

Minutes of the 44th Assembly of the Diocese of New England Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT – Oct. 26-27, 2007

The Assembly opened with a Service of Prayer celebrated by His Grace Bishop NIKON of Boston at 10:10 AM on Friday morning, October 26, 2007. The first plenary session took place in the nave of the Ss. Peter and Paul Church and convened at 10:40 AM with His Grace going over Rules Governing Resolutions, Motions and Voting at New England Diocesan Assemblies, Fr. Dennis Rhodes moved and George Ludko second the motion to accept these rules for the DNE Assembly. The main item in the rules was that 60% of voting members is required to pass motions and resolutions approved for presentation by the Resolutions Committee. (See Appendix I for full text.). Motion passed.

His Grace, Bishop NIKON, then welcomed all Clergy, Delegates, and Observers to the Assembly.

I. ELECTION OF ASSEMBLY OFFICERS

With the blessing of His Grace, Bishop NIKON, Fr. John Kreta chaired the election of Assembly Officers, as follows:

Clergy Vice Chair – Fr. Dennis Rhodes, nominated by the Diocesan Council. Fr. John Kreta called for the vote of acceptance. Passed unanimously.

Lay Vice Chair – Greg Shesko, nominated by the Diocesan Council. Fr. John Kreta called for the vote of acceptance. Passed unanimously.

Secretariat – Fr. David Koles (the Diocesan Secretary) and Prdn. Paul Nimchek nominated by the Diocesan Council. George Ludko was nominated from the floor. Fr. John Kreta called for the vote of acceptance. Passed unanimously.

Credentials Committee – Timothy Tassmer and Paul Culton, nominated by the Diocesan Council, Nicholas Bobrovsky, nominated from the floor. Fr. John Kreta called for the vote of acceptance. Passed unanimously.

Nominations and Resolutions Committee – Fr. Mark Sherman and Fr. Steven Voytovich, nominated by the Diocesan Council, Victoria Givotovsky nominated from the floor. Fr. John Kreta called for the vote of acceptance. Passed unanimously.

II. HIERARCH'S REPORT

His Grace, Bishop NIKON welcomed everyone and was grateful to Fr. Joshua Mosher and the parishioners of Ss. Peter and Paul for their work and preparation for this Diocesan Assembly.

Assignments & Ordinations:

- Fr. Michael Roshak was assigned to Three Saints in Ansonia.
- Fr. Barnabas Fravel was assigned to St Nicholas in Pittsfield.
- Fr. Caleb Abetti was ordained in Northfield Falls to become the pastor of that mission parish.
- Dn. Theodore Feldman was ordained at Holy Trinity Cathedral.
- Dn. Christopher Westrate was also ordained at Holy Trinity Cathedral.
- Dn. Steven Hosking was ordained at Holy Annunciation in Maynard.
- Dn. Gregory Uhrin was ordained in Claremont, NH.
- Dn. Brian Donovan was ordained in Springfield VT.
- Dn. John Konkle was ordained in Northfield Falls.
- Dn. Ambrose Powel was ordained in Claremont, NH.
- Early in November the ordination to the Holy Diaconate of Nicholas Finley in Terryville, Connecticut will take place.

Transfers:

- Fr. George Tyapko to the Omophorion of His Beatitude.
- Fr Alexei Kaluzhny asked for a medical leave of absence.

Status of Deacons:

There is a difference in interpretation between “attached” and “assigned”. Assigned deacons have specific responsibilities and in most cases also receive a stipend from the parish. This is a generality, but it is and has been the procedure we have been following for our previous assemblies. Several whose formal and official status should be changed and I do plan to make these changes in status for just a few of our deacons after the beginning of the New Year.

Diocesan Incorporation:

The New England Diocese incorporation was filed under the Connecticut General Statutes on December 10, 1969 under the name:

"Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, New England Diocese Corporation"

The document also indicates that an amendment was filed on May 22, 1973 to change the name to:

"Orthodox Church in America, Hartford and New England Diocesan Corporation"

There might have been by-laws submitted at that time or simply the OCA Statues were used. We are in the process of trying to find by-laws but none have been located. By laws might be a project for our diocesan council to consider during the coming year.

