



St Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting

Meeting: January 14, 2025

Zoom meeting called to order at 6:03 pm

Opening prayer was given by Father John

Council members attending:

Father John Thetford - rector

Paul Novak – president

Matt Tomac - vice president (excused)

Tom Julian – treasurer

Noah Becker – corresponding secretary

Vera Limberopoulos - recording secretary

guests: Marc Kotz, Danny Panella, Sarah Tomac, Jeff Zdrate

new business: Paul Novak with guests

-The work on the Big Room has started. Misha Mykhaylyuk is working on the lighting. Cleaning and some painting has begun. The carpet tiles will be delivered tomorrow and laid on Thursday. The large protestant cross that had been on the wall has been removed. Marc Kotz and Tom Julian will build an icon wall feature. It will be a larger version of the wall feature in Herrick Hall. Mark submitted a nice design to Father John. Paul and Tom also reviewed it and all were in favor of it. After scouting out all the items that he'll need, Marc sent a proposal to buy additional wood which falls within the project's budget. Marc asked Father John to accompany him to Bay Ridge to go look at the hardware and the black walnut wood for the cross. Marc will build the base this week, followed by the big paneling, the background panels, then the wall boards, finishing with the cross in the center. He welcomes input along the process.

Much of the material and labor has been donated. All of Misha's work has been donated. The tables have been purchased with donated funds. New furniture in the room has been donated or picked up for free. We are truly blessed with the generosity and progress.

-Jeff Zdrate spoke to Father John about the choir, relaying that when in full form it's fine, but when they're short (of members) they seemed to be lacking. He suggested that Father encourage the congregation to sing along. Also suggested ideas for choir practice of learning new music or focus on style, breathing, modes, etc. Father relayed that we have three or four versions of every song that makes it harder for congregation participation. Also, some things could be cut out that only get sung a few times a year. Sarah Tomac and Jeff have been sharing choir duties. Sarah's feedback: There are little changes that could make a big improvement in the choir. She does like limiting the repertoire. Also in practice, to remind the choir that singing cohesively as a group helps the congregation to participate. Father John, Sarah and Jeff will continue the discussion with the choir. Council members relayed that they felt the congregation has been participating. (Sarah exited the meeting.)



The minutes from the December 10, 2024, parish council meeting were reviewed. Father John had made a correction to the second version. Paul made a motion to accept the corrected minutes from the December 10th meeting. Tom seconded the motion, approved by all.

Priest's report – Father John Thetford

- We recently had our second catechumen's class. Twenty people attended the first one before Christmas and nineteen attended the second one. Two additional will be joining after meeting with Father.
- The February liturgical schedule has been sent out. There will be one feast day in February, The Presentation of our Lord, which will fall on a Sunday. Lent starts on March 3rd.
- On February 1st, Miles Tabor will be baptized. He is the 2 ½ year old son of William Tabor. The family is requesting a private service.
- We will be hosting a shelter meal this Friday, the 13th. We needed five volunteers, and we have seven signed up to serve. We are looking to add another volunteer day at St John's Women's Shelter, probably the last week in February. Details to follow. Financially, we are doing well with benevolence.
- The photo directory is still progressing. The final photos were taken on Sunday. Father will be working with Peggy Roman and Vera Limberopoulos to bring it all together. We are looking towards it coming out around Pascha.
- In the past, the parish has had men's luncheons. Father discussed this with a couple of men that were interested in bringing this back. He is looking to scheduling another men's luncheon on February 22nd.
- The 2025 Lenten Retreat is scheduled for the weekend of March 29th. Father Paul Jannakos will be returning this year to present the retreat. Last year the retreat was split between Friday and Saturday. It didn't work very well because some people were unable to attend both days. Father suggested that we have a dinner with the parish council and Father Jannakos on Friday the 28th. The retreat would be on Saturday the 29th with hours at 8:30, liturgy at 8:45, and the presentation following, ending at 3pm. Paul and the council agreed, liking the outline. Father John made a motion to vote to approve covering costs for lodging for one night for Father Paul Jannakos (for the retreat). Paul seconded the motion, approved by all.
- Waupaca and its possible relocation: After prior discussions regarding renting the Masonic Temple building in Stephen's Point, Father relayed that there was no longer interest in that location. The other option was a Methodist Church in the area. Father is still waiting to hear back from them. Deacon Spyridon will schedule meeting with Father John and Paul to decide the path forward, to start the process. Additionally, we received some new icons from the Deacon.
- OCA has opened their registration for the All-American Council, being held in Phoenix, AZ, July 14 -18. The AAC is held once every three years at various locations. Father's duty is to go, so he will be attending. The parish is allowed one lay delegate, which would be great if we had representation, but not necessary. Any parishioner interested in going can go as an observer. Previously, Matt had expressed interest in going. Paul will include information in the Saturday blast update. At the upcoming annual meeting, Paul we will talk about delegates. Noah asked if there is a set process for us selecting a lay delegate. Paul stated that at the annual meeting, the parish selects a delegate and a backup. Father also added that the parish pays for the delegate to go.



