




GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

Metropolitan MAXIMOS of Pittsburgh · 5201 Ellsworth Avenue · Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15232-1421
Telephone: 412-621-5529 · Fax: 412-621-1522 · Youth Office: 412-621-8543 · Web: www.pittsburgh.goarch.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Parish Priests of the God-Kept Metropolis of Pittsburgh
FROM: Rev. Archdeacon Ryan Gzikowski, Chancellor 
DATE: November 19, 2008
RE: Parish Council Ratification Packets

Dear Fathers,

Enclosed you will find the annual Parish Council Ratification Packets. I have enclosed a checklist that you may find useful in completing the paperwork associated with the annual Parish Council Elections.

I have also enclosed the “Conflicts Disclosure Policy Statement,” with accompanying signature form for the Parish Council. These forms should be duplicated from the enclosed master copies, and upon distribution and completion, they should be collected filed in the parish office. **They are not to be sent to the Metropolis or Archdiocese.**

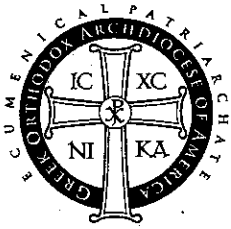
Please be sure to review the Uniform Parish Regulations (UPR), especially Chapter 2 (Articles 24-29), which focuses exclusively on the Parish Council. Copies of the UPR are available from the Archdiocese, or online at: www.goarch.org.

The Archdiocese Department of Outreach & Evangelism has a variety of Parish Council related materials available on their website. Please be sure to visit:
<http://www.outreach.goarch.org>.

Please be reminded that the Parish Council Affirmation of Office is administered *after* the Metropolitan has ratified your elections (UPR, Article 26).

I convey to you the Metropolitan’s best wishes for a Blessed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year.

Thank you.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

Metropolitan MAXIMOS of Pittsburgh · 5201 Ellsworth Avenue · Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15232-1421
Telephone: 412-621-5529 · Fax: 412-621-1522 · Youth Office: 412-621-8543 · Web: www.pittsburgh.goarch.org

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Parish Council Election Ratification Check-list

All items are to be addressed to the Metropolitan, and clearly marked: *Attn: Parish Council Ratifications.*

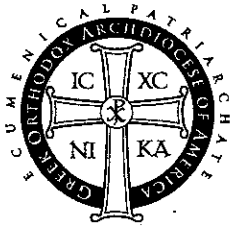
- A letter from the parish priest:
 - Certifying the eligibility of the candidates
 - Attesting to the proper conduct of the election process
 - Requesting ratification of the election results (clearly identifying the names of those elected)
- The “seminar attendance” signature form
- The minutes of the Board of Elections recording the votes and results of the election
- A complete list of elected and ongoing parish council members including current mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.
- A copy of your parish’s 2009 budget as distributed and approved at your fall Parish Assembly
- A letter identifying the current status of your parish’s Archdiocesan Total Commitment obligation, and Metropolis Stewardship Offering for the current year (2008).
- “Conflicts Disclosure Policy Statement - Parish Council.” These forms may be duplicated from the enclosed master copy. ***Upon completion, they may be kept on file in the parish office. They are not to be sent to the Metropolis or Archdiocese.***

The oath of office is not conducted until *after* the Metropolitan has ratified your elections. Your parish’s elections will not be ratified until the above items are received at the Metropolis, and processed according to our established procedures.

**PLEASE REFER TO UPR CHAPTER 2 (ARTICLES 24-29) FOR
PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION AND RATIFICATION PROCEDURES.**

Revised: November 19, 2008

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ · ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

Metropolitan MAXIMOS of Pittsburgh · 5201 Ellsworth Avenue · Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15232-1421
Telephone: 412-621-5529 · Fax: 412-621-1522 · Youth Office: 412-621-8543 · Web: www.pittsburgh.goarch.org

November 19, 2008

To the Reverend Clergy, Parish Councils,
Boards of Elections and the Faithful of the
God-kept Metropolis of Pittsburgh

Dear Co-Workers,

As we approach the time for parish council elections in our parishes, I would like to remind you that the procedures for those elections must be in accordance with the *Uniform Parish Regulations*. Candidates who are nominated for the Parish Council must be a parishioner in good standing of the Parish for at least one year immediately preceding the date of the election and must live his or her life in accordance with the Faith and canons of the Church (UPR, Article 25). They must understand that their duties include attending divine services regularly, participating in the sacramental life of the Church thereby setting an example for the parishioners, and aiding the parish priest in fulfilling the aims and purposes of the parish (UPR, Article 29).

