



**Minutes
of the Joint Meeting of the Lesser Synod
and the 2011 Fall Session of
the Metropolitan Council**

**Wednesday, September 28 – Thursday, September 29, 2011
East Norwich Inn, East Norwich, NY**

These draft minutes are subject to approval at a subsequent meeting of the Metropolitan Council.

PARTICIPANTS

LESSER SYNOD

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah
His Grace, Bishop Nikon
His Grace, Bishop Tikhon

His Grace, Bishop Benjamin
His Grace, Bishop Melchisedek
(*Interim Chancellor*)

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Church Officers

Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, *Secretary*

Melanie Ringa, *Treasurer*

Members elected by the All-American Council

Archpriest Theodore Boback
Priest David Garretson
Archpriest Theodore Bobosh

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick
Dr. Paul Meyendorff

Diocesan Representatives

Diocese of Alaska

Archpriest Michael Oleksa

Anna Cheryl Andrew

Albanian Archdiocese

Archpriest Joseph Gallick

William Peters

Bulgarian Diocese

Priest Matthew-Peter Butrie

Protodeacon Michael Myers

Archdiocese of Canada

Archimandrite Alexander (Pihach)

David Grier

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Archpriest David Mahaffey

David Yeosock

Diocese of the Midwest

Archpriest Alexander Kuchta

Diocese of New England

Priest Robert Dick

Deacon John Zarras

Diocese of New York New Jersey

Archpriest John Shimchick

Dr. Paul Witek

Diocese of the South

Priest Gleb McFatter

Judge Ray Lanier (9/28 only)

Diocese of Washington

Priest John Vitko

Diocese of the West

Archpriest David Lowell

Dr. Dmitri Solodow

Diocese of Western Pennsylvania

Gregory J. Nescott

Absent

Eleana Silk (elected by the All-American Council)

Sam D’Fantis (Diocese of the Midwest)

Rosalie Luster (Diocese of Washington)

Archpriest John Reeves (Diocese of Western Pennsylvania)

Guests *(for all sessions unless otherwise indicated)*

Archpriest Thomas Moore (alternate member elected by the All-American Council)

Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko (consultant)

Archpriest Alexander Garklavs (SMPAC)

Archpriest Matthew Tate (consultant – 9/28 only, until afternoon recess)

Maureen Ahearn (Pension Board report only)

Valerie Jones (external audit report only)

Alexis Liberovsky (recording secretary for this meeting)

John Sedor (Pension Board report only)

Robert Taylor (external audit report only)

Thaddeus Wojcik, Esq. (OCA General Counsel)

Wednesday, September 28

The meeting was opened with prayer led by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah at the East Norwich Inn at 9:15 AM.

A. Introduction

A.1. Roll Call

Fr. Eric Tosi conducted the roll call and introduced guests present for the meeting. He also announced that yesterday, Dr. Faith Skordinski had submitted a letter of her resignation from the Metropolitan Council, due to her increased job-related commitments. As the lay alternate, Dr. Paul Meyendorff will serve the remainder of Dr. Skordinski’s term.

A.2. Appointment of Co-chair:

Fr. Tosi announced that Metropolitan Jonah has asked Fr. David Mahaffey to co-chair the meeting

A.3. Approval of Recording Secretary

Fr. Tosi asked if there were any objections to the OCA Archivist, Alexis Liberovsky, serving as recording secretary for this meeting. There being no objections, Alexis Liberovsky was approved as recording secretary.

B. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Fr. Tosi presented the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Metropolitan Council on May 4-5, 2011 for approval.

B.1. MOTION GALLICK/BOBACK – To accept the previous minutes as presented. CARRIED.

A. Introduction

A.4. Agenda (attached)

Fr. Tosi presented the agenda for the meeting. It was requested that reports on Special Investigating Committee (SIC) follow-up and Metropolitan Council stewardship be added to the agenda. It was suggested that these reports could be incorporated into the agenda as items F.8 and F.9, respectively.

A.4.A. MOTION VITKO/OLEKSA – To accept the revised agenda with the addition of requested reports. CARRIED.

