

January 27,2024 Council Meeting Notes.

- Attendees:
  - Fr. Seth Earl [sethearl@gmail.com](mailto:sethearl@gmail.com)
  - Shady Gergis [shngergis@gmail.com](mailto:shngergis@gmail.com)
  - Mary Zacharias [maryzacharias0403@gmail.com](mailto:maryzacharias0403@gmail.com)
  - AJ Donahue [polishaga78@yahoo.com](mailto:polishaga78@yahoo.com)
  - Austin Humbles [austinbhumbles@protonmail.com](mailto:austinbhumbles@protonmail.com)
  - Susan Gorin [susangorin@gmail.com](mailto:susangorin@gmail.com)
  - Trent Jones
  - Issah Smallman [zaysmallman@gmail.com](mailto:zaysmallman@gmail.com)
- Opening Prayer- Fr. Seth.
  - Father Seth thanked Mary and Shady for their service on the mission council. Issah and Trent will be joining the meeting. Susan will assume the position as a warden. AJ will remain in the same position.
- Liturgical Schedule:
  - 2/01 (Thursday)- Meeting of the Lord Festal Vespers at 6:30 pm with blessing of the candles. There will be no Vespers scheduled for Wednesday that week. On Friday 2/02 Liturgy for the feast is scheduled at the Annunciation Church.
  - 2/04 (Sunday) Annual Parish Meeting.
  - 2/10 (Saturday) and 2/11 (Sunday)- Pre-Lenten Retreat with Fr. Chad Hatfield. Fr. Seth would like to schedule 3 sessions but not sure of the specific days.
- Annual Meeting:
  - Annual meeting will be officially the last meeting for Shady and Mary. Susan asked to meet with Shady sometime after. Shady recommended to mention renovations and projects completed in 2023.
  - Fr. Seth stated that annual meeting has been announced for the past month and included in the weekly parish email.
  - Not anticipating anything to vote on during the meeting, just review the 2023 year.
- Treasurer Report:
  - In 2024 budget, Austin increased the funds for Shady's diaconal training, church school, men's and women's groups, as discussed previously.
  - The pledge received for 2024 was about \$122k, over the \$120k amount originally anticipated.
  - In 2024 Austin also increased the projected expense for utilities, supplies, since we have grown.

- Shady asked if the pension increased to 14% of the housing allowance for Father Seth. Austin confirmed.
  - The original -year plan was based on 2020 and it showed average median household income to be about \$55k. Due to inflation and other factors, the median household income has now reached approximately \$69k. Will need to review the Diocese guidance and reevaluate the 5-year plan.
  - 1099 form has not yet been populated and sent to Fr. Seth. Priest gets paid once a week which includes housing allowance and salary amount. No taxes are withheld. At the beginning of the year parish writes a letter designating a portion of the income for the housing allowance. Austin will issue a letter.
  - In 2023 parish received \$116.5k in pledges out of \$103.6 budgeted. We were able to complete a lot of improvements around the property, raise money for seminary fund and benevolence fund.
  - Trent asked about the current amount in the checking account. Fr. Seth said it was \$30k. The plan in 2023 was to keep \$20k in checking account and remaining transfer to the building fund. Those funds were either saved or spent on repairs and improvements. Trent proposed to evaluate and accumulate about 6 months of operational expenses on hand. There are still repairs that will need to be complete. The ceiling in the church and kitchen will need to be repaired, the big white door will need to be replaced. The electrical in the attic is still to be scheduled as well.
  - Questions came up about plans to either purchase a new building or build on the property church currently have. It was agreed that a substantial amount would need to be accumulated in order to have a down payment or think about starting construction. The parish can run a capital campaign to raise the money. Father mentioned the option of putting those funds into the savings account at the diocese, since they offer higher rates of 4-5 %.
- Open Discussion
    - Isaah asked about the overview of our role in the parish. Shady explained that the priest chooses the members of the council. The council takes care of the business for the parish, votes on the important decisions and serves the parish.
    - Isaah asked about the requirements of our mission to become a parish. Father said he spoke about it with Father David. This was to be brought up to Bishop Gerasim, but it was overlooked. As a general requirement, a parish supports itself and has a full-time priest. Father Seth thinks the mission was overlooked in the past due to changes in the OCA administration.
    - Discussion continued about the capital for the new building. In reality, to purchase a new building, it would cost approx. \$1-\$2 million. The current property is not worth much. Another thing to consider if being able to afford the monthly payment. We might need a minimum of \$100-\$300k in the account to even think about looking for a new place. At some point last year, it was brought up to appoint a building commission.
    - Trent asked about the goals and objectives for 2024. This will be tabled until next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.