The National Crisis:

As hierarchs, as clergy; are we feeding our sheep? Do we provide the tools of support for shepherding the faithful and finding and retrieving those who are lost? As hierarchs we are ever mindful that from the beginning the church has survived a multitude of crisis. Through crisis after crisis, the Holy Church has been victorious and will survive the current dysfunction that we find ourselves in now.

Time for Discussion:

I have allotted some time for our delegates to discuss their frustration in our soap opera pace and seemingly non responsive church leaders. But I do not want to make this discussion the essence of our Assembly. In addition, all who wish to speak or make proposals or resolutions will be allotted 5 minutes of that hour or hour and a half. So that as many that wish to speak may do so. We most certainly may speak our minds with the understanding that we will respect the other person’s point of view. That with true Christian love we can listen, understand and appreciate our brothers and sisters concerns and perhaps see things as they might see them. I will make a few comments prior to that discussion, and yes, the timer will be set for me as well.

Communications:

Fr. Sergius Halvorsen had accepted the responsibilities of communications director and he has done a stellar job dealing with the Diocesan Newspaper, updating our diocesan mailing list, O-N-E Stewards and the Webpage. I do recommend that the position of communications director be added to our diocesan council as a voting member.

Chancellor:

Our Deans are ever busy with issues in their respective deaneries and I want to express my sincere thanks for the tireless efforts of our chancellor and deans. Fr. John Kreta is in contact with me almost on a daily basis and I with him. He has always been available whenever I have called upon him or when pastors or parishes have enlisted his advice and counsel.

Fr. John has also spoken on numerous occasions with Fr. Michael Westerberg. Fr. Michael has been a tremendous resource for our chancellor. We wish to especially thank him as we are most grateful for his advice and insights on issues pertaining to our diocese

Metropolitan Council:

Following Fr. Michael Westerberg's resignation as our clergy representative to the Metropolitan Council, I appointed Fr. Mark Sherman to complete the term of Fr. Michael. It is quite gratifying to see that the representatives to the Metropolitan Council from our Diocese and of the Albanian Archdiocese are in contact with each other and have worked together at these meetings. Our Clergy rep. Fr. Mark Sherman and Lay rep. Dn. John Zarras have been doing a wonderful job representing not only us but the church at large.

COLA Adjustment:

I know that COLA will be addressed by Greg Shesko later on in our assembly. It has been the practice to always use the NE Regional COLA adjustment for our diocese simply because it always ran slightly higher than all other schedules. The policy of using the NE regional area COLA has not changed, but I recommend that our diocese always look at the regional and national COLA amounts and always use the higher amount. This would require a resolution or motion for our consideration if a change is to be made. This year there is an anomaly. The NE area COLA, 0.8, is quite minimal and much lower than the national, 2.4. Perhaps a resolution to always use the higher of the two would be a more accurate policy for our parishes and pastors.

Youth:

I continue to meet with the OCF, that is the Orthodox Christian Fellowship, the campus ministry for all Orthodox College students. I usually attend the meetings at the University of CT. This is a very active group that sponsors lectures and seminars on campus that are open to the public. It is their way of outreach and witnessing. At these meetings there are usually non-Orthodox students that have shown some interest in Orthodoxy. Fr. Jason Vansuch also participates with the OCF students at UCONN and has held several Vesper services and Akathist services in the Greek Chapel on campus. Our OCF Students from UCONN annually participate in "Real Break" where they travel to different areas of the country and participate in the local outreach and mission ministry activities. Holy Trinity in Willimantic and Fr. Mark Vranes actually serve as the UCONN students' parish away from home.

In addition I greeted the students from Crossroads when they visited Boston. Crossroads is a program where Orthodox high school and college students from around the country travel to Massachusetts, stay at Holy Cross Seminary for lectures and make visitations to numerous churches around the Metropolitan area. Last year they were able to visit both Holy Trinity Cathedral and Saint George Cathedral.

Annually, I do take the time to meet with our children at Rally. Fr. John Hopko along with his fellow clergy and staff do an excellent job and Youth Rally is an important part of our diocesan programs. It is supported in part by O-N-E Stewards.

