

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
480 Racebrook Road, Orange, CT 06477
Date: November 8, 2015

A Parish Assembly (PA) meeting was called to order by Fr. Peter Orfanakos at approximately 12:05 PM

1. **Opening Prayer:** Fr. Peter Orfanakos led the PA in prayer.
2. **Election of PA Chairperson:** Vago Hadjimichael was nominated to chair the PA by Harry Hajedemos seconded by Connie Chagares. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Minutes Approval:** Peter Smith read the May 31, 2015 PA draft minutes. Gus Chagares motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Anne Meehan. Minutes were approved by majority.

Vago reported that the Church By-laws, which were approved at the previous PA, have been ratified by the Archdiocese.

4. **Approval of 2016 General Fund Budget:**

Eugene Esares went over the 2016 General Fund Budget (Attachment 1), which was distributed to all attendees at the PA. He spoke about the process that went into the preparation of the budget by the Finance Committee.

Gene then discussed the stewardship figure, which has been set at \$360,000 for 2016, as it was for 2015. He explained that the Church has been falling short of its goals in 2015, and there is still \$77,000 that needs to be collected before the end of 2015. However, Gene expressed that the goal is achievable for 2015 and 2016.

Gene next discussed other income items. He stated that income from candles and trays has been lower in 2015, and he encouraged the parishioners to give more.

Gene explained that the forecast for income from the Odyssey Festival in 2016 was set at \$40,000, which is \$10,000 higher than it was in the 2015 budget, due to the strong income totals from Odyssey 2015. He warned, however, that Odyssey income was originally meant to support the expenses of the Building Fund, not church operations, which means that income from other sources needs to improve.

Gene then entertained questions on income before proceeding.

Bill Chaltas asked about the percentage of the operating budget which comes from stewardship. He noted that in 2014, stewardship provided 59.3% of the operating budget, in 2015, stewardship provided 58.8% of the operating budget, and as proposed for 2016, stewardship will only provide 56%. He criticized this trend, arguing that stewardship, ideally, should pay for 100% of the operating budget.

Elia Alexiades asked why the donation line of the income is higher in 2015 compared to the projected donation income for 2016. Gene answered that there was a significant donation of audio/visual equipment in 2015.

Vago asked Gene to explain the difference between outreach and fundraising, and Gene proceeded to do so.

Next, Gene explained the expense side of the budget. Gene pointed out that candle expenses are set higher for 2016 due to the increased costs of candles being paid in 2015. Additionally, he explained that the Sunday School costs were higher in 2015 as we continue to assist in the Education of our youth. He also noted that the Greek Language School expense will be lower in 2016 because the program participates in the Greek Independence Day Parade every other year and 2016 is an off-year. Gene went on to discuss the expenses for travel, utilities, and ground maintenance. He praised the Property Maintenance Committee for the work they have put into the maintenance and repairs of the Church and the donation of time and talent by many of our parishioners to help in the various maintenance concerns.

Gene then allowed questions for expenses.

Nick Loussides asked about the HVAC contract, which is listed as a zero cost item for 2016 due to the contract being canceled. He asked if the maintenance expense for the HVAC is reflected in the maintenance total. Mike Wachter, chairman of the Property Maintenance Committee explained that it is.

Elia Alexiades asked if the air conditioner was replaced in the Lightle Center when the furnace was replaced. Mike replied that it was not, and it did not have to be replaced.

Elia Alexiades asked about the savings from the fire hydrant expense. Gene responded that the Church was paying for a hydrant that it did not need, because the construction of the Gymnasium has not been completed. Mary Constantinidi, the PC Treasurer explained that the Church was reimbursed by the water company for this expense.

Elia Alexiades offered a reminder that the operating budget does not include the mortgage expense. He noted that adding the mortgage expense to the total operating

budget makes the percentage that comes from stewardship much lower compared to the total.

It was noted that the weekly parish bulletins state the monthly mortgage and General Fund expense and income updates.

Paul Redding moved to accept the budget as presented, seconded by Connie Chagares. Motion passed by majority.

5. **Odyssey 2015 Report:**

Before discussing the report, Fr. Peter played a video of the Odyssey Festival for the parishioners on the TV in hallway. The video, filmed and directed by Alex Yates, displayed photographs and videos of Saint Barbara volunteers and guests at the 2015 Odyssey Festival.

Gene Esares then gave the Odyssey 2015 financial report, a copy of which was distributed to all parishioners in attendance.

Gene explained the profit and loss comparison between 2014 and 2015 in the report. He noted specifically that the amount of net income is very high, and this was probably helped by the good weather. He also reported that income from food sales, treasures 'n junque, and raffle tickets was very good. Gene also mentioned that the winner of the \$10,000 raffle prize gifted the monies to the Church.

Other questions were asked and answered.

The General Assembly then acknowledged the hard work of the Odyssey Festival chairs: Mike Wachter, Paul Redding, and Evans Mountzouris and their spouses, Helen, Barbara and Christina.

Nick Loussides moved to accept the report with the annotation regarding the raffle prize and the statement from the Gaming Commission attached, as discussed, seconded by Maria. Motion passed unanimously.

6. **Nomination of Candidates for Parish Council**

Vago announced that it was time for nominations for the Parish Council, either from the nominating committee or from the floor.

Eleni Yates from the nominating committee stated that the committee nominates Val Lott and Vicky Vagenas, both of whom accepted.

Nominations were then made from the floor:

Mike Wachter nominated Louie Vlahos, and he accepted.
Mary Constantinidi nominated Kosta Melanidis, and he accepted.
Nota Koutroumanis nominated Eleni Yates, and she accepted.
Joy Morris nominated Oly Hadjimichael, and she accepted.

Theo Nicolakis moved to close nominations, seconded by Elias Lolis. Motion passed unanimously.

Fr. Peter announced that there is a PC Seminar on November 16th which all nominees have to attend at Saint Barbara in order to be able to serve on the PC. If the nominee cannot attend on that date, then there are other seminars at other churches in the district which the nominee can attend.

7. **Election of members for the Board of Elections**

Vago then opened the floor for nominations to the Board of Elections.

Greg Guillotis was nominated. He was not present but accepted by proxy.

Anne Meehan nominated Jane Hadjimichael, and she accepted.

Steven Yates nominated Marcy Winkel, and she accepted.

Vago then asked for the PA to vote on the nominees for the Board of Elections. Steven Yates moved to accept the nominees, seconded by Paul Redding. Motion passed unanimously.

Fr. Peter stated that the elections will be held on December 13, after church until 1pm.

8. **Closing Prayer:** The PA meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:18 pm with a prayer by Father Peter.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Smith
Secretary, Parish Council

Attachments:

- (1) 2016 General Fund Budget
- (2) Odyssey 2015 Report with annotation regarding raffle prize

Attest:

Fr. Peter J. Orfanakos
Maria Diamantis, President, Parish Council