President's report - Paul Novak

Report given in new business.

Vice-president's report

Nothing to report.

Treasure's report – Tom Julian

-The Proposed 2025 Budget has been sent out to the PC for review.

- The presentation that he will make for the annual meeting has been sent out to the PC for review. He will have 50 copies available for the meeting,

-The Advisor 360 showing holdings has been sent out to the PC for review.

- The loan on the roof was paid off on December 31st. It currently still shows on the balance sheet, but Tom will try to remove it before the annual meeting.

- Some highlights: Revenue was \$236,483. Expenditures were \$203,545. Everything brought in above the expenditures went to the Icon Fund and to pay off the Roof Fund.

We took: \$5,000 from the Building Maintenance and Repair Fund, \$5,000 from P42, and \$5,00 from the Legacy Endowment Fund (with the PC approval) to pay off the roof.

- There was a big increase in COLA for the priest's salary.

- Because of the shelter meals, we are looking to increase the ministry fund for benevolence by roughly 30%. This would come to about \$3,500. We've been having more people and more activity.

- All American Council will also cost money.

- Everything else is right on last year's budget. It was \$201,500. This year is \$400 over last year. We did have quiet a bit come in for iconography which is behind us. We were blessed with contributions of \$106,000 in 2023, and contributions of \$131,000 in 2024 (line 3, total contributions). We were blessed with people coming and again blessed with people contributing to the church.

- When we moved into the new building, we had a building committee which consisted of Chuck Bayeri, Marc Kotz, Melissa Mc Neil, Misha Mykhaylyuk, and myself (Tom). We need a finance / treasure committee. It should include 2 or three people with two people available every Sunday to count incoming tithes. One person could count cash and the other the checks and then they would switch to double check the others count. A checks and balance system. Afterwards, if the treasurer isn't there that day, they would log the tally on the treasures prepared sheet for a bank drop off before leaving Green Bay for the day. This system would make it so one person would not have to tally and secure the funds. Paul made a motion that at the annual meeting, we explain the finance committee to the parish, and that we are looking for people to help count the incoming funds on Sunday. Noah seconded the motion, approved by all.

-We currently receive an annual lump sum from a specific donor to sponsor Pedro in seminary. Tom asked if we should wait to send the funds and hold for the installments (in the quarterly dispersal payments), or should we



send the full lump sum. We made the payment for December. Our goal is to match the donation. Last year it was \$3,600, and now it is \$4,100. We were able to give an extra \$500. Additionally, utilizing the amazon giving cards are a way to let the parish be involved in the giving process. Father relayed that as long as we are keeping track of how much we are giving in the calendar year, he is ok that if Tom has the funds, that he sends it to Pedro.

- Paul made a motion that the parish council approves this budget put forth and presents it at the annual council meeting. Noah seconded the motion, approved by all.

new business:

-Paul made a motion to propose on and vote for the naming of the big room at the annual meeting, with the recommended name of Founder's Hall. Tom seconded the motion, approved by all.