Pension Plan:

I continue to serve as Episcopal moderator of the OCA’s Pension Plan. The plan now has assets exceeding 25 million dollars and is operated totally independent of the National Church’s budget.

The Deaneries and Visitations:

The Massachusetts Deanery of the Albanian Archdiocese continues to hold the Akathist services on Friday evenings during Great Lent and I am most pleased to be present with our parishes during the Great Lenten Period. In order to keep a balance I make every effort to attend Pre-Sanctified Liturgies in our New England parishes on Wednesday evenings during Great Lent and the Albanian parishes on Friday evenings during Great Lent. Holy Week is mostly reserved for the cathedrals in Boston. This is in keeping with Episcopal norms, regulations and canons of the Holy Orthodox Church. Last year was a first. The Albanians start a little earlier than Holy Trinity Cathedral. I served at St George Cathedral, and then went to Holy Trinity Cathedral just in time to attend the Paschal Liturgy.

Credential’s Report presented by Paul Culton: as of 11:30am

<u>Voting Attendees</u>		<u>Non-Voting Attendees</u>	
Hierarchs	1	Observers, Guests, Alternates	17 (17 observers, 0 guests.)
Clergy Delegates	23		
Diocesan Council	10		
Lay Delegates	<u>20</u>		
Subtotal	54	Subtotal	17

Grand Total Voting and Non-Voting 71

III. METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPORT:

Fr. Mark Sherman presented the report. (hard copy of reports; MC Report and Chronology of National Church Financial Crisis are on file) Fr. Mark summarized what has been happening this past year concerning the MC and the Special Investigating Commission (SIC). Fr. Mark Sherman has been appointed chairman of the new Ethics Committee of the MC. There will be an AAC next year November 10-13, 2008 at the Hilton Hotel in Pittsburgh, PA. A new Investigative Committee has been appointed. Fr. Mark talked about the circumstances and resolutions concerning former chancellor Kondratick. (pg 2-3 of MC report). What questions need answers (pg 4 of MC report)? What has been accomplished (pg 5 of MC report)? The MC has begun to operate as a strong oversight body in accordance with the statute but is meeting with resistance from the Holy Synod and Met. HERMAN.

Dn. John Zarras presented a power-point presentation (hard copy of presentation on file) on the reorganization of the chancery in Syosset. Dn. John is a member of the Task Force for Reorganization. He told about how the Task Force went about its job of finding new people for the top four positions as outlined by the Task Force; Chancellor, Secretary for the Metropolitan, Director of Communications and Treasurer. All these people report directly to the Metropolitan.

Dn. John also announced that a new OCA treasurer, Fr. Michael Tassos, has been selected. He is a CPA from California and is waiting for release from the Antiochian Archdiocese to the OCA.

IV. **DISCUSSION ON THE FINANCIAL CRISIS:**

Fr. Dennis Rhodes chaired this question and answer session concerning the ongoing crisis. First he asked that if anyone has come to the assembly with a resolution from their particular parish to bring it to His Grace at the beginning of this discussion for examination and if it is OK it will be read and discussed. Any resolution presented at this time would not be voted upon only discussed and voted upon at the time of resolutions in the session held on Saturday.

A resolution was presented by the church council of All Saints of America Church, Salisbury, CT, pertaining to the withholding of assessments from the OCA by the DNE.

Questions arose concerning how would the withholding of funds effect the SIC in doing it's job. Fr. Mark Sherman didn't think it would have any effect. Dn. John Zarras said it would only impact those working at Syosset, Departments of the OCA, it stipends to the bishops, etc.

Fr. Mark was under the impression from legal counsel of the MC that law suits would not be productive. Fr. Arida stated that when the DMW was not withholding its assessments, the work of the SIC was being impeded. Since they began withholding the SIC has been reconstituted and is beginning its work without outside interference.

Dn. Patrick Donovan asked if information gleaned from SIC would be made public. Fr. Mark Sherman stated that he did not know if the results would be made public?

