Executive Board Meeting
September 7, 2013
St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Southgate, MI

Officers Present: President Ted Niforos; Vice-President Dan Packis; Secretary and State Rep Vicki Pappas; Treasurer and Pittsburg Metropolis Liaison Peter Vatsures; State Rep Elaine Charalambopoulos; and Detroit Metropolis Liaison Barbara Minton.

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 9:50 am with President Ted Niforos leading the group in the Lord’s Prayer. Father Anthony Cooke joined the group later during the meeting, offered words of welcome, and engaged in conversation over some of the agenda items.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes of the March 16, 2013 Executive Board Meeting had been previously distributed. Ted reviewed the highlights. Correction: Rhea Ballas is the Metropolis Youth Director, not Father Kallaur, who is now at Holy Cross Church in Pittsburgh.

MOTION PASSED (Elaine Charalambopoulos/Barbara Minton) to accept the minutes as corrected.

President’s Report
Ted Niforos reported that he has written thank you letters related to the Convention and also to the Grand Rapids Philoptochos. He discussed the Detroit Metropolis Youth Advisor position with Evey Simon and Maritsa Kalacz. He also made calls to identify State Representatives for Western Michigan and West Virginia with no results yet, and spoke with Tom Getska, Zoi Varahidis, and Ruthie Munk who all agreed to continue as State Representatives for their respective areas. He attended the birthday celebration for Metropolitan Nicholas.

Ted also talked with Anna Gallos to inform her that we had selected her music, the Gallos II liturgy, for 2014 and 2015. We prefer the side-by-side Greek/English version, with the Greek text version enlarged.

ACTION: Vicki Pappas will contact Anna Gallos about purchase of the side-by-side version of Gallos II. She will also ask if the product can be 3-hole punched; our singers would provide their own binders.

Financial Updates
1. Treasurer’s Report and Budget
Peter Vatsures presented a report from 9/1/12-8/31/13, which is a complete Federation year: The beginning balance was $13,196.53. Income was $15,663.96, with expenses of $11,234.01, leaving a net gain for the year of $4,429.95 and a balance of about $17,500.00.

Peter presented a draft budget for 2013-14, and members made revisions. The final budget showed anticipated income to be $14,609, with expenses of $16,015.00, leaving a net loss of $1,406.00 and a Treasury balance of about $16,100.00.

MOTION PASSED (Peter Vatsures/Elaine Charalambopoulos) to accept the budget as revised.

ACTION: We will place the approved budget on the MEFGOX website.

2. Patrons Campaign
Anna Niforos submitted a written report in her absence. By the end of August, the Patrons Program netted $2,312.00 for the year. The average donation is about $100 from Philoptochos chapters, and about $40-$45 from individuals. Dan suggested we appeal to those who did not attend the Cincinnati Convention this year to make a Patrons donation in lieu of their attendance.

**ACTION:** Ann will create a message such as Dan suggested and Vicki will send it to the MEGOXO email list.

3. **Stewardship**
   Peter reported for Tony Thrubis. 62 parishes were stewards last year. Peter received some contributions just before August 31st, the end of the Federation year: Memphis, Lansing, Lancaster, Bethlehem, and North Royalton. He noted that there are still some major churches who did not contribute. Average donations were about $100.00.

   **ACTION:** We will place the final 2012-13 stewardship list on the MEGOX website.

   **ACTION:** Tony and Peter will send out the 2013014 stewardship mailing in November.

   **ACTION:** Peter will add all active parishes to the stewardship list, to be submitted to him by Vicki.

4. **Memorial Scholarship Fund**
   Trustees Chair Dan Packis presented his report as of 8/1/13. The fund earned $462.75 in interest last year. Five scholarships were presented at the Convention totaling $4,050.00 - the Trustees used $1,837.25 from the corpus as allowed by our revised By-Laws since interest was below 5%. There were eight applicants this year, but three were not eligible because their parishes were not current in their stewardship.

   At the Convention, we received $935.00 plus $1135.00 using the new donation format, $2070.00. Since the Convention, the fund has received additional donations. The Fund now totals $85,992.05.

