

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly

St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church
Cleveland, Ohio

Sunday, February 11, 1979

The Annual Parish Assembly of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church was called to order at 1:20 p.m. on Sunday, February 11, 1979. Following the invocation by Father Diran, Jack Hacherian, Chairman of the Parish Council, welcomed the parishioners. In his welcoming message, the Chairman expressed deep appreciation to the Parish Council members for their services the past year.

The roll call of dues paying members was taken by Krikor Ghazarian, Secretary of the Parish Council. The total number of eligible voting members present was 56 (subsequently increased to 57 by a late arrival). A quorum was established since over one-third of the total membership of 123 was present.

Mickey Bagdasarian of the Nominating Committee presented the names for election of the Assembly Chairman and Secretary. The results of the secret ballot were as follows:

Chairman - Ralph Chakerian (31)
Richard Aurslanian (25)

Secretary - Martha Hacherian (33)
Anita Aurslanian (23)

The Secretary, Martha Hacherian, read the minutes of the 1978 Parish Assembly which were approved as read. The Chairman, Ralph Chakerian, then suggested that the order of business be changed so that the election of Parish Council, Auditing and Nominating Committee members be next on the agenda. In this way, we could proceed with the other business while the Nominating Committee was counting votes. The suggestion was agreed to by the assembly.

The meeting was then turned over to Mickey Bagdasarian of the Nominating Committee. This year there are six outgoing members of the Parish Council: John Borazanian, Florence Goekjian, Dr. K. K. Goekjian, Jack Hacherian, Florence Karoghlanian and Margaret Yeranian. The members remaining on the Council are David Andonian, Krikor Ghazarian and Sam Mirakian. The Nominating Committee submitted the names of six candidates for Parish Council membership. Several nominations were made from the floor, but all declined. A vote was taken by secret ballot with the following results:

Alan Borazanian (56)
George Sakian (51)
Meshac Aurslanian (49)
Armand Kazaros (46)
Nat Arslanian (45)
Margaret Yeranian (41)

Three candidates were submitted for the Auditing Committee, vote taken by secret ballot, with the following results:

Richard Arslanian (56)
 Ralph Chakerian (56)
 Jennie Kapoudjian (56)

Three candidates were submitted for the Nominating Committee, vote taken by secret ballot, with the following results:

Kevork Arslanian (56)
 Martha Hacherian (56)
 Jack Hatchadorian (54)

A motion was made by Thelma Bagdasarian and seconded by Nat Arslanian that the Diocesan Office be contacted to determine whether the person elected with the least number of votes could serve on the Council for one year rather than two, so as to balance out the election of Council members in future years. The motion was passed by majority vote and referred to the Parish Council for necessary action.

The next item on the agenda was the Parish Council's Annual Report and Financial Report. In response to Robert Bagdasarian's question regarding payments from Pasquale Caterers, Sam Mirakian, Treasurer of the Parish Council, responded that payments have been made through November 1978. The assembly then discussed the costs for building and property maintenance. The discussion also concerned needs for improvement in the maintenance and cleaning of the cultural hall. Upon recommendation of the assembly Chairman, the membership agreed that the entire matter of cultural hall maintenance and cleaning, including the kitchen, should be referred to the Parish Council for review, necessary action, and a report at the next parish assembly.

Sam Mirakian took this opportunity to express thanks to Ralph Chakerian, past Parish Council treasurer, for his cooperation and assistance whenever needed throughout the past year.

Reports of the church auxiliary organizations then followed.

(a) Ladies Auxiliary - no discussion on the report.

(b) Armenian Women's Guild - Eileen Hacherian, Chairman, stated that the Women's Guild would not undertake the New Year's Eve celebration next year. Further, that the Guild will be sponsoring the Khunjook in September and is now looking for a chairman.

(c) ACYOA - Good progress was made by the ACYOA during the past year and parents were encouraged to support their children in the organization's activities. It was the general consensus that programs and projects for the ACYOA members are necessary to maintain membership interest. Volunteers from the community are needed to work with the youth as the Parish Council, with its many responsibilities, does not always have the time or resources to assist the ACYOA. The need for additional adult education programs to acquaint parents with Armenian Church teachings was also encouraged. The Parish Council was requested to look into the areas of adult education and youth programs.

