

**MINUTES**  
**Archdiocesan Council Meeting, Aug., 13, 2016**  
**St. Andrews Orthodox Church, Baltimore MD**

The Annual Council meeting of the Archdiocese of Washington D.C. was held on August 13, 2016 at St. Andrew Orthodox Church in McLean, VA.

The meeting opened with the singing of "O Heavenly King" at 1:10 pm. In attendance were:

<b>PARISH</b>	<b>CLERGY</b>	<b>LAY</b>
<b>Archdiocese</b>	Metropolitan Tikhon	Lisa Mikhalevsky, Treasurer, Netropolitan Council
	Fr. John Vitko, Chancellor, Metropolitan Council	Popadija Katherine Vitko, Metropolitan Council
	Fr. Mark Koczak, Auditor, Mission Board Chair	Matthew Matyuf, Auditor
All Saints of N. America	Fr. Michael Koblosh	
Christ the Savior Holy Archangels	Fr. Robert Miclean	Noel Brockett Paula Eisengrein Gregory Honshul Susan Matyuf
Holy Trinity		Yuri Dzambasow Peter Mazikins Alexia Kolia
St. Andrew	Fr. Theodore Boback	Michael Thompson
St. Catherine	Fr. Dennis Buck	
St. Luke	Fr. John Vitko	
St. Mark	Fr. Gregory Safchuk Fr. Timothy Perry	
St. Matthew	Fr. Constantine White	Cooper Pappas Claire Nobles
St. Nicholas	Fr. George Kokhno Fr. Valery Shemchuk	Larry Harrison
Other		Michael Hydock - past Treasurer Alexander Norton - Seminary Candidate Walter Alesevich - ByLaws Committee

**Agenda:** The Agenda for the meeting is attached and was unanimously approved.

**Minutes of the 2015 Council Meeting:** were distributed in advance and were unanimously approved.

**Call for New Archdiocesan Officers:** Fr. John Vitko reported that both the Archdiocesan Secretary (Fr. John Parsells) and the Archdiocesan Treasurer (Lisa Mikhalevsky) have ‘stepped down’ due to personal commitments and that we are looking for nominees/volunteers to fill these important positions in the life of the Archdiocese.

**The Metropolitan’s Report:** Metropolitan Tikhon opened by thanking St. Andrew’s for hosting the Council meeting. He then asked for our prayers for Ascension Monastery in Clinton MI that just experienced a major fire.

*Archdiocesan Officers:* Fr. John Parsells has asked to step down as Secretary because of his other commitments. His Beatitude offered his personal thanks to Fr. John for his very effective service to the Archdiocese, including such significant contributions as the Archdiocesan website, the video for the All American Council, video-recording portions of the AAC. Fr. John has graciously offered to continue to help the Archdiocese in other capacities. Lisa Mikhalevsky is overwhelmed with personal situations and feels it would be more effective to select another Treasurer. The Metropolitan thanked her for all her work this past year and offered his condolences and prayers on the falling asleep of her mother. The Metropolitan also thanked Fr. John Vitko in his continuing role as Chancellor.

*Memory Eternal:* His Beatitude offered condolences and prayers on the falling asleep of Protodeacon Basil Safchuk, Lisa’s mother (Helen), Prodeacon Blagoje’s mother (Lisalotte), Claire Nobles father (Edward), and the St. Andrew’s choir director (Paul) and for all the other parishioners and their relatives who had fallen asleep in the Lord this past year.

*Other:* His Beatitude briefly discussed the upcoming Continuing Education Retreat which will be focused on legal issues in the life of a parish and will be opened to lay leaders as well as clergy. He also called attention to the recently released statement by the Holy Synod on Sincerely Held Religious Beliefs that is intended to clarify our practices in a language that is also legally clear and precise. He also urged parish and individual participation in the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors (DDB) Fund.

*Missions:*

- All Saints of N. America is doing very well, growing and looking for ways to expand.

- Christ the Savior had its mortgage paid off by a generous donations and will be celebrating with a mortgage burning next week.
- Holy Archangels is making some good strides, particularly securing a new rental place in a prominent location but is still struggling financially. Fr. Robert Miclean provided some photos of the new facility (attached) and also commented on the highly successful Bible studies at both the Naval Academy (25-40 midshipmen attending) and at the Mission (averaging about 10 people, with a third to a half from outside the mission).
- OCA is holding a Mission School Aug. 22-26. We currently do not have a clergy delegate to this, but James Magruder will be our lay delegate.