   The Special Banquet appeal for contributions to the Fund was very successful, and added a different flavor to the Fund Drive, making the process a little more personal. Several people commented after seeing how it was being handled, that it was very nice, not a competition, and the amounts were not made public. It was very moving that Metropolitan Nicholas and the priests read every name individually at the Memorial Service at the Divine Liturgy.

   **ACTION:** We will conduct the Special Banquet appeal again in Columbus.

   Dan also reported that he is still looking at investment firms to manage the Scholarship Fund.

**State Representatives Reports**

**Metro Detroit:** Elaine Charalambopoulos had nothing to report. She is trying to plan a gathering of directors and perhaps a Christmas Concert for the area.

**Outstate Michigan:** Ruth Munk will continue to be the representative of this area. She did not submit a report for her area.

**Indiana/Kentucky:** Vicki reported that she made a presentation to the congregation of Holy Apostles in Indianapolis regarding congregation singing in August. This Sunday, she has been invited to Holy Trinity in Fort Wayne to talk to the congregation about rejuvenating their choir.
SW Ohio: Valerie Baker submitted a written report in her absence. She has made contacts with her parishes and assisted Springfield and Middletown. She is hoping to plan a Columbus choir visitation to Springfield.

NE Ohio: Mary Matzorkis did not submit a report for her area of Ohio.

Tennessee/Arkansas: Interim Rep Vicki Pappas reported that she has contacted these parishes for more current information about their rosters and activities. Anna Maria Miller has expressed an interest in becoming the State Representative for these parishes for 2014-15.

New York: Neither Zoe Varahidis or Tom Getska submitted a report for their state.

Eastern PA: Kathy Doulgeris did not submit a report for her area.

Western PA: No report – a representative still needs to be identified for parishes in this area.

West Virginia: No report - a representative still needs to be identified for parishes in this area.

There was concern expressed that the Representatives are not transmitting information to us: we especially need information about director and priest changes, chanters, mailing lists, activities, and needs.

Metropolis Liaisons

Pittsburgh: Peter reported on the Ohio Valley Choir’s Reunion in August. They sang at Steubenville, with George Sarabalas directing. A memorial service was prayed for those in the original group; only about half of the original members still sing in choirs. Peter spoke with them about the Federation, our conventions, etc. Many don’t have email; he encouraged those with email to pass information on. He anticipates some participation in Columbus. Peter felt it was a very positive visit. The Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly will be held at Holy Trinity in Pittsburgh on September 25th - 28th and Peter will attend as a member of the Metropolis Council.

Detroit: Barbara Minton reported that the Federation was represented at Metropolitan Nicholas’s 60th birthday celebration. Plans are in the works for some type of gathering of choir directors of Metropolitan Detroit to plan a Christmas program and discuss other church music topics. There are many changes in the Metropolis regarding priests and directors. Father Dean Hountalis is now serving as Interim Chancellor. The Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly will be held in Cincinnati on September 25th - 28th and Vicki will attend as a member of the Metropolis Council.

Planning Discussion

1. CMI’s for 2013-14: Co-Chairs Vicki and Barbara presented a written report of the evaluations of the various workshops held as part of the Church Music Institute during the Cincinnati Convention – all workshops were extremely well received; the ratings were the highest ever.

Types of chanting workshops for the Columbus Convention were discussed. There is a desire to include a program for youth provided there is a core in the Columbus area. Several chanters and clergy were discussed for possibilities as instructors; Vicki and Barbara like to select needed topics first, and then match instructors to them. Other suggestions were to continue holding a workshop on Thursday evening where attendance is greatest; include topics like a cappella singing, vocal techniques for male voices, and priests’ vestments and the meaning of their colors; and include active participation in workshops as Anna Maria did.

Barbara and Vicki would like to once again offer opportunities for regional CMI’s and also plan a workshop for the spring Council meeting to encourage better attendance.

ACTION: Barbara and Vicki were given the OK to go ahead with planning these additional educational offerings.
2. **Young Adult Recruitment:** Discussion was held about recruiting for the 25-45 year old age group. Many parishes are suburban and those communities have great music programs in schools; why can’t we get them after college? We could emphasize that being in the choir is a way to help new parishioners feel part of the church family. We should concentrate on new parishioners – making them feel welcome and encouraging choir service. Do directors and priests see this welcoming role as part of their responsibility?

