Session I: July 18, 2013

CALL TO ORDER
President Ted Niforos called the first session of the Federation Council of the Mid-Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians to order at 6:15 pm on Thursday evening, July 18, 2013 at Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, site of the Federation’s 66th Annual Convention. All Convention participants were present for Session I, which followed the Opening Dinner.

According to the Federation’s By-Laws, the agenda for this Convention Meeting is an abbreviated one, with action only on pre-determined items.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes of the 2013 spring meeting of the Federation Council were previously distributed via the MEFGOX email distribution list; copies were available for perusal. Major decisions that were made at that meeting included selection of the Gallos II liturgical setting for the next two Conventions and an amendment to the Scholarship By-laws to allow the Trustees to withdraw up to $3000 from the corpus of the fund should overall interest rate fall below 5%. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes.

MOTION PASSED (Peter Vatsures/Anna Niforos) to accept the minutes as distributed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
President Niforos reviewed the purpose and work of the Federation, the church music arm of two Metropolises of Detroit and Pittsburgh. He also noted that three Executive Board meetings were conducted during the past year to carry out the business of the Federation. In lieu of regular oral reports, copies of print reports from the Vice-President, State Representatives, Church Music Education Committee, and Governance Committee, and Byzantine Echo were distributed to participants.

President Niforos commented on some significant events during the course of the year: expanding Federation communication to its members via the Federation website, the new “electronic” Byzantine Echo, our MEFGOX email distribution list, and the Federation Facebook page. He also reported on his attendance at the National Forum’s Council of Presidents meeting in the spring and the Annual Meeting in July in Charlotte, National Chairman. Items of discussion included development of a youth music curriculum for Church Schools, in cooperation with the Archdiocese’s Department of Religious Education.

President Niforos also noted the loss of quite a few church musicians this past year, including officers of blessed memory, Mary Ameredes, Dorthe Belaskas, Elizabeth Sarafis, Helen Arambages, Delores Revelos, and Steve Davlantes.

President Niforos thanked the current officers and committee chairs. He also encouraged people to consider becoming involved in the administration of the Federation by taking on one of the offices.

The meeting adjourned for the Church Music Institute presentation of Father Stavros Akrotirianakis.

Session II: July 19, 2013

CALL TO ORDER
President Niforos called the second session of the Federation Council of the Mid-Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians to order at 8:50 am on Friday, July 19, 2012. There were 15 Federation parishes in good standing represented at this session.

Executive Board Reports:

TREASURER'S REPORT
Peter Vatsures reported on Federation finances from September 2012 to July 2013. The beginning balance was $13,196.53. Income was $14,793.02 and expenses were $6,343.94. The ending balance for the period is $8,449.06. There are still bills to be paid and further income is expected from the National Forum as part of
their subsidy to the Federation for conducting CMI’s. Peter will close the books for the past year at the end of August.

**MOTION PASSED** to accept the Treasurer’s Report.

**STEWARDSHIP REPORT**
Peter Vatsures also gave the Stewardship Report in the absence of Tony Thrubis and Lydia Villeneuve, Stewardship Chairs. The stewardship year runs from September 1st – August 30th. To date, there are 52 parishes out of a possible 95 contributing as stewards. Peter noted that he had received two additional parish contributions at this Convention. Peter distributed a list of parishes in good standing and those from whom we are still awaiting stewardship contributions.

**MEFGOX PATRONS PROGRAM**
Anna Niforos, Patrons Program Chair explained that this program continues to encourage individual contributions to MEFGOX in support of its programs. She reported that $2,212.00 was received this year, plus additional monies anticipated from the Convention Registration check-off box. There were no expenses this year, for the solicitation letter was sent through the MEFGOX email distribution list and articles were placed in the Byzantine Echo. The form is also on the Federation website. There was a mailing to Philoptochos chapters, which netted $1100 of the total annual contributions.

**ACTION:** Anna requested that each Federation member take forms to their parishes and ask individual church musicians to make an annual personal donation to the Patrons Program.

**MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**
Trustee Dan Packis presented the Scholarship Program report. The Endowment’s starting balance was $82,486.86. New donations have totaled $4,890.00, bringing the current balance to $87,389.61. Scholarships are awarded based on income from interest and the needs of individual applicants. Because of low bank rates (less than 5%), some of the corpus was used for this year’s scholarships. There were eight applications received this year, but three of them came from parishes that were not current in their stewardship so those applications had to be disqualified.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Byzantine Echo:**
Stan Takis prepared the last print issue which was mailed to the more than 1300 members in September. Co-Editors Vicki Pappas and Barbara Minton published five issues of the new electronic ECHO this past year. More than 700 church musicians and 117 clergy received the issues via email. Print copies were mailed to the 8 of 95 parishes for which we have no email contacts. Costs for the year were less than $5.00.

**Church Music Institutes**
Barbara Minton and Vicki Pappas co-chair this Committee. They reported on the five workshops that are taking place at this Convention: Two vocal development workshops by Anna Maria Miller of Nashville, TN; “Choir and Clergy Relationships” by Father Stavros Akrotirianakis of Tampa FL; “Understanding the Third Mode” by Richard Barrett of Bloomington, IN; and “Preparing the Holy Gifts” by Metropolitan Nicholas. They also reported a desire to host more regional CMI’s in the coming year.