It was also stated that the Holy Synod has posted on the OCA website that it would have to review the report of SIC as to what would be made public. Fr. William DuBovik said he is always troubled when we speak of withholding funds since it affects both the good things as well as the bad. It reminds us of what happened to many parishes when people didn't like what the priest or the council was doing. When things didn't go their way they took their ball and went elsewhere. We should not be moving backward but looking forward.

Fr. Robert Dick believes that the cover-up is worse than the original problem. Without repentance there can be no forgiveness. The faithful see no repentance but rather obstruction, cover-up, obfuscation, etc. A strong statement must be sent. We become enablers if we continue supporting the dysfunction that is the OCA.

Fr. John Hopko stated that if everyone who had something to do with the crisis "leaves the room" and then we can start anew. The only person still in his place is Metropolitan HERMAN.

Fr. Steven Voytovich thanked His Grace for the open forum to discuss the crisis. He then gave us a word from his council concerning how this situation seems to be affecting his parish and its parishioners; they believe withholding is not the best way to have a voice in this situation. Rather to request our diocesan bishop to speak up against what the Holy Synod and Metropolitan HERMAN are doing in impeding the progress in resolving the crisis.

Fr. Mark Sherman stated that by our acceptance we would stand behind Abp. JOB so that he would not be the only one speaking against the current interference.

Fr. Michael Westerberg is against withholding because it tears apart the body of Christ. Those who have been dealing with this problem firsthand have dealt with much more pain and anguish than anyone of our parishioners.

Fr. Andrew Tregubov stated that the Metropolitan is supposed to be first among equals and not just the guy on top.

The session ended at 1:30pm to break for Lunch.

Session II Began at 2:45pm (continuation of previous discussion)

Fr. Sergius Halvorsen stated that morale is at an all time low by both senior clergy and those who are at our seminaries about to enter the vocation. When our morale is low true evangelization goes by the wayside. If we do not take some kind of action then we are sort of accepting the status quo. We must ask ourselves are we true stewards of what we have been entrusted.

Fr. Dennis Rhodes stated that the question is who also was involved.

Fr. John Hopko wonders what does Syosset do for us anyway. He remembered, back when he was a worker at the chancery that Syosset didn't help his current parish and they don't help now. This is a wake-up call for the few at Syosset to get with the program and start doing the work of the church. Also by passing the presented resolution we aren't withholding but rather putting our assessments in escrow. It will be paid at a later date "when they get their act together."

The discussion turned to "what does the national church do for the local parish or diocese?"

Dn. John Zarras stated that the discussions that have been held by the Task Force believe that many of the things that have been handled by the national church need to be given back to the local diocese. Also that this "crisis" has been hanging around for almost two years without any end in sight. The frustration he sees is that other priorities are taking place rather than resolving the current problem first.

A second resolution was proposed, a modified version of the earlier one that withholding would be for one quarter of the year until the first Special Investigative Committee (SIC) report was presented. The Diocesan Council under the guidance of Bishop NIKON would review the report and decide whether to withholding should continue or not.

Greg Shesko asked what our Diocese is trying to say and/or accomplish by withholding funds. The DMW had benchmarks when they passed their resolution to withhold. Other dioceses at their assemblies passed strong resolutions without having one about withholding. How did this happen? Why did this happen? And how do we avoid this happening again? This is what we need to say in the passing of any resolution.

Prdn. Paul Nimchek stated that the second resolution says its objective is to "put pressure" on the SIC so that they will do what they are charged to do.

Fr. Marc Vranes is against withholding of funds because of the assurances of Fr. Mark Sherman & Dn. John Zarras and the work of the MC.

Credential's Report presented by Tim Tassmer: as of 3:15pm

<u>Voting Attendees</u>		<u>Non-Voting Attendees</u>	
Hierarchs	1	Observers, Guests, Alternates	17 (17 observers, 0 guests.)
Clergy Delegates	21		
Diocesan Council	10		
Lay Delegates	<u>20</u>		
Subtotal	52	Subtotal	17
Grand Total Voting and Non-Voting		69	

V. PRESENTATION BY FR. VLADIMIR ALEANDRO:

Fr. Vladimir and Matushka Suzanne Aleandro made a missionary journey to Kenya this past summer as part of the IOCC mission building tour. Fr. Vladimir began his presentation with a brief history of how Orthodoxy got its start in Kenya.

