

St Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting Meeting:

November 12, 2024

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

Tom Julian – treasurer (excused)

Noah Becker - corresponding secretary

Vera Limberopoulos - recording secretary

guest: Jeff Zdrale

There was an error in the October minutes that were initially submitted for review. September minutes had accidentally been submitted, incorrectly label as October. The correct October minutes were submitted to council today. If any corrections are needed, they can be submitted to Paul.

Jeff Zdrale copied the official letter stating when the parish was made official church status and will frame for submitting to the church. It will be hung in Herrick Hall.

Priest's report – Father John

Volunteers:

Prospora crew has grown with Emma Niemi as a new addition, also doing a very good job.

With new servers, we have recently had more than enough, so Frank has not had to serve.

We are anticipating having two new readers in January, Alejandro Martinez and Samuel Jasmer. Sunday, November 24th, we received four people into the church.

We continue to get new people (attending services), with two new inquires coming for the first time this past Sunday, and a number that have come for the first time over the past few Sundays. We need to continue to greet people. Father has been adding them to his contact list.

The December liturgical schedule has been sent out.

A church sponsored shelter meal is taking place as we speak, with four new people assisting in serving the meal. Also, there has been some new participation with the hot food preparation. Father would like to see individuals alternate with the hot food preparation since it is a lot of work.

Melssia had brought it to Father's attention (prior) that we need a second oven / stovetop combo that works well. Additionally (prior), people have brought up an overall kitchen remodel.

Paul made a motion to purchase a new stove with oven for the kitchen, not to exceed \$650. The new stove can be delivered free of charge. The old oven can be removed for \$50. Vera seconds the motion, approved by all.

At that time (of getting the new oven), we will also rearrange some things in the kitchen. There will be people willing to offset this purchase. Paul has done some research to obtain these details. Paul will work with Tom on this.

Regarding the furniture in the big room, Father will reach out to Ruth Larsen next week. She had informed Father that she had guaranteed housing starting December 1st. At that time, Father will reach out to some members to assist with moving those items.

Waupaca Chapel: There was a liturgy there November 9th. Prior, Father had a discussion with Deacon Spyridon, Photini, Paul and some other individuals regarding how we might turn it more into a community. They have had new inquiries there and some families attending that are unable to attend SMOC due to distance. The plan is to start looking into a place to rent in 2025, possibly from a church. This would probably be two Sunday liturgies and one Saturday liturgy a month. This would move it out of the Roegner house, making it more like a church. Tom brought up to Father (prior) that we could possibly help them jump start it financially, possibly matching \$300 or \$500 a month.

Jeff asked, how do new people find out about this (chapel), the times and what days? Father relayed that he put it on google maps, recently made a Facebook page, and if you search through google, it will come up through our website. Our website has a subsection for Waupaca. Jeff relayed that he recently came across old church records. In SMOC's beginning, we received a "planting grant" from the diocese, of \$10,000 the first year and \$5,000 the second year. Father stated that those grants are now issued from the national level, but that we are not at that point yet.

President's report – Paul Novak

The church has been growing and we continue to need to get creative on where to put people. Members have been asking, what do we need to do to get more people into the nave? Father proposed a change in seating layout. Father John and Paul made a preliminary change in the seating layout. (Images of the new layout were shared.) Where the choir had been, 5 rows of 4 chairs had been added. The last row of chairs in the back have been removed. The choir footprint had been 11' x 11'. The choir has been moved to near the reader stand, which gets incorporated into the space, approximately 11' x 11', now along the right wall. This moves the seating forward without increasing chairs, bringing people forward. Chairs could be added to the back row if needed. Matt said that this is a workable solution. This could also assist with ringing of the bells. Jeff did not see a disadvantage from the choir point of view. Noah was concerned for space for the reader, and asked would individuals not want to stand by the choir? Father will address where the reader goes as this progresses. Paul will send out an email to the parish that there have been some changes, including the photos of the new seating layout.

We are getting more people and kids upstairs in the balcony. Paul would like to add another large rug upstairs to help deaden some sound and move a couple runners. Paul made a motion to purchase a couple of rugs and some runners for upstairs, not to exceed \$300. Father John seconds the motion, approved by all.

Vice-president report – Matt Tomac

Matt reports that some people left the church dinner (on November 10th) because of over-saturation of Herrick Hall. He wants to address the dining seating, so we are ready for

Pascha. Also, too many appliances were plugged into shared upper outlets, popping the breaker. Those plugs are on one line and cannot handle that load.

Under the balcony in the back corner, a light is hanging down. We need to check and see if Misha (Mykhaylyuk) can secure it.

(Matt exited the meeting.)

Treasure's report – via Paul

Giving is solid and bank accounts are good.

new business

The annual church meeting is set for Sunday, February 2nd.

We are anticipating the iconography work to start mid-January. We have not had a response from Dmitry but will continue to plan for it.

Upper room schedule. We are looking to put in four round tables of ten, giving us forty additional seats, for Pascha or as needed. The tables cost \$100 - \$125 each. We have plenty of chairs. Work that needs to be done includes painting, some electrical, some tile replacement, cleaning, etc. The workdays will be Friday January 24th and Saturday January 25th to start. If needed, we could add more Saturdays to complete the work before Pascha. Noah will round up the gang. Paul has a list of tasks that can be shared for anyone that would like to participate. There are approximately 30 recessed fluorescent bulb fixtures recessed on the perimeter. Noah volunteered to dispose of those bulbs at no cost to the church, taking responsibility for the bulbs.

Paul addressed: How should we handle Father's payroll going forward, for simplicity and accuracy? How do taxes get taken care of? Some churches outsource that management to a payroll service. Paul inquired and found that this would cost \$46/month. This takes the burden off the priest at the end of the year to make sure he's filing everything correctly. It also takes the burden off the treasurer to make sure he's preparing the proper documents during the year. Some parishes have people on staff to do it. There is no uniformity parish to parish. Having a payroll service could help as we recruit new treasures in the future.

Paul asked Father to have the OCA website techs make the change to 1998 as the official date of the parish.

Noah asked going forward for the council meetings: is 6pm on Tuesday night the best time, should we meet in person?

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57.

Father gave the closing prayer.