- Paul brought to our attention that the chairs in Herrick Hall have been basically destroyed by spills. He has been investigating replacement options. He found The Hercules series 800# stacking chair in burgundy, capacity 880#, at a modest \$26.50, (with shipping total cost about \$30). We would need a count of 150 chairs. Paul would like to put forth a Buy a Chair Campaign, to get the parish engaged with the replacements. Tom would like to see one in person before he votes on it. Paul could bring a sample chair for showing at the annual meeting. Paul also suggested that we scrap the old chairs, removing the seats, and taking the frames for recycling, recouping some funds. Father acknowledged that Frank donated 20 chairs last year, the ones with the dark frame. It was agreed that those could be kept and moved to the upstairs Sunday school area. Father agreed that this potential new chair option and program could be presented at the annual meeting.

-Dmitry Shkolnik and Alex will be here on January 23rd, in our nave doing work. All the lunches have been signed up for. On Monday January 27th Eric Peterson from Fox 11 News will be coming to do a story on Dmitry and his work here at SMOC. Eric is excited to covering the follow up story to his prior coverages.

-Paul reminded us that Noah and Vera each have one year left in their term. (Both are in their first term.) Matt, Tom and Paul have all completed the end of their first two-year term. They all would like to continue council in their current positions, for the final two years.

-Paul will publish the agenda in advance of the annual meeting. It would include 1. Here are the members of the PC. 2. Here are their terms and where they sit. 3. Here are three people that would like to continue in their positions on the council. 4. Are there nominations from the floor? Then we would have a vote on paper ballots that are provided.

-Paul pointed that he would like to have people participate in the parish and to understand what goes in in the parish council. He wants people to get involved this year on the periphery, so that they have an idea what it's about. This could ease people into it. This is why he asked Danny to join us today.

- Noah reiterated that he would like to meet in person for the council meetings and would like to have the meeting time and location put on the next meeting's agenda. Also, he would like to talk about bringing potential changes for minor procedural things, such as votes and seconds.

- Jeff follow up about the next choir meeting. Father relayed that it will be Sunday, January 26th. Sara will be directing choir on January 25th and 26th and Jeff will be directing choir on January 18th and 19th.



- Tom asked for permission to use the bookstore money to buy a new sign for the bookstore. Paul stated that he had permission to do so and that the bookstore funds comes from its proceeds thus it does not need to be voted on. Tom will have Corrine Dovekis' plaque mounted in the new library.

- Tom will announce at the annual meeting, trying to pay down the \$50,000 mortgage loan before we refinance in 2026.

- When asked what Danny thought of the meeting, he said "I learned a lot. I liked it."

-A motion was made by Paul to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tom, approved by all. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12.

Father gave the closing prayer.

Addendum 01.26.2025

Supplemental council meeting at SMOC, 01-26-2025:

Meeting called to order at 11:12 by Paul Novak.

Council members in attendance: Father John Thetford, Paul Novak, Tom Julian, Matt Tomac, Noah Becker, Vera Limberopoulos. Guest: Dmitry Shkolnik.

Father John relayed that this meeting was called to address the Iconostasis while Dmitry was present. We currently have six large icons on the Iconostasis. While they are wonderful, they are not correct in their representation. St Nicholas should be St Matthew, and St Herman should be St John. The angels could possibly be changed also to St Steven and St Lawrence. The second change could be decided later. Dmitry could paint the appropriate icons, which would be more detailed, higher quality, and the style would match the other installations commissioned by Dmitry.

For \$1,800 per icon, Dmitry would paint the icon and mount it to a board. He would then ship it to us where we would then install them.

At present: Iconography Cost \$48,000

Travel Expense \$ 1,115

Total phase III exp. \$49,115

Remaining balance in SMOC Incography fund is \$7,957.

New Icons \$1,800 x 6 = \$10,800

This would leave us with approximately \$3,000 to raise with shipping.

Paul proposes to confirm this order with Dmitry, with approximately 1 year for completion and delivery. Tom seconds the motion, approved by all.

Paul made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Noah, approved by all. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50.

St. Matthew Orthodox Church



Green Bay, WI