethon results. Mr. Venios indicated that while we will have another telethon, it’s very important that all parishioners be involved in the process by making calls and talking to fellow parishioners.

Paul Foukas read a letter stressing the need for fiscal responsibility and noted the importance to set aside funds for repairs and maintenance.

Paul Makredes expressed concern over the projected deficit, suggesting the Parish Council’s projections were too optimistic. Mr. Makredes thought the shortfall would be \$150,000 to \$180,000. Mr. Collins suggested that the \$120K projected shortfall was realistic and that it will be reduced to \$40,000-50,000 through functions income, printing savings and Greek School tuition. Mr. Collins further noted that recent trends in stewardship suggest the shortfall will be reduced even further with the hope that we will not need to use any of our \$65,000 in savings.

Kay Nicolakis expressed concern over church attendance and have addressed the apparent drop in attendance.

Sophia Nanis suggested that the Parish Council prepare a 2-3 year forecast and perform both short- and long-term planning.

James Metropolis asked about the \$500 Ministry Expense in March 2008. Mr. Venios explained that it was for a Supply Priest during the weekend of the winter ski trip. Mr. Metropolis asked about the \$821 expenses for Youth Groups in 2009 to

date. Mr. Venios noted that it is embarrassing that we spend that little on our youth programs.

Rita Constantinou made a motion to end the questions and move to voting on the proposals. The motion was seconded by Steve Kalivas and was passed by majority show of hands.

Proposal #1 – Charge Tuition for Greek School

Mr. Venios explained that the proposal is to charge \$300 annual tuition for grades 1-6 and \$100 for the introductory class, with a \$500 per family tuition cap. Mr. Venios read the proposal in both English and Greek.

Prior to the vote, there was discussion.

Dr. Kostas asked if the Parish Council considered that Greek School enrollment will drop as a result of the decision to charge tuition. Mr. Venios explained that in the 2007-08 school year, there were about 120 students, and the forecast for 2009-10 was 85 students.

Bill Stephanides asked what percent of parents of Greek School students have made a stewardship pledge and is there a risk that the parents may pledge less because they must pay tuition. Mr. Venios agreed that it is a possibility. He further noted that financial hardship cases will be handled by the clergy and that no student will be denied Greek School for financial hardship reasons.

Clay Anastopoulos wondered if we are forcing parents to remove their children from Greek School.

Chris Venios observed that \$300 is not very much for the value derived from Greek School, and that the cost is only about \$4 per lesson.

Mary Emeromistis expressed sadness and frustration that we were considering charging for Greek School because she has taught for 60 years and St. Vasilios always had the ability to fund the Greek School.

Bill Stephanides commented that when the 2009 budget was voted on, we should have considered salary cuts instead of raises. Spero Venios clarified that not everyone received raises. The only raises were for clergy in accordance with the 2009 Archdiocese Clergy Compensation Plan.

Steve Kalivas asked if both parish priests received raises in 2009. Mr. Venios answered yes.

Jason Panos noted that he is a member of the Audit Committee, which recommended charging tuition for Greek School.

Dr. Kostas made a motion, seconded by Rhea Lesage, that the vote for the four proposals be conducted under secret ballot. The motion was defeated by a vote of 61 to 55. Thus, the proposals will be voted on by show of hands.

Proposal #1 (Greek School Tuition) was put to a vote and Nick Collins, Secretary, counted the votes. All members exercising their vote stood and displayed their “member in good standing” form. The proposal passed by a vote of 67 to 42.

Proposal #2 – Summer Furlough for Part-Time Secretary

Mr. Venios read the proposal in both English and Greek. Prior to the vote, there was discussion.

Helen Terzakis asked if there will still be a weekly bulletin. Fr. Chris and Mr. Venios both indicated there would not.

Helen Papadopoulos asked what the role of the part-time secretary is. Mr. Venios explained that the job includes preparing the weekly bulletin, translating certain correspondence into Greek, and other office duties. Mr. Venios noted that this role has gone from 20 hours per week to 10 hours per week over the last two years.

Sophia Nanis asked if anyone else on staff will assume the responsibilities. Fr. Chris answered no.

Clay Anastopoulos made a motion to postpone the vote on proposals 2, 3 and 4. The motion was not seconded.

Dr. Kostas made a motion, seconded by Chris Venios, to end discussion and vote on Proposal #2. The motion to vote was approved by unanimous consent.

Proposal #2 (Summer Furlough for Part-Time Secretary) was put to a vote and the Secretary counted the votes. All members exercising their vote stood and displayed their “member in good standing” form. Proposal #2 was defeated by a clear majority.

Proposal #3 - Custodian to Work Part-Time During the Summer

Mr. Venios read the proposal in both English and Greek.

Proposal #3 was put to a vote and Secretary counted the votes. All members exercising their vote stood and displayed their “member in good standing” form. Proposal #3 was defeated by a clear majority.

Proposal #4 – Petition the Metropolis of Boston to Reassign the Assistant Priest, thus Eliminating the Position.

Prior to the vote, there was discussion surrounding whether Proposal #4 was to reassign Fr. Panteli or to effectively eliminate the position. It was the consensus of the assembly that the proposal was to eliminate the position. Mr. Venios read the proposal in both English and Greek.

Dr. Kostas asked whether it was possible for the assistant priest to take a reduction in pay. Mr. Venios indicated that this is not consistent with current Archdiocese salary guidelines, although it used to be.

Chris Venios noted that St. Vasilios has had an assistant priest, at least part-time, for the past 15 years, and the reassignment would result in a significant loss of services.

Bill Stephanides asked what Fr. Panteli's salary is. Mr. Venios answered that it is approximately \$80,000 with benefits. Mr. Stephanides asked how many years has Fr. Panteli been a priest. Mr. Venios answered three years, and explained the Clergy Compensation Guidelines indicate that a priest with up to five years of service should receive salary and housing allowance in the range of \$47,232 to \$63,690, factoring in the relative cost of living in the geographic location. Fr. Panteli's salary and housing allowance is approximately \$61,700.

Dr. Frank Papacostas commented that having a second priest is critical to St. Vasilios and part of what makes our church so vibrant, and that risking losing the second liturgy will result in overcrowding of the first liturgy.

Dr. Varinos commented that if we vote against the proposal, then we all have the responsibility to bring in the revenues to pay the expenses.

George Rockas observed that no one has asked how the reassignment of the assistant priest would affect Fr. Chris. Marietta Brooks commented that we cannot afford to lose our assistant priest.

Fr. Chris made a general plea that we all be committed Christians and be more committed to St. Vasilios.

Pam Katsiris asked if we can secure a part-time assistant priest. Mr. Venios indicated probably not but that he cannot speak for the Metropolis.

Molly Xerras asked if the Metropolis could refuse the reassignment request. Mr. Venios answered yes.

Jason Panos made a motion, seconded by Bill Katsulis, to end discussion and vote on Proposal #4. The motion to vote was approved by unanimous consent.

Proposal #4 (Petition the Metropolis of Boston to reassign the assistant priest, thus eliminating the position) was put to a vote and the Secretary counted the votes. All

members exercising their vote stood and displayed their “member in good standing” form. The proposal was defeated by a vote of 84 to 25.

V. Adjournment:

At 10:05 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Sophia Nanis and seconded by Helen Terzakis. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicholas Collins
Secretary

Speros C. Venios
President

Rev. Christopher P. Foustoukos
Proistamenos