C. Opening Remarks: Metropolitan Jonah

Metropolitan Jonah spoke of the upcoming All-American Council as a great event in the life of our Church where we can come together as a community in Christ to build a vision for the future. He also spoke of the recent bitter church politics and infighting that have weakened the Church immeasurably. This must be put aside as we must learn to agree to disagree and tolerate one another's opinions in order to build up the Body of Christ. We must repent of anger, bitterness and judgment. Let us turn to Christ and do His will. He commended the Preconciliar Commission and the Strategic Plan Committee for their hard work in formulating proposals that will strengthen the OCA and its witness. He discussed the assessment funding proposals submitted for consideration at the All-American Council and broader issues of funding at all levels of the Church. He addressed the issue of a united autocephalous Orthodoxy as the ultimate canonical solution for the Church in North America, which will take a long time to achieve. He spoke of the role being played by the Episcopal Assembly in this process. He reflected on the accountability and responsibility that autocephaly entails for the OCA. He discussed the OCA's relationships with sister Churches and the last minute cancellation of his visit to the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia due to the repose of Archbishop Dmitri. He particularly mentioned the recent concelebration with Metropolitan Hilarion of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) that has sealed our reconciliation. He alluded to warm personal relations with the chief hierarchs in America of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Greek and Antiochian Archdioceses. He outlined the current problems with the OCA representative in Moscow. Finally, he commended the ongoing work of the SMPAC, as well as the Human Resources Committee of the Metropolitan Council in the search for a new chancellor.

A discussion of issues raised in the Metropolitan's report and related matters took place.

C.1. MOTION GARRETSON/WITEK – To receive the Metropolitan's report. CARRIED.

D. Officers' Reports

D.1. Chancellor – attached (report to the 16th All-American Council)

Bishop Melchisedek, Interim Chancellor, responded to questions concerning his written report. Fr. Tosi expressed gratitude to Bishop Melchisedek for his almost weekly travel from Pittsburgh to New York to fulfill his responsibilities as Interim Chancellor. Bishop Melchisedek stated that the Holy Synod is functioning according to its resolutions on operations and procedure that were adopted in May. He outlined how this has occurred in specific situations.

D.2. Secretary – attached (report to the 16th All-American Council)

In addition to his written report, Archpriest Eric Tosi, OCA Secretary, spoke of the readjustment of responsibilities among the chancery staff. He highlighted the launch of the new OCA website and its further upgrades that are still in process. He stated that the chancery strives to connect the Church together. He indicated the main facets of preparation for the All-American Council, which will be detailed later in this meeting. He announced that by decision of the Metropolitan, Monk James (Stevens), who has enrolled at St. Vladimir's Seminary, has been replaced as the Metropolitan's personal assistant by Reader Michael Zachariades. Father Tosi outlined the maintenance and improvements of the chancery building that are currently being undertaken. A discussion of several personnel issues took place. A consensus emerged that established procedure must be followed to include the Human Resources Committee in personnel matters. The Metropolitan stated that he would work with the Human Resources Committee to formalize job descriptions for his personal secretary and driver/personal assistant.

D.1-2.A. MOTION GALLICK/KUCHTA – To accept the reports of the Chancellor and the Secretary. CARRIED.

E. Sexual Misconduct Committee

E.1. MOTION SOLODOW/MYERS – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Protodeacon Peter Danilchick presented a report and led an extensive discussion on various issues pertaining to sexual misconduct including the ongoing work of the Sexual Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee [SMPAC].

E.2. MOTION GALLICK/VITKO – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

Following a recess for lunch at 12:03 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:00 PM.

F. Metropolitan Council Committees

F.1. Crisis Management (attached)

Dr. Dmitri Solodow, chairman of the Crisis Management Committee, outlined the history of the establishment of the Committee, its purposes and actions. He also presented a detailed analysis report from Subdeacon Bernard Wilson, Committee consultant. An extensive discussion ensued as to whether the report of the Committee including the appended analysis report by Bernie Wilson should be published among reports to the All-American Council.

F.1.A. MOTION DANILCHIK/BOBOSH – To include the appended analysis report by Bernie Wilson with the general Crisis Management report among published reports submitted to the All-American Council. CARRIED by a vote of 16 for, 7 against and 1 abstention.

