Mid-Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians  

Serving the Metropolises of Detroit and Pittsburgh  

Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting  

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Akron, Ohio  

March 16, 2013  

Officers Present: President Ted Niforos; Immediate Past President Irene Georgantas; Vice-President Dan Packis; Treasurer Peter Vatsures; Secretary Vicki Pappas; Pittsburgh Metropolis Youth Coordinator Diane Matzorkis; State Representative Mary Matzorkis (NE Ohio); Webmaster Nicholas Bodle; 2013 Convention Chair Janice Kellaris; and Patrons Campaign Chair Anna Niforos.  

Guests: Representatives from the Annunciation Akron Choir: Emanuel Creekus, Director; Georgia Stavropoulos (Scholarship Fund Trustee); Irene Theodore; Gia Powers, and Mary Dennis.  

Call to Order and Opening Prayer  

President Ted Niforos called the meeting to order at 9:50 am, and led the members present in praying the Lord’s Prayer. He also offered prayers for the health of Elaine Charalambopoulos and her daughter and for the souls of †Delores Revelos and †Mary Ameredes.  

Approval of Minutes:  

The minutes of the October 6, 2012 Executive Board Meeting had been distributed via email earlier.  

MOTION PASSED (Irene Georgantas/Mary Matzorkis) to approve the Minutes as distributed.  

President’s Report  

President Niforos reported that since the fall, he has kept in contact with officers, state representatives, and the Convention Committee. He is still trying to find State Representatives for Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. He assisted with the Patrons and Stewardship campaigns, and submitted articles for the Byzantine Echo and the Detroit metropolis’s Shepherd’s Staff. He also attended the funeral of Mary Ameredes.  

Treasurer’s Report  

Treasurer Peter Vatsures presented officers with a copy of the approved 2012-13 budget, and then the current year’s financial report. The beginning balance is $13,196.53. Income is $11,683.02; expenses are $3,971.30; leaving an ending balance of $7,711.72. Peter noted that this is the first year of resuming our contribution to the MEFGOX Scholarship Fund as per our By-Laws, totaling $250.  

MOTION PASSED to accept the Treasurer’s Report.  

Patrons Campaign  

Anna Niforos reported that the 2013 Patrons Campaign letter was sent via the MEFGOX email list on schedule in January; the Philoptochos letter was mailed that same month. Since September 1st, we have received $892.00 to date – of these, nine donations came from Convention registration ($217.00) and four from Philoptochos chapters. Ann sends thank you letters to all donors, and includes a donation form for their use with friends.  

ACTION: Anna encouraged all to talk with choirs and other church musicians about the Federation’s our mission and to seek their support. There will be reminders included in forthcoming Echo’s.  

Stewardship  

Peter Vatsures reported for Tony Thrubis. As of 3/7/13, 41 parishes are stewards. It appears we have broken away from $50 contributions, a remnant of our former dues structure. Many more parishes are contributing $100 or more. We are close to our budget projection, with only about 60% of the parishes responding.  

ACTION: Peter will do a follow-up mailing as a reminder to those parishes who are delinquent. He asked State Representatives to contact those parishes; reminders will also be in the Echo.
Vicki presented an analysis of which parishes we are including on our stewardship listing, noting some are missing.

**ACTION:** Peter will add those parishes to the list and Barbara and Vicki will update the State Representatives listing in the Constitution. State Representatives should make contacts with these additional parishes to seek more information and offer our services.

**Memorial Scholarship**
Dan Packis presented a written report. $560.00 was added to the base from donations made at the Convention. Also, there is $2,723.00 in the Hadgis Scholarship fund and $2,632.00 in the Georgantas Scholarship fund. The base is now $79,546.00. At the 2012 Convention, the Federation presented two scholarships at $750.00 each and one at $350.00. Dan is continuing to investigate use of a professional management firm (e.g., Cleveland Foundation) to increase the interest our base is gaining.

There was a productive discussion which included all three Scholarship Trustees who were present (Packis, Stavropoulos, Georgantas) regarding the amount of money in the corpus of the fund with respect to the amounts of our scholarships and the special scholarships. There was consensus to work towards amending the language of the Memorial Scholarship in the Federation By-Laws.

**MOTION PASSED** (Georgantas/Pappas) to propose an amendment to the Federation By-Laws for Federation Council approval that if the investment yield is less than 5% per annum, the trustees would be allowed to withdraw up to $3000 from the corpus for scholarships to supplement the available funds. [3 yes/1 no]

Parishes will be notified of this proposed amendment 30 days in advance of the Spring Federation Council meeting as per our By-Laws. The vote on this amendment will occur then.