To that end, all candidates for election must attend a seminar conducted by the parish priest prior to the date of the election. Any candidate who does not attend the seminar and signs the declaration enclosed will have their name deleted from the ballot.

After the election, a letter from the parish priest is to be sent to me, 1) certifying the eligibility of all the candidates, 2) attesting to the proper conduct of the election process, and, 3) requesting ratification of the election results, with the names of those elected clearly identified. This letter is to be accompanied by, 1) the minutes of the Board of Elections recording the votes and results of the election, 2) the declaration of seminar attendance by the candidates, 3) a list of elected as well as ongoing parish council members with their addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses, 4) A copy of your parish's proposed budget for the coming year, as distributed at your fall Parish Assembly, and, 5) A letter identifying your parish's current status regarding your Archdiocesan Total Commitment obligation, and Diocesan Stewardship Offering for the current year.

A form introduced last year -- the "Conflicts Disclosure Policy Statement - Parish Council" -- is to be signed by each newly-elected Parish Council member, and kept on file in the parish office. They are not to be sent to the Metropolis or Archdiocese.

With paternal blessings and love,

+MAXIMOS
METROPOLITAN OF PITTSBURGH



Ecumenical Patriarchate
DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Metropolitan Maximos • 5201 Ellsworth Avenue • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15232-1421

Telephone: (412) 621-5529
Youth Office: (412) 621-8543
Fax: (412) 621-1522
www.odpgh.org

TO: All Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh
FROM: Metropolitan Maximos
DATE: December 5, 2002
RE: Parish Council Election Ratifications

COPY

This memorandum is a follow-up to my most recent communication with you regarding Parish Council Elections and Ratifications of Elections, dated November 12, 2002. The memo contained several items that are needed *before* I ratify your parish's elections. In the past several years, policies such as these have not been enforced, and we have witnessed a sharp and sudden deterioration in priest-parish council relationships in many parishes. Therefore, effective immediately, we will once again enforce the policies and procedures that have been established.

The enclosed check-list will be helpful when requesting parish council election ratifications. Any further questions should be addressed to Deacon Ryan at the Diocese. Your prompt attention to this matter is requested.

Please keep in mind that the Diocese of Pittsburgh does not permit husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and parents and children to serve together on the parish council. Any such cases, or cases of similar concern, should be discussed *before* elections take place, using pastoral sensitivity. Any concerns should be forwarded to my attention *before* requesting ratification of elections.

Also, my previous memo addresses cases in which insufficient numbers of candidates have been nominated for election to the parish council. The policy (UPR Article VIII, Section 11) clearly states that elections are to proceed in accordance with Archdiocesan procedures. Any vacancies are handled thereafter in accordance with the UPR directives. Elections and ratification of the elections are *not* to be postponed due to lack of participation.

Wishing you a blessed and joy-filled Nativity, I remain, paternally yours in Christ,

Metropolitan Maximos

MAXIMOS
Metropolitan of Ainou
Bishop of Pittsburgh

MMA/rg



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE POLICY ("Policy") FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN, METROPOLIS AND PARISH COUNCILS

Members of the Archdiocesan Council, the Metropolis (Local) Councils and the Parish Councils, herein referred to collectively as "Council(s)" and "Council Member(s)" of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America ("Archdiocese")¹ are entrusted with sacred responsibilities which affect the whole of the Archdiocese. All such individuals shall honor that trust, with honesty, competence and care in managing the affairs of the Archdiocese and, as Council Members, shall always act in the best interests of the Archdiocese.

The purpose of this Policy is to set forth procedures for properly disclosing and addressing conflicts of interest.