L. 2012 Budget Presentation

Fr. Matthew Tate (Finance/Investment Committee Consultant) delivered an oral report on his visits with Melanie Ringa to various dioceses in order to meet with diocesan treasurers, to learn of their particular funding methods and to discuss various other financial issues. He reminded the council that such visits have been occurring for several years with the blessing of the Holy Synod and the approval of the Metropolitan Council. Since the spring of 2010, these visits are within the purview of a special subcommittee of the Finance Committee of the Metropolitan Council. He stated that these meetings were fruitful and suggested that they should continue. He then reviewed fair share funding proposals at previous All-American Councils and discussed various budgetary considerations in conjunction with funding proposals submitted for consideration at the 16th All-American Council. A lengthy discussion ensued. It was pointed out that unanimity among the Holy and Metropolitan Council on funding issues is essential going forward. A resolution proposed at this session was deferred to the later session on budget consideration.

L.1. MOTION SHIMCHICK/PIHACH – To endorse for the next two years an annual meeting of all diocesan treasurers and other senior diocesan officials with the OCA Treasurer in order to facilitate an ongoing discussion on funding. CARRIED.

Fr. Tate additionally suggested that an analysis report with recommendations be undertaken on the Church's declining membership. Various views were expressed on who should undertake this and methodology to be utilized.

Following a short recess at 3:00 PM, the session resumed at 3:25 PM.

F. Metropolitan Council Committees

F.2. Ethics

F.2.A. MOTION BOBACK/DICK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Fr. Ted Bobosh, Ethics Committee chairman, presented the Committee's confidential report concerning several ethics complaints and investigation reports that had been forwarded by the Committee to the Holy Synod for further action. .

F.2.B. MOTION MEYENDORFF/GARRETSON – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

F.2.C. MOTION SOLODOW/YEOSOCK – To accept the report of the Ethics Committee. CARRIED.

F.3. Charity – attached report to the 16th All-American Council

In the absence of Father John Reeves, Protodeacon Michael Myers presented the attached report of the Charity Committee and answered questions.

F.3.A. MOTION GALLICK/SOLODOW – To accept the report of the Charity Committee. CARRIED.

F.4. Council Development - attached report to the 16th All-American Council

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick, Council Development Committee chairman, presented the Committee's attached written report. Bishop Tikhon suggested that in the future an extended focused discussion of

national/diocesan church issues be undertaken together by the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council. The Council Development Committee report was accepted with thanks.

F.5. Human Resources

F.5.A. MOTION KUCHTA/BOBACK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Fr. David Garretson, Human Resources Committee chairman, presented the Committee's confidential report concerning the search for a new chancellor and other matters.

F.5.B. MOTION GALLICK/BUTRIE – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

F.6. Internal Governance

F.6.A. MOTION DANILCHICK/VITKO – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Dr. Dmitri Solodow reported on policies and procedures pertaining to the Church's internal governance. An extensive discussion ensued

F.6.B. MOTION GALLICK/BUTRIE – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

F.7. Strategic Plan - attached

Priest John Vitko, Strategic Plan Committee chairman, provided an update on the Committee's work in preparation for the 16th All-American Council and the structure of the Plan's presentation during the council. A PowerPoint presentation provided illustration for the report and the methodology of the Strategic Plan Committee's work. He noted that the first choice of working group for every council participant would be honored. He also indicated that parish development was by far the top choice of working groups. Fr. John additionally spoke of interactions with the Preconciliar Commission in the course of joint work to integrate deliberation of the Strategic Plan into the agenda for the All-American Council. He likewise provided an overview of the anticipated implementation of the Plan following the Council. Funding considerations in conjunction with the plan's implementation were discussed.

Following a recess for dinner at 5:13 PM, the evening session was called to order at 6:14 PM.

F.5. Human Resources (continued)

F.5.C. MOTION DICK/BUTRIE – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Fr. David Garretson, Human Resources Committee chairman, reported on additional issues in the Committee's work.

F.5.D. MOTION NEScott/KUCHTA – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

F.5.E. MOTION SOLODOW/DANILCHICK – To accept the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee and to forward the name of Archpriest John Jillions to the Holy Synod for consideration for appointment to the position of Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

G. Legal Issues

G.1. MOTION GALLICK/WITEK – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

In executive session, Gregory Nescott, Legal Committee chairman, Judge Ray Lanier and Thaddeus Wojcik presented the Committee's confidential report, which covered a variety of current and potential legal issues. A lengthy and in-depth discussion ensued.