He then gave a power point presentation on his journey.

VI. 2006 ASSEMBLY MINUTES

Prdn. Paul Nimchek asked for a clarification to his status on the Diocesan Council. He should be listed as Financial Secretary/Treasurer of ONE Stewards.

A motion to accept the 2006 Diocesan Assembly Minutes, with the clarification, was made by Marion Gulash, and seconded by Mat. Ann Sovyrda. The motion carried.

VII. REPORTS

Fr. Dennis Rhodes, Clergy vice Chair, asked that all members to read all the reports in the Assembly packet. It was requested that the ONE Stewards report be given orally.

ONE Stewards – Protodeacon Paul Nimchek reported on the decline in membership due to the lateness of getting the envelopes mailed.

VIII. TREASURER’S REPORT

Peter Kopcha, Diocesan Treasurer, presented the Treasurer’s Report

STATEMENT OF ASSETS:

Checkbook balance (8/31/2007):	\$ 15,515.08
Savings & Investments:	<u>\$ 69,895.16</u>
Total Cash Assets:	\$ 85,410.24

Value of Diocesan Residence:	<u>\$300,000.00</u>
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Total Assets:	\$385,410.24
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Outstanding Bonds and Loans:	\$ <u>1,000.00</u>
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Overall Diocesan Condition:	\$384,410.24
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BUDGET REPORT:

Total Budget Income for 2006-2007 fiscal year ending 08/31/07:	\$350,241.55
Total Budget Expense	<u>\$340,722.19</u>
Total Budget Expenses over Income	\$ 9,519.36

A complete, detailed breakdown of the Treasurer’s Report was distributed to those in attendance and copies are on file with the Diocesan Secretary. Peter reviewed orally all the reports he distributed, explaining the facts and figures presented in the printed information. He indicated that even though there was a shortfall in income the expense items were also down therefore an over profit of appx. \$7000.

ONE Stewards was budgeted for \$23k for 2007. Only \$ 9,900 has been received as of Aug. 31st.

Marilyn Shesko moved and Joan Skrobat seconded the acceptance of the Treasurers report.

IX. AUDITOR'S REPORT

Marion Gulash presented the findings of the Auditing Committee. A motion was made by Fr. Joshua Mosher, seconded by Tim Tassmer, that the Auditor's Report be accepted. The motion passed unanimously.

The session closed with prayer at 4:55 PM. The gathered body celebrated Vespers, followed by a dinner for the delegates at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Meriden.

***** Overnight Break *****

After the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning, October 27, 2007, at Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, Meriden, CT, followed by a brunch in the parish social hall, the Diocesan Assembly reconvened in the nave of that Church at 11:35 AM with the singing of "O Heavenly King."

X. OLD BUSINESS

Greg Shesko, Lay vice Chair, opened Session III with Old Business.

DIOCESAN TASK FORCE: Fr. Sergius Halvorsen presented the report of the Task Force on Diocesan Membership (see written report in assembly packet) that was appointed after the acceptance of a resolution on the declining population of our diocese from the DA last year. Members of the TF are Frs. Sergius Halvorsen, chairman, John Kreta, Mark Sherman and Dn. John Zarras.

Only 21 % of the parishes in the NE Diocese are growing. People have been leaving urban centers and the decline within the diocese is taking place in our "city" parish. The TF has sent out a new statistical form to gather more in-depth data. The big question is why have our parishes experienced a 38% decline while the NE region has experienced an 8% increase?

If people have moved away what can we do?

This is not just a numbers game but one concerned with people. What can be done to assist parishes that are struggling?

Evangelization is what is necessary.

A question arose about the migration of people to southern states. Has this been taken into consideration about membership in two parishes or proper transfer of persons to these areas? Fr. Robert Dick talked about urban parishes and missions located too close to these areas may not benefit either the mission or the existing parish.

Another area to look for evangelization is the un-churched population.

A new 'census' form that will include detailed metrics such as ages of adults & children, funerals, baptisms, etc. will be forthcoming.