A "Conflict" exists when the financial or other interests of a Council Member (or a member of his/her immediate family) compete or conflict with the interests of the Archdiocese. For example, this includes situations in which an individual's judgment is or may be influenced by considerations of personal gain or benefit to that individual (or his/her immediate family) or when participation in a decision creates the appearance of a conflict of interest, whether or not such a conflict actually exists.

Prior to or at the commencement of a new term of a Council each Council Member shall be given a copy of this Conflicts Disclosure Policy and shall execute the applicable Conflicts Disclosure Statement (as attached hereto as Exhibits A-C).

If, at any time, an Archdiocesan Council or Local Council member discovers that he/she may have a Conflict, he/she shall immediately report it to the President, Vice President and Secretary of the Council. If at any time, a Parish Council Member discovers that he/she may have a Conflict, then he/she shall immediately report it to the Parish Priest, as well as to the President and Secretary of the Parish Council.

The determination of whether a Conflict exists shall be made, in the case of an Archdiocesan Council Member or Local Council Member, by the President, Vice President and Secretary. In the case of a Parish Council Member, the determination shall be made by the Priest, Parish Council President and Parish Council Secretary (the "Committee") and the Committee's determination shall be disclosed to the Parish Council. At any time, the Priest or any member of the Parish Council may request a review by the respective Hierarchy, whose determination shall be final.

If it is determined that a Conflict does exist, the affected Council Member may not vote or otherwise take action on the matter in which he/she has a Conflict. The foregoing shall not preclude the Council Member from making a brief statement on his/her position or answering any questions the Council may ask. In no event shall the affected Council Member be present or participate in any deliberations on the matter or be present when the vote on the matter is taken.

The minutes of the meeting shall reflect when the Conflict was disclosed and the final determination on the matter.

A lay employee of: a) the Archdiocese shall not serve as a member of the Archdiocesan Council; b) the Metropolis shall not serve as a member of the Metropolis Council; or c) a Parish shall not serve as a member of the Parish Council.

¹ "Archdiocese" as used herein includes the Archdiocese, the Direct Archdiocesan District, the Metropolises and the Parishes.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

Conflicts Disclosure Policy Statement – Parish Council

For Members of the Parish Council of the Greek Orthodox Church
_____ (“Council”)

I, _____, understand that my role as a Parish Council member is one of sacred honor and trust and, as a Parish Council member, will act, at all times, in the best interests of my Parish and the Archdiocese.

I have received and read a copy of the Conflicts Disclosure Policy of the Archdiocese. I agree to abide by the Policy and affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, I am not engaged in any activity or business, or have any other association that potentially would pose a financial or other conflict with the best interests of my Parish, except as has been disclosed, in writing, to my Priest and to the President and Secretary of the Parish Council.

If I become aware of any conflict that arises after the date of this affirmation, I will immediately disclose that conflict, in writing, to the individuals specified above.

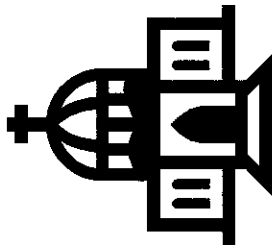
Date: _____, 200__

Signature: _____

Please Print Name: _____

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

The duties of a parish council member (UPR Ch 2, Article XII) include regular attendance at divine services and participation in the sacramental life of the Church, "...thereby setting an example for the parish." To set an example for the parish will require that we overcome the stereotype of the parish council member who is rarely seen in church. It is easy to be like Martha -- Jesus, the Son of God, came to dinner and Martha spent the entire time in the kitchen



“anxious and troubled about many things.”

A COMMITMENT TO SERVE

In the Oath of Office, the parish council members affirm that they “...will fulfill faithfully and sincerely the duties and obligations required of a member of the Parish Council...” Apromise is made which rests on the shared commitment of all council members to serve the Church, which is the Body of Christ on earth. We are His hands, feet, eyes and more. To serve on the council is a ministry and a mission. We are called to use the gifts with which we have been blessed to carry out the work of the Church.

THOUGHTS ON LEADERSHIP

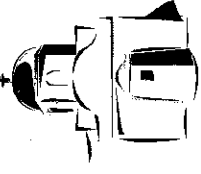
“The most basic task of the Church leader is to discern the spiritual gifts of all those under his authority, and to encourage those gifts to be used to the full for the benefit of all. Only a person who can discern the gifts of others and can humbly rejoice at the flowering of those gifts is fit to lead the Church.”