**State Representatives Reports**

**NE Ohio:** State Representative Mary Matzorkis presented her written report. She has contacted all her parishes via mail and email, but has heard back from only from a few. She has received some rosters and has identified directors, youth directors, and chanters. She will send follow-up messages about stewardship.

**Indiana/Kentucky:** State Representative Vicki Pappas reported on her states. Both Kentucky parishes are current stewards; only one of the Indiana parishes is (Holy Apostles, Indianapolis). She updated officers on the activities and personnel changes of the Indiana parishes; Carmel and Fort Wayne have interim priests; Richard Barrett is a new chanter/director at Holy Apostles/Indianapolis. She will be contacting the Kentucky parishes shortly for updates.

**Tennessee/Arkansas:** Interim State Representative Vicki Pappas reported that Chattanooga and Little Rock are current in their stewardship. She is still seeking a State Representative for this area. She will be contacting the parishes in these states during the spring.

**SW Ohio:** State Representative Valerie Baker sent a written report. She has been contacting her parishes. She has also sent a questionnaire to her parishes to get more information about their church music programs. She commented about the positive impact of visiting parishes in person, both for her and the parish church musicians.

**Eastern Pennsylvania:** There was no report from State Representative Kathy Doulgeris.

**Western Pennsylvania:** There is no State Representative yet for this state.

**West Virginia:** There is no State Representative yet for this state.

**Metro Detroit:** State Representative Elaine Charalambopoulos reported to Ted that she has not been active as she has had surgery and is also supporting her daughter through surgery. Ted reported some changes in personnel - Evey Simon is no longer director at St. Nicholas/Troy; Shannon Filareki is the new director. George Raptis is directing at Annunciation. Father Anthony Cooke is the new priest for Southgate.

**Outstate Detroit:** There was no report from State Representative Ruthie Munk.

**New York:** There was no report from Co-State Representatives Zoi Varahidis and Tom Getska.

**ACTION:** Vicki will turn Valerie’s questionnaire into an online survey for all Federation parishes. She will then prepare reports for the State Representatives with the results from their areas.
**Metropolis Youth Music Advisors**

**Pittsburgh Metropolis:** Diane Matzorkis reported that she has contacted churches in the Pittsburgh area and Father Michael Kalleur as Metropolis Youth Director. In the Cleveland area, St. Demetrios will be hosting a Youth Talent event in July after the Convention. She has not found active youth choirs in any of parishes, although some youth sing with adult choirs.

**Detroit Metropolis:** There was no report from Evey Simon.

**Other Committee or Administrative Updates**

a. Peter Vatsures distributed the Leadership database he has updated. It consists of contact information for the priest, choir director, music representative, chanter, and youth director for each parish.

   **ACTION:** Officers and State Representatives should send Peter updates.

   **ACTION:** Peter will send the Leadership list to Kathy and Vicki for their databases.

b. **Byzantine Echo:** Co-Editors Vicki Pappas and Barbara Minton reported they have prepared and distributed three issues of the electronic Echo. They plan one more during Lent, one shortly after Pascha, and one or two more before the Convention. Convention news will be a priority, as will announcements about our scholarships and the Athenagoras nominations.

   Vicki also shared the results of a reader survey they recently conducted to assess early reaction to sending the Echo electronically. Responses were overwhelmingly positive and people seem to be printing out and posting copies for church musicians without emails. Also provided were good suggestions for future articles. They plan to continue the survey later in the year.

   Officer feedback was also positive. It was suggested to add a “Do You Remember?” section in the Echo and in emails to drive people to MEFGOX website.

c. **Governance:** Co-Chairs Vicki and Barbara completed the lengthy Convention Procedures section last fall and they are currently being used by the Cincinnati Convention Committee. The remaining revisions are relatively minor, and they will concentrate on completing them as soon as possible.

d. **Federation Website and Facebook page:** Webmaster Nicholas Bodle presented his written report, stating that he has done some redesigning, re-organizing, and updating to the website. He has also added a Facebook plug-in so that whatever is posted on Facebook also appears on the home page of the website. He is working with Convention Registration Chairperson to provide an alternate Convention registration and payment option (PayPal) on the website. Mary suggested it would be helpful to add instructional videos and recordings in the future.

   **ACTION:** Vicki to send Nicholas the scanned Echo’s from Mary Ameredes’s archive.

   When completed, she will send him the scanned Convention Albums.