**Governance**
Vicki and Barbara continue to work on revisions to the Operational Procedures. This past year, they completed a major section on Convention Procedures, which was piloted by the Cincinnati Convention team. They will work on an upcoming amendment and the remaining sections this coming year.

**Federation Website and Facebook Page:**
Nicholas Bodle maintains the Federation website. The site is [www.mefgox.org](http://www.mefgox.org). He also periodically posts news on the Federation’s Facebook page. He asks that officers and members send him information to post so the sites remain current and fresh.

**NATIONAL FORUM REPORT**
Immediate Past National Chairman Vicki Pappas provided an update of the recently-concluded Annual Meeting of the National Forum, which was held in Charlotte, BC. The MEFGOX delegates were President Niforos, Peter Vatsures, Barbara Minton, Chris Zervos, and Vicki Pappas; Anna Niforos also attended as a Forum member. Major items of discussion were the move to distribute the Liturgical Guidebook via the
Orthodox Marketplace, a new project to develop a church music curriculum supplement for Church Schools, and the recent PRAXIS magazine issue which featured church music.

NEW BUSINESS

Byzantine Echo Editors
Vicki Pappas and Barbara Minton were nominated to continue as co-editors of the Byzantine Echo. Their nomination was accepted by acclamation.

2014 Convention:
Peter Vatsures gave notice of a bid to host the 2014 Convention from the Annunciation Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio. The dates are one week later than usual because of community and hotel conflicts, from July 24th – July 27th. He will send a formal letter for the fall Officers meeting. There were no other bids.

MOTION PASSED (Barbara Minton/Anna Niforos) to accept Columbus’s bid for the 2014 Convention, pending the Executive Board’s receipt of their formal bid letter.

Selection of 2014 Guest Director:
We will be singing the Gallos II liturgical setting at the 2014 Convention. There were three nominations for Guest Director: Maria Futules of Akron nominated Manny Creekus; Vicki Pappas of Carmel, IN nominated Christina Polizos; and Gena Hallaman of Akron nominated Constantina Tsolainou. Biographies were read of all three candidates, according to our governance procedures.

Each choir present in good standing was allowed one vote. Eleven votes were cast, and Christina Polizos was selected as our 2014 Guest Director.

It was suggested that the Federation try to ask each candidate to prepare a video presentation illustrating their qualifications which could be posted on the website and distributed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In the absence of Irene Georgantas as Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, Barbara Minton presented the following slate of officers for 2013-2014, under the new governance structure:

President: Ted Niforos
Vice-President: Dan Packis
Secretary: Vicki Pappas
Treasurer: Peter Vatsures

The floor was opened to further nominations. There were none.

MOTION PASSED (Anna Niforos/Maria Grias) to accept by acclamation the full slate of officers as presented.

The meeting adjourned until lunchtime, where State Representatives would be selected and the remainder of the meeting concluded.

Session III: July 19, 2013

SELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES

State meetings with their respective representatives were held later on Friday, July 12th over lunch. Agendas included discussion of the past year’s activities of parishes, plans for the coming year, and electing a State Representative. The following were selected:

Northeast Ohio: Mary Matzorkis
SE & West Ohio: Valerie Baker
Detroit Metro: Elaine Charalambopoulos
Outstate Michigan: TBA
West Virginia: TBA
Western Pennsylvania: TBA
Central Pennsylvania: Kathy Doulgeris
New York: TBA
Indiana/Kentucky: Vicki Pappas
Tennessee/Arkansas: Vicki Pappas (interim)
ACTION: The elected officers will take the Oath of Office during the Divine Liturgy on Sunday.

ACTION: President Niforos will appoint the remaining State Representatives, the two Metropolis Liaisons, the two Metropolis Youth Coordinators, and the three Scholarship Trustees.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER
1. To increase attendance at the Columbus Convention, it was suggested that each person bring a “neighbor” next year.
2. We should invite church musicians from other Metropolises to our Conventions. A standing invitation is offered to the Presidents of the other Federations, as per an agreement among them via the National Forum.
4. Ted also thanked the Holy Trinity/St. Nicholas parish for their hospitality and excellent Convention planning.

ADJOURNMENT
Upon a motion by Mary Grias, and a second by Valerie Baker, President Niforos adjourned the Federation Council meeting at 1:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Pappas,
Secretary

ATTENDANCE
July 18 and 19, 2013 - Members in Good Standing

Arkansas: None represented
Indiana: Carmel/Holy Trinity
           Indianapolis/Holy Apostles
Kentucky: Lexington/Panagia Pantovasilissa
Michigan: Grand Rapids/Holy Trinity
           Southgate/St. George
           St. Clair Shores/Assumption
           Troy/St. Nicholas
           Westland/Ss. Constantine & Helen
New York: None represented
Ohio: Akron/Annunciation
     Columbus/Annunciation Cathedral
     Dayton/Annunciation
     Rocky River/St. Demetrios
     Toledo/Holy Trinity
Pennsylvania: Camp Hill/Holy Trinity Cathedral
Tennessee: Nashville/Holy Trinity
West Virginia: None represented