~ St. John Chrysostom ~

This brochure is offered to all who serve and to all who may consider serving on the Parish Council. It was developed as part of a Parish Council orientation seminar and is intended to offer a vision of the Parish Council as a ministry.

May the Lord bless you and guide your efforts in this important ministry of our Church.

Department of
OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

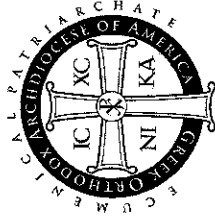


The Parish Council Is a Ministry

Father James W. Kordaris

The president was preparing to exit Air Force One on an official visit. Before exiting the plane he took what seemed like a very long time checking his appearance in the mirror -- first his hair, then his tie, and then his suit. When an aid teased him about his vanity, the president replied, “When I go out that door, I’m not just a man – I am the United States of America.”

In much the same way, parish council members represent their parish and the Orthodox Christian faith. As leaders of the community, parish council members are on the front lines and are able to have a long-term positive effect on their parish. To serve on the parish council is a ministry and those who serve are called to represent Christ to all whom they meet in all aspects of life.



DEPARTMENT OF
OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

83 Saint Basil Road ◊ Garrison, New York ◊ 10524

telephone 646/519-6160

ParishRenewal@goarch.org ◊ www.renewal.goarch.org

MISSION ^{of the} PARISH COUNCIL

The mission of the parish as defined in the Uniform Parish Regulations – and therefore the mission of the Parish Council – is “...to keep, practice and proclaim the Orthodox Christian Faith pure and undefiled.”

In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Rich Man walked by poor Lazarus every day. The Rich Man didn't hate Lazarus – he just ignored him, committing the sin of indifference. The opposite of love is not hate. The opposite of love is indifference.

We have been blessed with great treasures of the faith and Lazarus lies at our gate. Lazarus is the visitor that walks through the doors of our church on Sunday morning. Lazarus is the non-Orthodox spouse. Lazarus is the lapsed Orthodox Christian visiting the parish after a long absence. Like the Rich Man in the parable, we often walk right by without noticing, and they eat from the crumbs that fall from our table.

If we believe that in Orthodoxy we have the fullness of the Truth, then we have the great responsibility – the Great Commission – to share it with everyone. As Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of ALL nations – ΕΙΣ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΤΑ ΕΘΝΗ

AMBASSADORS OF FAITH

For non-Orthodox as well as for inactive Orthodox Christians, entering an Orthodox church can be a very uncomfortable, intimidating experience. Research has shown that non-believers attend church at least once each year, and when they attend, they are profoundly affected by their first impressions.

It is also important to note that the percentage of Greek Orthodox Christians marrying non-Orthodox Christians is in the range of 60-70%. Some priests will tell you that it is closer to 100%. If we don't make Orthodoxy real and accessible to the non-Orthodox spouse, then eventually we will lose the couple and their children.

Often the first person our visitors see is a member of the parish council. Reaching out to those who enter our doors with a handshake, a greeting and a welcoming smile could be the most important missionary work we do. Simply put – friendliness has eternal implications. Unless people see in us the light and the love of Christ, they will not believe.

SUITABLE CANDIDATES

Parishioners are often nominated as candidates for the Parish Council because of their education, business

experience or legal background. The best parish council members are not necessarily those who are business-oriented, but rather, those who are Church-oriented and Christ-centered. To be a good council member, one must be active in the worship and sacramental life of the Church. The best candidates are easy to find – they are in church.

WE ARE CONCILIAR

The Priest is head of the Parish, and is charged with the guidance of the total Parish program. The parish council consists of the Priest, and the elected lay members, and is referred to as a board only when so required by local statute. In internal matters of the Church, we always use the designation of Parish Council. This is because one of the identifying traits of the Orthodox Church is that we are conciliar – decisions are made in council.

To refer to the Parish Council as “The Board” is a symptom of our inclination to apply the corporate paradigm to the operation of the Church. Although some tools used in corporate life may also be useful in the operation of the Church, the corporate paradigm falls short and reduces the local church to something less than she was meant to be.