



MITROPOLIA ORTODOXĂ ROMÂNĂ A CELOR DOUĂ AMERICI
THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX METROPOLIA OF THE AMERICAS

Most Reverend Dr. NICOLAE CONDREA
Archbishop and Metropolitan

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January 3, 2023

+ Forefeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; Malachi the Prophet

TO: Parish Priest and Parish Council Members

RE: Election of the Parish Councils/ Parish General Assembly 2023

Dear Reverend Father and Members of the Parish Council,

2023 will be the fourth election of Parish Councils under the provisions of the new Statutes approved in 2016 at Hamilton in two separate dioceses: Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of United States of America and Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada. To assist you in this process we would like to highlight a few of the more important points that you should know. Please be aware that under the provision of the Statutes the General Assembly **MUST** be held on one of the Sundays in **JANUARY 2023**. In addition, we have attached some excerpts from the Statutes and other documents that you should also read and take into consideration. The attached documents are:

- Conflict of Interest. Each person elected to the Parish Council must read and sign this document before they can assume their duties.
- Abbreviated Guidelines for Parish Councils
- Sample letter requesting approval of the Parish Council election
- Parish Manual
- Sexual Misconduct Policies (English and Romanian)

Nominating Committee. If you have not already done so, you should name a Nominating Committee in accordance with the provisions of Article 27.03. The Nominating Committee should identify sufficient candidates to serve on the Parish Council, taking into consideration the size of the parish. Members of the Nominating Committee should be not on the list recommended by the Committee itself to the General Assembly for election. The Statutes call for a Parish Council of no less than 5 persons and no more than 15. When considering persons to serve on the Parish Council the Committee should keep in mind the qualities and responsibilities enumerated in the Statutes. The Committee should also make an effort to propose a Council membership that is balanced, being both representative of the Parish community and able to work well together in assisting the Parish Priest in the administration of the Parish.

Members of the General Assembly. A Parish Assembly consists of Parishioners in good standing of the Parish who have met their stewardship obligations to the Parish. A person whose name appears on the official roll of Parishioners but who is in arrears in the payment of his/her stewardship obligations may take part in the Parish Assembly by meeting such stewardship obligations on or before the date of the meeting. If a Parishioner is delinquent for more than the current calendar year, he/she may vote at the Parish Assembly only after that Parishioner has met the unfulfilled stewardship financial obligations at least thirty (30) days before the Parish Assembly. New Parishioners may exercise their vote at Parish Assemblies if they have been Parishioners in good standing for at least six (6) months.

Conflicts of Interest. The attached Guidelines describe the various conflicts of interest that should be avoided. These are not only family relationships, but also other kinds of conflicts of interest. Some have asked what a "smaller" parish is. The Archdiocesan Council did not want to specify a number, since the total number of members is not always the only factor that should be considered. The guiding principle is that the Parish Council should be diverse. In choosing persons to serve on the Parish Council effort should be made to avoid the development of cliques or factions within the Parish. In some parishes that are very small (for example, 35 members), some family members may have to serve on the Council together. These as with other "conflicts of interest" should be "disclosed." Still, leadership in the parish should strive to maintain certain "diversity," and in no case should members of the same family have signature power over the Parish accounts.

A copy of the Conflict of Interest document form and a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policies form, signed by all the members elected to the Parish Council, with the agenda of the meeting and the official letter requesting the approval of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae of the newly elected council, must be sent to the Metropolia Center in Chicago, not later than 8 days after the election is held.

Officers. The Statutes say that the minimum officers are a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two auditors. This same Article also says that the Parish General Assembly may authorize other officers such as the parish might deem necessary.

Traditionally, Parishes elected Eпитrops as one of the financial officers. This person(s) collected monies and issued receipts and then gave the monies with an accounting to the Treasurer. The Financial Guidelines under consideration emphasize that financial matters should be divided among different persons, rather than being concentrated in one individual, to lessen the possibility of something going wrong. The addition of an Eпитrop or Assistant Treasurer to the list of officers would be an appropriate response to this concern. For more information concerning the duties of Parish Council officers, please read the Abbreviated Guidelines for Parish Council attached.

In addition, remember that you must elect 2 delegates to the Eparchial Congress and 2 to the Deanery Assembly.

Again, please accept my sincere prayers that the New Year 2023 brings you and the faithful of your parish spiritual joy and profit. You are the City on the Hill and the Lamp set on the table illuminating all those around us. May our good and loving Lord continually strengthen you in this work.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly in Christ,



V. Rev. Fr. Daniel Ene
Secretary of the Eparchial Council