G.2. MOTION MYERS/GALLICK – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

G.3. MOTION GARRETSON/SOLODOW – On the basis of matters heard in executive session, to direct the OCA General Counsel, Thaddeus Wojcik, to send appropriate letters to secure OCA work product and to defend the interests of the Orthodox Church in America regarding said work product. CARRIED.

G.4. MOTION GARRETSON/PIHACH – To move into executive session. CARRIED.

Discussion of legal matters continued in executive session.

G.5. MOTION GALLICK /MYERS – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

G.6. MOTION SOLODOW/BUTRIE – To adjourn the evening session. CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 8:38 PM.

Thursday, September 29

The morning session was called to order, following prayer, at 9:08 AM.

J. Finance Report - attached

Melanie Ringa introduced Robert Taylor and Valerie Jones of Lambrides, Lamos, Taylor LLP, the external auditors for the Orthodox Church in America. She provided some background on the work that is done with the external auditors, particularly Ms. Jones, our account manger. She commented on the attached preliminary reports for 2010, which were explained in greater detail by Mr. Taylor, who along with Melanie answered numerous questions from the Council. New government legislation concerning the handling of endowments was noted. It was stated that this was the first clean audit since 1998. The external audit firm expects to issue an unqualified opinion before the All-American Council.

J.1. MOTION TOSI/OLEKSA – To accept the external audit reports. CARRIED.

F. Metropolitan Council Committees (continued)

F.9. Metropolitan Council Stewardship – attached report to the 16th All-American Council

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick presented a draft overview report from the Metropolitan Council to the upcoming All-American Council, which aims to show the Metropolitan Council's stewardship of its responsibilities as the body that is charged to implement the decisions of the All-American Council. In lengthy and wide-ranging discussion, many revisions to the draft report were suggested. It was noted that the Metropolitan Council's credibility would be judged on the basis of this report. It was agreed that a final draft based on suggestions for revision would be further reviewed at this afternoon's session. Protodeacon Peter was thanked for his work on this report.

M. Pension Board Report

John Sedor, Pension Board Chairman, delivered the Board's report focused on efficient communication regarding the Pension Plan so that questions could be properly answered and alleviate problems. Maureen Ahearn, Pension Plan Administrator, was also present. Mr. Sedor answered several questions from the Metropolitan Council and was thanked for his report.

Following a short recess at 10:53 AM, the session resumed at 11:19 AM.

Dr. Dmitri Solodow initiated a brief discussion concerning a regrettable leak on the internet concerning the search for a new chancellor. Fr. David Garretson provided some background information on the search process.

F. Metropolitan Council Committees (continued)

F.8. Special Investigating Committee (SIC) implementation – attached report to the 16th All-American Council

Dr. Dmitri Solodow presented the attached report concerning implementation of the Special Investigating Committee's recommendations. An extensive discussion of various issues raised in the report took place, particularly concerning internet communication in general and the possibility of interactive communication on the OCA website or related church media.

F.8.A. MOTION GALLICK/DANILCHICK – To accept the SIC implementation report. CARRIED.

I. 16th All-American Council update

Fr. Eric Tosi updated the Metropolitan Council on various aspects of preparation for the upcoming All-American Council, which is proceeding smoothly and in a timely manner. Discussion took place and Fr. Eric answered numerous questions. He reported on registered delegate representation to date according to diocesan affiliation. It was particularly noted with satisfaction that the Diocese of Alaska will be represented in greater numbers than at any previous All-American Council. Fr. Eric was thanked for his informative report.

Following a recess for lunch at 12:21 PM, the afternoon session was called to order at 1:05 PM.

K. Finance/Investment Committee Report – attached

Melanie Ringa presented the current year's financial reports through June 2011 and answered questions from Council members.

L. 2012 Budget Presentation & Approval (continued)

Melanie Ringa presented proposals for the 2012 budget at various levels of per capita assessment. A long discussion took place on budget presentation at the upcoming All-American Council. It was suggested that budget planning for staffing for the Metropolitan's office with consideration of his dual role as Primate and diocesan bishop of Washington DC be developed in conjunction with job descriptions formulated by the Human Resources Committee in consultation with Metropolitan Jonah. Various other details of the budget and related matters were reviewed and discussed at length.

