

# Metropolitan Council Report

Archdiocesan Assembly 2018 – November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018 – Belle Vernon, PA

Clergy Representative – Priest Nikolai Breckenridge, Lay Representative – Dr. John Shultz

For detailed minutes of meetings and reports given to the Metropolitan Council, please see [oca.org/about/metropolitan-council](http://oca.org/about/metropolitan-council)

**Metropolitan Tikhon's report** – His Beatitude spent the bulk of his report discussing the restructuring of the chancery offices. This process has been ongoing over the past several years, with the help of the ad hoc restructuring committee helping to clarify the job descriptions of the officer's positions. As His Beatitude said at the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, he asked all chancery staff to submit letters of resignation, to be accepted or rejected as His Beatitude felt necessary. He updated the Council about this situation. His Beatitude decided to accept the resignations only of the three officers, the Chancellor, Treasurer, and Secretary. A candidate for the Chancellor's position has already been endorsed by the Council, and confirmed by the Holy Synod. The Chancellor will then work together with His Beatitude to select suitable candidates for the positions of Treasurer and Chancery Administrator (which will replace the former position of Secretary).

His Beatitude also shared his thoughts on the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, noting its prayerful and peaceful nature. Of note was the presence of so many representatives from all over the Orthodox world. A lengthy discussion also took place in regards to the spontaneous fund drive which took place on the last day of the council toward the process of funding a full time OCA Youth Director.

**Secretary's report** – Fr. Eric Tosi gave his report on the general goings-on at the chancery. As part of his job, he oversees general maintenance items at the chancery building, as well as special projects, such as the ongoing upgrades to the archives.

Fr. Tosi then gave a detailed report on the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, held this past July in St. Louis. Of particular note were several things. That this council was considered by many to have been particularly uplifting in its tone. The staff of the hotel noted that our group was incredibly polite, and much better than many other Christian groups who have conferences there. The success of the Youth component to the council was something often noted in the post-council online survey, which several hundred attendees participated in.

Fr. Eric then presented an amended *Social Media Guidelines for Clergy and Lay Leaders of the Orthodox Church in America*, which includes a *Social and Digital Media Code of Conduct* and an *Image Release Form*. A motion was made to accept these documents for use by the Chancery staff, and were recommended for Dioceses to adopt as a whole, or in portions as they see fit.

**Chancellor's report** – Fr. John Jillions gave his brief report on his activities since the last MC meeting. He noted that this was his last report to the MC as Chancellor, and thanks His Beatitude,

the Synod of Bishops, Chancery staff, and other members of the administration for their work alongside him during his tenure. He offered his approval of the new job descriptions for the chancery officers, and gave some thoughts about what he saw as the greatest barriers to a smooth functioning of the chancery.

After the Chancellor's report various legal matters were discussed in executive session, and the council was brought up to speed on SMPAC and ORSMA matters. It was noted that we are still not at 100% compliance with the sexual misconduct policy Church wide. This is something that must absolutely be remedied.

**Stewards of the OCA** – Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak gave an update on the efforts of SOCA to have a better approach to fundraising. It was also decided that the third Sunday in October would henceforth be set aside for the annual SOCA appeal.

**Treasurer's report** – Melanie Ringa gave her report of the OCA's financial situation, which is stable. 2016 and 2017 audited financial statements were presented, and determined to be in good order by our independent auditor. A balanced budget proposal was presented for 2019.

Following discussion from the finance committee an amendment proposal was made to require a 15% health insurance premium contribution from employees of the chancery toward their health coverage. This is in keeping with practices at most secular employers, and in fact less burdensome than many. This proposal was passed, and the amended 2019 budget was moved and passed.

On the final day of sessions, a strategic planning session was held in order for His Beatitude to present a proposal for use of funds collected at the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council for the development of a full time OCA youth director. The proposal was discussed at length, and the following motion was passed: "To endorse a 1-year pilot program to establish feasibility of the establishment and definition of a full time youth director/coordinator for the Orthodox Church in America and to approve funding of this program from receipted pledges up to \$87,000."

It was noted that at the time of passing, only about half of the pledged money had actually been received by the treasurer.

Any further questions can be asked of myself or Dr. John Shultz.

Forgive me for any errors or omissions.

Submitted by Priest Nikolai Breckenridge