ByLaws Revision Committee: His Beatitude thanked the Committee Co-chairs, Fr. Ted and Walter Alesevich, and the rest of the Committee.

Looking Forward:

- Hoping to continue informal periodic gatherings and phone calls with the clergy
- We may want to consider something analogous to the Clergy Peer Groups in the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania and use them as a starting point/model

OCA: (comments necessarily brief because of the packed Agenda for this meeting)

- Things in the OCA are quiet and good. The annual chancellors and treasurers meetings are good and collegial. The passage of the financial resolution has simplified many of the discussions.
- We view the recent Great and Holy Council positively, but 4-5 Orthodox Churches were not present (the 5<sup>th</sup> being the OCA). We continue to advocate for a truly local Orthodox Church in North America. We will be present at the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of America.

**Agenda for Continuing Education Retreat** (attached) – Fr. John Vitko: the retreat will be held from 9am – 3:30pm Friday, Sep. 16 at St. Luke Orthodox Church in McLean. It will focus on legal issues in the life of a parish, e.g. the law and non-profits, insurance, immigration, employee benefits and religious liberty. This retreat is based on a highly successful related session in the Diocese of E. Pennsylvania and is expected to be the most efficient way to get all this information. Because of this it will be also open to lay parish leaders who have responsibilities or interests in these areas.

**Agenda for the Archdiocesan Assembly** (attached) – Fr. John Vitko: the agenda is similar to past years. Some key items include the proposed budget and assessments for 2017; proposed revisions to the ByLaws; and a presentation from the newly formed Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF). The Treasurer has had complications with new software, so the Auditors report will be deferred to a later date. It was also suggested and agreed to add a FOCA presentation by Walter Alesevich to the agenda.

**Nominations for Archdiocesan Assembly Elections:**

- There were two nominations for the Clergy Delegate to the Metropolitan Council:

- Claire Nobles nominated Fr. Valery Shemchuk and Fr. Valery accepted;
- Fr. Dennis Buck nominated Dn. Timothy Skuby, who was not present. (the newly revised Statute of the OCA allows deacons to be Clergy Delegates. However to be elected by the Archdiocese, the deacon must be an official Assembly delegate – which only occurs if he is either assigned or an Archdiocesan Officer).
- Auditor: there were no nominations for Auditor

**Update on the 2016 and 2017 Budget** – Lisa Mikhalevsky: this has been a challenging year for her personally and for the office: (1) because of a miscommunications, M&T Bank closed our account and it was necessary to open a new account at another bank; (2) lack of familiarity with the new Quickbooks Pro (which is significantly different than the Quickbooks she worked with 7-8 years ago); and (3) personal issues, including the care and falling asleep of her mother. Because of continuing problems with Quickbooks, she was not able to provide any written budget reports at the meeting, but gave her report orally

2016: bills are paid and we are doing well compared with last year.

2017: the major changes in 2017 are that (1) the mission stipend to Holy Archangels Mission will revert back to \$7,000 compared with \$11,500 this year; and (2) the OCA assessment will decrease from 50% of our budget in 2016 to 48% in 2017. At this time Lisa is projecting a total budget (archdiocesan operations plus OCA assessments) of \$114K in 2017 compared with \$124K in 2016, which should result in a lower assessment rate for our individual parishes.

Several suggestions were made from the floor, including hiring an accountant for a day from a temp agency; preparing a manual report to distribute; and seeking help from Michael Hydock.

**Financial Status of Holy Archangels** – Fr. John Vitko: because of its financial need Holy Archangels was given special assistance in 2016: its normal mission stipend of \$7,000 was increased to \$11,500 for 2016 only; and it received a DDB grant for \$7,800 in 2016. While having made financial progress, Holy Archangels is still struggling and appealed to His Beatitude for an increased mission stipend in 2017. His Beatitude has referred this appeal over to the Mission Board – and it is up to that Board to recommend, or not recommend, an increased stipend in 2017 and then for the Assembly to deliberate and decide on that.