Dn. John Zarras moved to endorse the recommendation of the Task Force to establish a permanent Committee on Evangelization and Revitalization (CER) second by Joan Skrobat. Motion passed unanimously.

His Grace thanked Fr. Sergius for the report and congratulated him on being named the new chairman of the CER.

XI. 2007 DIOCESAN BUDGET AND ASSESSMENT

Peter Kopcha, Diocesan Treasurer, presented the complete budget and assessment package for the upcoming financial year. Peter commented especially on the changes and adjustments from last year’s budget. Copies of the material distributed are on file with the Diocesan Secretary. As of this meeting there are 5 parishes that have not sent in the statistical information to the treasurer and the national church has not notified the diocese if the assessment will remain the same or rise. Therefore the “Fair Share” allocation is only a preliminary number until final statistics are received.

Peter explained the increases and decreases in the diocesan budget. It also noted that a line item for the AAC was placed into this budget since we did not know the date of the AAC. As of this date the AAC will be on November 2008 which will be within the 2009 fiscal year. Dn. John Zarras stated that since there has been withholding of assessments by the DMW all the monthly stipends (\$650) for diocesan bishops has been stopped. He inquired as to how this stipend could be given to our bishop. Greg Shesko said that the DNE would pay 1/2 of the monthly stipend since we share salary and fringe benefit payments with the Albanian Archdiocese.

Dn. John Zarras moved to increase the Bp. NIKON’s stipend from the DNE to \$20,575.00 which is an increase of \$325 per month. Second by Fr. Mark Sherman. Amendment to this motion by Prdn. Paul Nimchek to remove the line item for the AAC of \$1000 and to increase the Fair Share income by \$2575, this would balance the budget. Second by George Ludko.

Fr. Michael Westerberg spoke against the motion. How do we go back to our people and tell them that their Fare Share is going up because some of the faithful around the nation are withholding. If the bishops didn’t get their stipend from the national church maybe they would move faster to end the current situation (crisis).

Motion to accept the 2008 budget as amended made by Marion Gulash, seconded by Fr. Sergius Halvorsen. Motion passed with one abstention.

Credential’s Report presented by Nicholas Bobrovsky at 12:30 pm

<u>Voting Attendees</u>		<u>Non-Voting Attendees</u>	
Hierarchs	1	Observers, Guests, Alternates	13 (13 observers, 0 guests)
Clergy Delegates	21		
Diocesan Council	11		
Lay Delegates	<u>18</u>		
Subtotal	51	Subtotal	13
Grand Total Voting and Non-Voting		65	

XII. ELECTIONS TO THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Lay vice Chair, Greg Shesko asked Fr. Mark Sherman, Nominations and Resolutions Committee representative, to present the slate of candidates, as listed below:

SLATE:

Open Position: One (1) Clergy-at-Large Representative to Diocesan Council

Nominated Candidates from the Nominations Committee: Dn. Steven Hosking, Fr. Marc Vranes.

Open Positions: Three (3) Laity-at-Large Representatives to Diocesan Council [two for three years and one for one year to complete Peter Kopcha's term]*

Nominated Candidates from the Nominations Committee: George Ludko, Alexia Tassmer, Joseph Boruch.

Open Position: One (1) Clergy Representative to the Metropolitan Council

Nominated candidate from the Nominations Committee: Fr. Mark Sherman.

Open Position: One (1) Diocesan Auditor [non-voting]

Nominated Candidate from the Nominations Committee: Cindy Voytovich.

There were no additional nominations from the floor. Marylyn Shesko moved, and Marion Gulash seconded to close the nominations for these positions and cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated to positions without opposition. Motion passed.

The nominations process being concluded, elections by means of written ballot took place for the position having multiple candidates, that of Clergy Representative to the Diocesan Council.

XIII. ELECTION RESULTS

At this point in the Assembly the results of the elections to the Diocesan Council were announced as follows:

Position: One (1) Diocesan Council Clergy Representative:

Fr. Marc Vranes

* [Following the elections the three elected lay representatives gathered and agreed amongst themselves that Joseph Boruch would take the one year term.]

