

**Diocesan Council Meeting
December 16, 2010
San Francisco, CA**

Diocesan Council Members, Deans and Department Heads Present: His Grace Bishop BENJAMIN; Archpriest Ian MacKinnon, Chancellor; Mary Caetta, Treasurer; Archpriest David Lowell, Secretary; Archpriests and Priests: John Dresko, Anthony Karbo, Lawrence Margitich, John Pierce, Lawrence Russell, John Strickland, Christopher Swanson; <Maha Estephan, Dorothy Nowick, Sub-Deacon Paul Philipenko, Ivan Pouchine, Carol Shumaik.

Others Present: Priest Andrew Cuneo, Rick Ashley, John Della Monica, and Barry Migyanko.

I. The meeting was called to order with prayer at 10:30 am.

II. Previous Minutes: Three sets of minutes were reviewed: October 19th, October 21st and November 21st. It was motioned, seconded, passed (Nowick, Shumaik) to approve the minutes.

III. Report of Bishop Benjamin

Plans for the All-American Council in Seattle are shaping up nicely. The area surrounding the hotel provides many places to eat. By not providing food, we will save money.

The website for the Diocese is up, looks beautiful and is much easier to navigate. Please take pictures of what happens in your parish, send them in with a short paragraph or two. That's all it takes to keep the website current.

His Grace said that if all goes well, a new Bishop for Alaska will be consecrated in Sitka, the weekend following the All-American Council in November 2011.

His Grace is on the Board of Project Mexico and highly recommends this ministry. Project Mexico coffee will be for sale to help support the work with families and children.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Mary Caetta has updated the Diocesan website with useful information on reporting requirements for wages (W-2, 1099, etc.).

Kitty Vitko has made a generous donation of \$50,000 to the Diocesan Mission Fund in honor of her recently reposed father.

V. Diocesan Loan Program

John Della Monica and Rick Ashley presented an overview of progress made towards establishing the Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF).

The OCCIF will be an independent entity from the Diocese, capable of assuming liability, hiring independent auditors to make loan decisions. The OCCIF Board will not make the loan decisions but will oversee the standards and policies of OCCIF. The Fund will be able to receive free-will donations. It will also receive interest bearing deposits.

The final documents allowing OCCIF to open its doors will be presented at the next Diocesan Council meeting. Completion of legal documents and start up expenses are projected to cost \$15,000.

It was M/S/P (Tate, Dresko) to grant \$15,000 out of sales of the Point Reyes property to OCCIF to help cover legal and start up expenses, with the opportunity for repayment.

VI. Updates and Other Business

A. Parish and Clergy Screening and Background Checks

Barry Migyanko reported that we have 100% compliance to date. His Grace stated that anyone put forward for tonsuring as a Reader or to serve as Sub-Deacons need to have background checks completed first.

B. 16th All-American Council

Archpriest John Pierce announced that the website for the AAC is ready to go online. The AAC is in Seattle and begins on October 31, 2011.

Because of budget constraints within the Church, the budget for the 2011 AAC remains the same as budgeted for 2008. This means cutting some expenses, like continental breakfasts and the like.

Our Diocesan Assembly will meet in a very short meeting in conjunction with the AAC.

Fr. Christopher Swanson will oversee the building of the iconostasis for the All American Council; the iconostasis will then be used at St. Elizabeth Mission in Poulsbo, Washington. The cost of this iconostasis will come from money retained from the closing of the Spokane mission.

It was M/S/P (Pierce, Tate) to approve \$6,000 from the closing of the Spokane mission to build the iconostasis for the 16th AAC and then to be used for the St. Elizabeth Mission.

C. Budget Planning for Next Year

The budget committee states that all items and requests for next year's budget must be submitted by July 31, 2011.

D. Raphael House of San Francisco

Fr. John Dresko and Barry Migyanko, both members of the Board of Directors of Raphael House of San Francisco, reported that on December 13th the Raphael House Board voted to disband the Orthodox Live-In Community at Raphael House. Fr. John and Barry said they had no advance notice that a proposal of this magnitude would be presented at the meeting. Bishop Benjamin expressed surprise at the lack of communication from the leadership of Raphael House.

The Diocesan Council Secretary will write a letter expressing our dismay at the way this has been handled, and our concern for the staff and volunteers who currently live and work at Raphael House.

There are many areas of concern to be dealt with, including the presence of the Orthodox Chapel at Raphael House and the many Orthodox books and historical items. We will take this up in greater depth at the March 29th Diocesan Council meeting.

E. The next Diocesan Council meeting will be March 29th, 10:30 am in San Francisco.

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 2:55 pm.