**Proposed Revisions to the Archdiocesan ByLaws** – Walter Alesevich and Fr. Ted Boback: all Council members had been provided with read ahead materials, including: the Report of the ByLaws Revision Committee; a Summary of Proposed Changes; and a Motion and the Revised ByLaws. Walter focused on the discussion of the one major outstanding issue: the current Archdiocesan ByLaws say that the Auditors will be members of the Archdiocesan Council – but the revised OCA Statute precludes that. After some discussion, the Council agreed to modify the proposed revisions to be

consistent with the Statute, i.e. the Auditors will no longer be part of the Archdiocesan Council.

**Motion** (Fr. Theodore Boback/Michael Thompson): Moved that the Archdiocesan Council recommend approval of the ByLaws revision to the Archdiocesan Assembly, provided that the revision is modified as follows:

- i. The Auditing Committee consists of three members; and
- ii. The Auditing Committee members are not members of the Archdiocesan Council

The motion passed unanimously, and the revisions were modified as directed and emailed out to potential Assembly delegates (rectors and lay leaders) on the evening of Aug. 13, so as to be in full compliance with the 30 day notification required by the ByLaws.

**Participation in OCA and Archdiocesan Events** – Fr. John Vitko: the Archdiocese did not receive any nominees for young adults to participate in the Syndesmos Conference nor for high school seniors to participate in IOCC ServXtreme, or other events. Participation in the life of the Archdiocese is important and Fr. John was looking to better understand why this did not occur and were there things we could do better. Comments and suggestions from the floor included:

- Didn't have any high school seniors;
- Need more advanced notice, a couple of months is not enough. Most people have their summers planned out way in advance.
- Advertise on Archdiocese website – might reach people we wouldn't otherwise reach.

**Update on the Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors Fund** – Yuri Dzambasow: Yuri apologized for not doing the job he had hoped this past year and is excited about moving into 2017. In 2016, the DDB supported one major program: \$7800 to Holy Archangels Mission. To date, the DDB has only received one donation in 2016 and can fulfill its support to Holy Archangels but only barely. We need to re-energize the DDB:

- Push for a parish drive before year-end (there is DDB material on the website – [wdcoca.org](http://wdcoca.org) – that can be used for this);
- Schedule 1 major fellowship event per year (e.g. festival, golf tournament, ...)

**Update on the Draft Mission Plan for the Archdiocese** – Fr. Mark Koczak: Fr. Mark presented the attached version 2 of a Draft Mission Plan and thanked Popadija Kitty for all her support. He said he expects to have version 4 or 5 for the Assembly. The draft plan addresses our strategy for planting missions, classifies the missions into different states of development, talks about the responsibility of mission clergy and their compensation, the role of the Mission Board in mentoring missions, and the level and conditions for Archdiocesan support for missions. There was an excellent discussion amongst the Council members and some of the suggestions included:

- Performing an impact assessment on what the siting of a new mission would do to existing parishes in the area;
- Demographic studies to assess the growth potential of new missions;

- A new section on Mission Health and Evaluation, including some type of formal reporting, annual evaluations by the Mission Board, addressing the difficult question of do we and, if so, how do we decide to no longer financially support a mission;
- A suggestion to place a time limit on how long the Archdiocese would support a mission – e.g. up to 10 years, based on annual assessments

**Compliance with Various OCA Policies – Fr. John Vitko**

- With the start of a new church school year, it will be necessary to ensure our annual compliance with *Policies, Standards and Procedures (PSPs) of the Orthodox Church of America on Sexual Misconduct*. Your formal compliance reports will be due in by the end of the calendar year. The Archdiocese will take care of all clergy background checks (priests, deacons, subdeacons and readers) – so if you have any new subdeacons or readers since last year, please let Fr. John Vitko know. Individual parishes are responsible for doing the background checks on their non-clergy youth workers.
- All priest and deacons are required to take 20 class hours of continuing education per year, including 5 ‘standardized hours’ provided through the OCA (the Continuing Education Retreat on Sep. 16 will fulfill the 5-hour requirement).
- Parishes are required to bring their individual parish bylaws into compliance with the newly revised *Statute of the Orthodox Church in America* by December, 2017.

The Archdiocesan Council meeting was closed at 2:20 with the singing of “It is truly meet...”.

Respectfully submitted,

Fr. John Vitko,  
Chancellor and Acting Secretary