St. Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting

Meeting Held: July 7, 2026

A regular meeting of the St. Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council was called to order at 6:01 pm CDT. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

The opening prayer was given by Father John.

Council members attending:

Father John Thetford—rector
Paul Novak—President
Matt Tomac—Vice-President
Danny Panella—Treasurer
Noah Becker—Corresponding Secretary

Council members absent:

Vera Limberopoulos—Recording Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary, Noah Becker, served as clerk of the meeting.

The minutes from the June regular Parish Council meeting were postponed to the August meeting by unanimous consent.

Priest's report—Father John Thetford

- Fr. John will be out of town July 13–22. As previously discussed, Fr. Tom Mueller will serve on Sunday, July 19th, with Reader's Vespers the night before.

- A Women's Group luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, August 15th; Men's Group will next meet on Saturday, September 19th.

- As approved in June, Fr. John completed the application process for a diocesan grant for St. Lawrence Chapel in Door County.

President's report—Paul Novak

- Paul will be attending The Parish Development Forum July 9–11 at St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Palos Hills, IL.

Vice-President's report—Matt Tomac

- The special event cleaning checklist has been prepared.

- There was discussion about alternate door options for the main entrance.

- After further research, grants for an AED may be difficult to obtain for our church.

Treasurer's report—Danny Panella

- A Treasurer's Report PDF was submitted to the Council.

- All accounts were noted to be doing well.

- The line of credit for upper entrance repair work has been finalized.

- The bookstore credit card will be prepared when the Treasurer has appropriate minutes for documentation of Council approval.

- There are expense tracking options built into Aplos that Danny is considering using.

- The church is on track to be ahead of expected revenues and behind expected expenses by the end of the year.

New Business

- Fr. John brought up the possibility of issuing a stipend to Deacon Spyridon. It was explained that issuing a stipend to deacons is preferable when a church is financially able. A motion was made by Paul Novak that St. Matthew Orthodox Church issue a monthly stipend of $200 to Dn. Spyridon. The motion was carried unanimously by voice vote.

- Fr. John noted that there is a property in Menasha that could potentially be of use to St. Macrina Chapel. It was noted that this property was not under serious consideration at the time, but that a small group of church members may wish to gather information and report back if the property is viable for church purposes. A motion was made by Paul Novak to commit the investigation of the property in Menasha to a small group of those interested. (It was noted that the group would likely include several of the following: Fr. John, Paul Novak, Danny Panella, Doug Bisbee, and Tom Julian.) The motion was carried unanimously by voice vote.

- The August 9th Parish Informational Meeting was discussed. Topics include Parish Council structure; a November meeting for those in the Fox Valley area who may be interested in starting a church there someday; a customary brief fiscal update; and establishing a stable base of savings in 2027.

Old Business

- There was further discussion of new Parish Council member positions and how the roles should be organized.

- The north (upper) entrance project is set to begin work this month.

- The stair replacement project is expected to occur in as little as 6–8 weeks.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Noah Becker. The motion was carried unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 pm CDT.

Father John gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Becker, Corresponding Secretary