L.1. MOTION SOLODOW/VITKO – To approve the budget at the \$105 per capita assessment level as amended. CARRIED by a vote of 20 for, 3 against, no abstentions.

- L.2. MOTION VITKO/SOLODOW – That the Finance Committee prepare excursions around the budget at \$50, \$90 and \$125 per capita assessment levels. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

K. Finance/Investment Committee Report

Fr. Gleb McFatter, Chairman of the Finance Committee, provided an update on the Investments Subcommittee. Having begun to gather information for its work, the subcommittee is projected to meet after the All-American Council to begin formulation of the investments policy for the OCA, which will be presented for approval at the next meeting of the Metropolitan Council.

H. Internal Auditors Report – attached

In the absence of Deacon Martin Watt, chairman of the Audit Committee, Fr. Gleb McFatter presented the Committee's attached report, which indicated no irregularities in financial reporting. In discussion of the report, various views were expressed on the viability of our current "head tax" system of funding.

- H.1. MOTION GARRETSON/NESCOTT - To receive the report of the Audit Committee. CARRIED.**

F. Metropolitan Council Committees (continued)

F.9. Metropolitan Council Stewardship (continued)

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick presented a new draft, substantially revised per earlier discussion, of the overview report from the Metropolitan Council to the upcoming All-American Council.

- F.9.A. MOTION GRIER/OLEKSA – To accept the revised draft of the overview report of the Metropolitan Council to the 16th All-American Council. CARRIED.**

N. Other Business

Gregory Nescott introduced the following motion of gratitude.

- N.1. MOTION NESCOTT/MYERS – To express thanks to Dr. Faith Skordinski and Mark Stokoe for their tireless and principled service to the Orthodox Church in America during their years of service on the Metropolitan Council. CARRIED with 1 abstention.**

It was also noted that Rosalie Luster has moved to Canada and Dr. Paul Witek has moved to Eastern Pennsylvania and they will henceforth no longer be representing their current dioceses on the Metropolitan Council. Additionally, the terms of Frs. Boback and Bobosh, Protodeacon Danilchick, Deacon Zarras and Mr. Grier are expiring after this meeting, although some of them could be reelected. The Metropolitan Council expressed its gratitude to these outgoing members. Protodeacon Danilchick suggested that current and outgoing members of the Council provide mentoring to new incoming members.

Fr. John Vitko initiated a discussion to reconsider the decision concerning publication of the Crisis Management report and its appendix.

- N.2. MOTION NESCOTT/MYERS – To defer release of the Crisis Management report and its appendix until after the Holy Synod meeting next week and to revise it accordingly based on actions taken by the Holy Synod. If the Holy Synod takes no action on the matters in question, to release the report with its appendix as currently drafted. CARRIED with 2 votes against and 1 abstention.**

N.3. MOTION BOBACK/MEYENDORFF – To move into executive session, CARRIED.

In executive session, Thaddeus Wojcik, OCA General Counsel, provided additional updates on several legal matters.

N.4 MOTION NEScott/MCFATTER – To move out of executive session. CARRIED.

Fr. David Lowell initiated discussion on staffing of the Metropolitan's office.

N.5. MOTION DANILCHICK/OLEKSA – To authorize the Human Resources Committee to work with His Beatitude to assess his needs for support and services and to develop effective staffing organization to meet those needs and then to provide that information to the Finance Committee for appropriate budgetary consideration by the end of the calendar year 2011. CARRIED.

In closing remarks, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah expressed his thanks to the Metropolitan Council, especially its outgoing members, and all of the committees for their tremendous hard work. He stated that it is important to remember that we are all on the same team working towards the same goal – to serve Jesus Christ and His Church. Reiterating his gratitude, both from himself personally and on behalf of the entire Church, he encouraged outgoing members to continue their work for the Church in whatever capacity they may be called to do so.

N.6. MOTION GARRETSON/BOBOSH – To adjourn the meeting. CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 3:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Liberovsky,
Recording Secretary