Orthodox Church in America
20th All-American Council

Plenary Session III
Wednesday, July 20, 2022

The session was convened at 10:37 a.m. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.”

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

Hierarchs: 13
Clergy Delegates: 249
Lay Delegates: 219
Total Voters: 481

Clergy Observers: 24
Lay Observers: 61

METROPOLITAN’S REMARKS

His Beatitude Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, thanked the council for the discussion yesterday regarding clergy health and other issues. He expressed his disappointment with the results of the vote on the proposed Pension Plan amendment to the Statute. Urgent action does need to be taken to ensure the sustainability of the plan. Our responsibility is to ensure that the plan not only works today, but that it works for the priests who are joining today. His office will take all measures necessary to ensure the long-term health of the plan. While the proposed amendment did not reach the two-thirds vote necessary to pass, 57% nonetheless voted in favor of it—a sign that the Church is looking for a change.

The Metropolitan Council, elected by the AAC and the dioceses, is, according to the Statute, the permanent extension of the All-American Council, and will continue consideration of this matter.

He himself will examine the issue of less than 100 percent compliance with mandated participation in the Pension Plan. Participating in the Pension Plan speaks to humility, obedience, and mutual care.

He expressed thanks to Mr. Andrew Smith for analyzing the state of the Plan and exploring solutions.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Archpriest Andrew Jarmus, Clergy Vice Chair, announced that the Holy Synod has approved the minutes from Plenary Sessions I and II.

CHANCERY STATUTE AMENDMENT

Archpriest Timothy Hojnicki described the work of the Chancery Restructuring Task Force, consisting of His Grace Bishop Daniel, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Archpriest John Dresko, Lisa Mikhailovsky, and Archpriest Timothy Hojnicki. The current Statute (Section VI.1) places the Chancellor, Secretary, and Treasurer on an equal plane reporting directly to the Metropolitan. The purpose of the Amendment is to codify the new “structural flow chart” in the Statute (see full text of the amendment in the Delegate Handbook).

Archpriest Thomas Moore moved for acceptance of the amendment as presented. Priest Nicholas Finley, Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Madison, IL, seconded.

DISCUSSION

Proponent: Archpriest Dennis Buck, St. Catherine the Great Martyr Church, Hagerstown, MD: This structure relieves His Beatitude of certain direct responsibilities to free him up to focus on his archpastoral ministry as Archbishop of Washington. He urged his fellow diocesan colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

Archpriest Alexander Vallens, St. Tikhon Mission, Parker, CO: Point of clarification. It has been standard in non-profits to separate Treasurer and Controller – why was that not done here? Mr. Andrew Smith responded that, in present practice, we have an Accounting Manager who functions much like a daily controller, whereas Mr. Smith’s own role is much like a CFO—oversight and strategy. The proposed amendment allows us flexibility to move back and forth between responsibilities.

Fr. Jarmus called the vote to question. The proposed amendment passed overwhelmingly.

CHANCELLOR’S REPORT

Archpriest Alexander Rentel, OCA Chancellor since January 1, 2019, noted that his official report is available and stands as written. He highlighted two areas: the transition to a hybrid in-person and remote work environment, and the relocation of the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America.
Fr. Rentel introduced Mr. Gregory Honshul and Mr. Ray Steeb to discuss the Chancery Relocation on behalf of the Metropolitan Council (see slide presentation), and who outlined the stages undertaken in the process.

Stage 1: Relocation of His Beatitude and staff and identifying temporary Chancery headquarters
Stage 2: Find permanent location for the Chancery

The report continued with the planned disposition of the Westwood property, as the site of the Syosset Chancery is officially called (see additional slide presentation). Two offers are presently under review.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Priest Alessandro Margheritino, OCA Secretary, presented his written report, in which he introduced his work as Secretary and expressed his gratitude for being asked to serve in this new capacity. He highlighted the work of the relocation of the Archives to St. Vladimir’s Seminary (SVS) and offered this update:

Over the last couple of months, a memorandum of understanding for the relocation of the archives has been drafted. The document was approved and signed by both parties. The OCA Archives will be housed by SVS starting in Fall 2022, but the OCA will retain ownership.

The Archives Commission will be comprised of:
   OCA Secretary
   One appointment by the Metropolitan
   The academic dean of SVS
   One appointment by SVS

The OCA Secretary will offer semi-annual reports to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Mr. Andrew Smith, Treasurer, presented highlights from his attached report.

INTERNAL AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mka. Sharon Hubiak, Chair, gave the Auditing Committee Report (see report).
PROPOSED FUNDING RESOLUTION

Treasurer Andrew Smith presented the proposed funding resolution (see slide).

DISCUSSION:

QUESTION: Protodeacon Peter Danilchick, Protection of the Holy Mother of God Church, Falls Church, VA, asked if each of the territorial Dioceses has given their assent to the funding resolution. Mr. Smith: It has been discussed with Diocesan Chancellors and Treasurers.

QUESTION: Priest David Gresham, Holy Apostles Church, Bloomington, IL: Why is the Diocese of Mexico not in the contribution breakdown? Answer: The OCA does not receive funding from Mexico.

The Resolution passed by majority vote.

STAVROPEGIAL MONASTERIES REPORT

Abbot Sergius (Bowyer) gave the attached report on St. Tikhon’s Monastery.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

Archpriest Paul Jannakos, St. Luke the Evangelist Church, Palos Hills, IL, Chancellor, Diocese of the Midwest, requested clarification from the Treasurer regarding the $1.5 million in undesignated operating funds: Could the difference between that amount and the six-month cushion be offered as a one-time donation to the OCA Pension Plan?

Mrs. Trudy Ellmore, Church of the Holy Cross, Medford, NJ: Question for the Treasurer regarding endowment funds – could a portion of the 3% spending rate go to the Diocese of Alaska to kickstart its Clergy Endowment? Answer: Most of the money in the endowment fund is purpose restricted already, but we can review the unrestricted portion to see if it can be designated. Three percent of the entire endowment is roughly $60K, so this does not represent a large sum.

METROPOLITAN’S REMARKS

His Beatitude noted that there will be two fora this afternoon; one on the Diocese of Mexico and the other on addictions. He encouraged attendees to participate and to consider ways to support the Dioceses of Alaska and Mexico.
**HOUSEKEEPING**

Dn. Peter Ilchuk noted that nominations to Church-wide positions are closed.

The session was adjourned at 12:46 p.m. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet.”