XIV. RESOLUTIONS

Bishop NIKON spoke before the Resolutions Committee presented the list of resolutions and stated that he could abide by the decisions of the assembly.

The Resolutions Committee presented four resolutions (see attached Appendix II)

The First Resolution, to make the Director of Communications of the Diocese of New England a voting member of the New England Diocesan Council, was seconded by Fr. Joshua Mosher. Passed unanimously by voice vote.

The Second Resolution, on the COLA, was seconded by Fr. John Bacon. Passed by voice vote with two abstentions.

The Third Resolution was seconded by Peter Kopcha. Marilyn Shesko presented an amendment to the final paragraph to read, "We, the 44th Assembly of the Diocese of New England respectfully request that the Holy Synod of Bishops of the OCA encourage His

Beatitude Metropolitan Herman retire for the good of the entire church.” Seconded by Fr. David Koles.

His Grace ruled that this resolution was not within the competence of the assembly. A question was raised if a simple vote of ‘No Confidence’ would be permitted. Bp. NIKON ruled that this also would be out of the competence of the assembly.

The Fourth Resolution concerning the withholding of diocesan Fair Share payments to the OCA was seconded by Eleanor Calabrese. Frs. John Hopko and Joshua Mosher pleaded that His Grace and the assembly express the feeling of ‘pain and suffering’ members of our diocese and the entire church are dealing with to the Holy Synod.

Fr. William DuBovik spoke against the resolution and urged the clergy and people to get behind the actions taken by Met. HERMAN and the Metropolitan Council.

Dn. John Zarras offered the following amendment; first, eliminate section (i) under the last ‘WHEREAS’; second, add the word “known” after the word “no” in sections (ii) & (iii); and third, add the word “may” in place of “will” in section (iv). The amendment was seconded by Fr. Robert Dick. A voice vote was taken on the amendment. Amendment passed.

Fr. John Bacon moved the question and a paper ballot was taken.

24 votes in favor, 25 votes against. Resolution was defeated.

XV. PENSION BOARD

The Pension Board reports that the current account has 27 million plus. A complete external audit of all pension funds has been completed. A new pension administrator is about to be hired. Many thanks were offered to Fr. Michael Westerberg for all his work as chairman of the Pension Board and fill-in administrator.

XVI. NEW BUSINESS

1) Prdn. Basil Andruchow talked about a Medical Bio-ethics symposium for the DNE. He stated that the media misrepresents the issues behind many of these medical procedures. Our clergy need pastoral guidance for many of these new areas of medicine. Fr. John Breck would be the main lecturer for this subject for the clergy and their wives. He encourages many to attend and to bring this material to the parish level. Possible dates will be January or Mid March to the end of April, 2008. The topic for this first series would be about the end of life. Prdn. Basil stated that there may be a charge of \$ 20 to \$50. The response was positive.

2) Fr. Steve Voytovich moved to thank Fr. Joshua Mosher, Alexia Tassmer and the entire local committee for all their work in preparation and hosting the diocesan assembly. Peter Kopcha seconded. Passed unanimously.

XVII. NEXT DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

2008 Diocesan Assembly: Cumberland, RI.

2009 Diocesan Assembly: Waterbury, CT.

2010 Diocesan Assembly: Northern Deanery

2011 Diocesan Assembly: Ansonia, CT

XVIII. ASSEMBLY ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the assembly was made at 2:00pm by Marion Gulash, seconded by Marilyn Shesko. All in favor rose and sang, "It is Truly Meet." With a benediction given by His Grace, Bishop NIKON, accompanied by prayerful best wishes for safe travel home on the part of all gathered for the Assembly, the proceedings came to a close.

Respectfully submitted,

The 2007 Diocesan Assembly Secretariat:

Fr. David Koles, Diocesan Secretary
Prdn. Paul Nimchek
George Ludko

APPENDIX I

Rules Governing Resolutions, Motions and Voting at New England Diocesan Assemblies

Article VII of The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America contains twenty sections pertaining to the Diocesan Assembly. Section 18 states:

The Diocesan Council, or the Assembly itself, may determine all voting procedures.