   **ACTION:** All officers are encouraged to periodically check the website and communicate any updates and ideas to Ted and Nicholas.

e. There was discussion about the need for training videos and podcasts on websites and Facebook. Nicholas has a web page where he posts music transcriptions (Roubanis, Vrionides, Sakellaridis): [www.orthodoxmusic.us](http://www.orthodoxmusic.us)

**Convention Updates**

**2012 Final Report:** Dan Packis provided a final report of the Rocky River Convention. He reported that there were 119 adult singers, 30 youth singers, 4 clergy, and 10 guests/spouses, totaling 165 registrants. The Album netted $3,532; registration and individual tickets $2,154; pictures $50; and the CD $264. Underwriters provided $6,000. Total profit for the Convention was $12,000, with half ($6,000) for the Federation.
2013 Cincinnati: Janice Kellaris reported on plans and progress.

Publicity: The Convention logo, letterhead, and covers have been designed. The plan to invite the general public to the Divine Liturgy and the CMI’s; it was suggested they charge for CMI, and have people register so we have an idea of numbers.

Album: Letters are ready to send to parishes for their church musicians’ ads and other local ads. Peter will provide the historical information needed for the Album.

ACTION: An Album Contract packet should be sent to each choir director and representative using Peter’s list. It can also be sent via the email list.

Events: Preliminary ideas are hosting a Cincinnati Night on Thursday with Greek dancing, dinner and musical presentations for Friday night, and the Reception and Grand Banquet on Saturday night followed by Greek dancing. Vicki and Barbara reported some of the ideas they were developing for Church Music Institute: individual talks with the Metropolitans, clergy and choir coordination, and Byzantine chant.

ACTION: Janice will talk with Evey Simon regarding a possible youth music program; one possibility for a youth social event is to attend a Cincinnati Reds baseball game on Friday evening.

ACTION: Vicki and Barbara will work with Janice to reconcile the schedule.

Registration: Cincinnati will be trying an online registration this year, and are working with Nicholas. She reported that PayPal comes with a cost of $700 to implement – consensus was that it was too expensive; either eliminate it or find a cheaper way.

There was discussion about how to disseminate registration information about the Convention. While much can be sent via the email list, the Echo, and the website/Facebook, there was also a sense that there should be one mailing to individuals on the MEFGOX database. Also discussed was manning of the registration desk: it was suggested to ask parish non-singers to handle the registration desk instead of asking the hotel to do this (e.g., seniors, GOYANs, other parish members).

ACTION: The Convention City will mail a Registration Packet to all 1400 individuals on the MEFGOX database. Kathy Doulgeris will send Cincinnati an Excel file for the printer’s use for addressing and mailing.

ACTION: The Convention City will send all registrants a Welcome Packet at the beginning of July.

ACTION: The Convention City will send publicity to Vicki for the email list and the Echo.

Finance: Janice presented preliminary figures for various budget lines. Registration fees were decided upon.

MOTION PASSED (Vatsures/Pappas) to set registration at $180 for early registration.

MOTION PASSED (Vatsures/Georgantas) to set late registration at $210.

MOTION PASSED (Pappas/Georgantas) to set the youth rate (22 and below) to equal the cost of meals plus the costs of any Special Youth Special Event.

Planning for the Spring Federation Council Meeting
Saturday, May 18th was confirmed as the Federation Council meeting date. Ted will contact suggested parishes: St. George/Massillon, St. Paul/North Royalton, or Sts. Constantine and Helen/Cleveland, OH.

A major item of business will be selection of music for 2014 and 2015. Some possibilities were discussed: for instance, one of Anna Gallos’s settings, Ted Bogdanos, or George Raptis. Stan Takis sent in the idea of considering a youth choir to do the entire Liturgy and the adult choir to do a concert instead.

National Forum
Vicki reported that the National Forum has received a $75,000 grant from Leadership 100. This provides MEFGOX with $5000 for CMI’s. She also reported that a slightly revised version of the Christ is Risen as approved by our Holy Synod will be distributed to parishes at Lent’s start. The Forum is working with the Department of Religious Education to submit church music articles in a forthcoming issue of PRAXIS and will also be meeting about a church music supplement for the youth curriculum. Peter Vatsures reported that the Liturgical Guidebook was distributed through the Orthodox Market Place for the first time this year, and for the most part was successful; some refinements in the process will be looked at for next year.
Comments for the Good of the Order
a. Peter suggested we initiate a Years of Service award for choir members. Priests could present the award on Church Music Sunday.

b. Ted will be attending the National Forum’s Council of Presidents meeting in Boston in April. He asked for any issues he might raise: one suggestion was that the Forum consider funding a choir to record music to put on websites? Professional recordings of Greek Orthodox liturgical music are needed.

Adjournment
Upon a motion by Irene Georgantas and a second by Dan Packis, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vicki Pappas
Vicki Pappas
Secretary