   **ACTION:** Place articles in the Echo and in Shepherd’s Staff.

3. **Meetings:** Concern was expressed about lack of officer attendance at meetings. It was suggested we utilize conference calls for routine reports; the officers should concentrate on traveling to key areas for substantive discussion about Federation participation, Convention attendance, choir/chanter needs, etc. Limit such meetings to 1-2 topics.

   **ACTION:** A meeting in the Pittsburgh area will be planned with Metropolitan Savas.

   **ACTION:** Ted will hold an Executive Board Conference call in October (issues agenda). He also will convene a conference call just for State Representatives.

   **ACTION:** There will be a face-to-face Executive Board meeting on March 15th in Columbus. The Spring Federation Council meeting will occur after Pascha.

4. **Chanters:** Vicki shared a discussion she had with Richard Barrett about building relationships with our chanters. He has offered to make contact with chanters for the Federation.

   **ACTION:** Vicki will request a written proposal from Richard about what activities he might conduct.

**Evaluation of the Cincinnati Convention**

Janice Kellaris submitted a written preliminary report. While her parish was disappointed in the low turn-out, she reported on the enjoyments and benefits to those that attended as well as to her own parishioners. Publicity and facilities were good; the ad book broke even. Projected profit is $2,375.00, to be split 50-50 with the Federation.

   **ACTION:** The Federation will follow-through to see if the honoraria and travel were paid.

Officers discussed the reasons for low attendance in Cincinnati. While distance and conflicts with personal events is always present, it was agreed that we must emphasize that there is more to coming to the Convention than the music that is selected. Adding more hours for CMI’s may be a possibility.

Officers also brainstormed different ways of presenting the Convention, less of an emphasis on learning new music for Sunday; more of an emphasis on learning new music in workshops or as part of the CMI.

**Youth Initiative**

**Detroit Metropolis:** Maritsa Madias-Kalasz has agreed to serve as the new Youth Advisor for the Metropolis.

   **ACTION:** We will ask Maritsa to gather information from each parish by developing a common form of information to identify.

   **ACTION:** Ted will plan a meeting with Metropolitan Nicholas, Maritsa, and Barbara to discuss direction based on the information Maritsa is able to gather.

**Pittsburgh Metropolis:** There was no report submitted by Diane Matzorkis.
Other Committee or Administrative Updates

1. Byzantine Echo: Co-Editors Barbara and Vicki prepared and distributed the Convention issue in August electronically. Another electronic issue is planned for October/November.

2. Governance: Co-Chairs Barb and Vicki reviewed the Convention Procedures and made clarifications.
   
   **ACTION:** They will disseminate the revised procedures to officers for an OK after getting feedback from Janice Kellaris.

   Vicki also presented a draft dissolution amendment to our By-Laws, needed so Dan can complete our application as a 501(c) 3 status.
   
   **ACTION:** Peter Vatsures to run it by Peter Papadakos for his suggestions.

3. Web Site and Facebook Page: Webmaster Nicholas Bodle sent a written report in his absence, including suggestions for upgrades to the MEFGOX website. Dan made edits to the Scholarship Application Form and it was reposted on the website.
   
   **ACTION:** Dan to add additional edits and send a revised document to Nicholas for re-posting.

2014 Convention in Columbus

Peter Vatsures reported that the parish has signed contract with the Hampton Inn Hotel, which is right next to the church; this provides a gain of about an hour and a half in time as people will be able to walk to the church (a golf cart was suggested for some attendees). Most rooms will be king bed and a good pull-out couch (no bars). Cut-off dates for hotel rates will be very firm. All attendees will be able to park free in the Church lot. A parishioner is donating money to apply to bringing down the room rate. A Master Account at the Church will be established so everyone can receive the state tax discount.

Other ideas were suggested: Expand Saturday lunch another hour for a more casual lunch and/or see shops on “Short North.” Add a Thursday afternoon rehearsal (consider an incentive/reward for attendance). Possible Vespers on Saturday night.

   **ACTION:** The Convention Committee will be meeting with their priests and Parish Council and will send the official letter to the Federation.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Upon a motion by Barbara Minton and Elaine Charalambopoulos, President Niforos adjourned the meeting at 4:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Vicki Pappas**

Vicki Pappas
Secretary