In October, 2005, the Diocesan Council promulgated rules concerning the submission and review of resolutions and motions to the Diocesan Assembly. These rules remain in effect (see the attached text).

As its first order of business, the 44th Diocesan Assembly is asked to approve the following voting procedures for this and subsequent Assemblies:

Approval of reports to the Diocesan Assembly shall be by voice vote.

Election of Assembly Officers shall be by voice vote or by show of hands; if there are multiple candidates then the vote will then be by secret ballot.

Election of Diocesan Officers shall be by secret ballot if there are multiple candidates for a particular position; otherwise the election will be by voice vote or by show of hands.

Voting on resolutions and motions approved for presentation by the Resolutions Committee shall be by secret ballot. In order to be approved by the Assembly, **a resolution or motion must receive sixty percent (60%) of those delegates present and voting.**

Submitted by Greg Shesko
October 26, 2007

APPENDIX II

RESOLUTIONS BY THE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE
44th NEW ENGLAND DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY
October 27, 2007

Resolution No.1

Presented by the Resolution Committee

Be it Resolved, that the Director of Communications of the Diocese of New England be a voting member of the New England Diocesan Council.

Resolution No.2

Presented by Greg Shesko, Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Assembly recommends that the higher of the three percentages will always be selected as the cost-of-living increase for New England diocesan clergy. The three percentages are the July 2007 Boston Consumer Price Index (CPI), the Northeast Region CPI, and the US city average CPI. The values of these percentages for 2007 are 0.8%, 2.0% and 2.4%, respectively. Therefore, for 2008, the recommended cost-of-living increase will be 2.4%.

Resolution No.3

Presented by Joseph Boruch, Nativity of the Holy Virgin Mary, Waterbury, CT, and Fr. David Koles, Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT

WHEREAS, the financial and legal crisis of the Church has not been resolved; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese called last year for “immediate compliance with the Statutes of the OCA,” and “principles and rules of corporate and fiduciary behavior, and action required to protect Church assets”; and

WHEREAS, to date fiduciary obligations continue to be breached

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Diocese of New England has lost confidence in the leadership of the OCA.

To remedy this situation we urge that quick and decisive changes be made to the highest leadership of the OCA.

We, the 44th Assembly of the Diocese of New England respectfully request that his Beatitude Metropolitan Herman relinquish his position as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America.

Resolution No.4

Combination by the Resolutions Committee of Resolutions by Victoria Givotovsky, All Saints of North America Church, Salisbury, CT; and Sarah Hofmann, St. Jacob of Alaska Mission, Montpelier/Northfield, VT

WHEREAS, the Diocese of New England, acting at its 44th Diocesan Assembly, deeply saddened and concerned by the financial crisis affecting our Church, wishes the good order of the Church for the protection and promotion of the spiritual progress of its members; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of New England recognizes that numerous actions have been taken to address and correct the causes for the present financial crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of New England commends the actions of our clergy, laity, and hierarchs for the work completed so far in addressing the causes of the crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese called last year for “immediate compliance with the Statutes of the OCA,” and “principles and rules of corporate and fiduciary behavior, and action required to protect Church assets”; and

WHEREAS, the financial and legal crisis of the Church has not been resolved; and

WHEREAS, to date fiduciary obligations continue to be breached in that

- (i) full investigation of the scandal by the Metropolitan Council has not been permitted to date, although such investigation is its duty under the Statute; and
- (ii) no attempt has been made to recover stolen Church assets by litigation or otherwise; and
- (iii) no report of apparent criminal actions has been made to the authorities; and
- (iv) continued inaction will result in possible civil and criminal remedies being barred by Statutes of Limitations.

IT IS HEREBYRESOLVED that all funds normally paid by this Diocese to the DCA Central Administration shall be put in escrow and remain in escrow until such time as His Grace, Bishop Nikon, has determined, with the assistance and upon the advice of an Oversight Committee of such individuals as he shall designate, that the foregoing conditions and breeches of fiduciary responsibility have been substantially remedied. The terms of such escrow and the functioning of such committee shall be such as His Grace shall determine to be necessary or advisable to protect the assets of the Diocese and carry out the purposes of this resolution.