(d) Armenian Church Choir - no discussion on the report.

(e) Armenian Church Sunday School - Arrangements have been made by the Parish Council to double lock the Superintendent's office because of complaints of missing items. Janet Ariyan, Superintendent, brought to our attention that a three-hole punch is currently missing.

The Building Committee Report was next on the agenda. This past year the cultural hall mortgage was burned and \$10,000 was transferred to the Parish Council. Approximately \$500 remains in the Building Committee treasury to be transferred to the Council to close out their records. A motion was made by Kevork Arslanian and seconded by Armand Kazaros that \$500 to be transferred to the Parish Council be donated to the Aid for Lebanon fund raising. The motion was passed by a vote of 25 to 21.

The two Diocesan delegates, Kevork Arslanian and Robert Bagdasarian, attended the 76th Diocesan Assembly in Detroit on May 4-6, 1978. Mr. Arslanian reported on the following significant items from the Assembly: (1) the re-election for a four-year term of Archbishop Torkom Manoogian; (2) the proposed 1978 budget of \$782,000; and (3) the shortage of clergy within the diocese. Mr. Bagdasarian commented on the assessments to the Diocese by the local parishes. He referred to the assessment formula appearing on page 31 of the annual report. Only two of 54 parishes in the Diocese, Cleveland and Detroit, have consistently paid their dues on time.

A motion was made by Florence Karoghlanian that the Diocesan delegates and Parish Council chairman be allowed up to 50% of their transportation expenses only to the Diocesan Assembly. The motion was seconded by Harry Atkian. After some discussion, the motion was passed by majority vote for Parish Council consideration.

The proposed budget for 1979 was next on the agenda. Sam Mirakian corrected the following figures in the budget projection -- the pastor's stipend from \$11,500 to \$12,500; the draw savings account interest from \$2,400 to \$3,400; and the budget total from \$48,400 to \$49,400.

At this point, there was considerable discussion regarding the proposed pastor's stipend of \$12,500, and whether Father Diran was serving in a full time or part time capacity. In support of the \$12,500 stipend proposal, Jack Hacherian brought the following matters to the attention of the assembly. At the Parish Council meeting on December 4, 1978 a motion was passed to continue the services of Father Diran during 1979. The Diocese recently established a new minimum stipend.

So as to resolve the question of the stipend for 1979 and Father Diran's status, a letter was written on December 15, 1978 to the Diocese requesting clarification. In a letter dated January 26, 1979 to Father Diran, the Primate directed that Father Diran be recognized as full time Pastor of St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church of Cleveland. Therefore, based on this letter and the fact that Father Diran serves 10 of 14 days in the Cleveland parish, the Parish Council decided to establish the new stipend at \$12,500. In order to resolve this matter, a vote was taken on the stipend of

\$12,500 for the proposed 1979 budget. The proposal was passed by a vote of 26 to 15.

A motion was made by Thelma Bagdasarian that the parish dues be increased from \$35 to \$45, but that persons age 65 and over, if they so desired, be considered as dues paying members providing the minimum required by the Diocese is paid. The motion was seconded by Jack Hacherian and passed by majority vote.

Discussion was then had regarding the \$3,000 proposed for parish house improvement. Several members suggested improvement priorities for Parish Council consideration. A motion was made by Thelma Bagdasarian and seconded by Mona Karoghlanian that the \$3,000 be first used for improvements in the house and second, for the pastor's office. The motion was defeated by a vote of 25 to 16.

Nat Arslanian moved that the proposed budget for 1979 be accepted. Eileen Hacherian seconded the motion which was passed by majority vote.

Mona Karoghlanian asked why the pastor's annual report was not in Armenian. Jack Hacherian replied that the Council approved the English only because of the length of the report, but that future reports would appear in both English and Armenian.

Due to the length of the meeting, Father Diran delivered a short, but very meaningful pastor's message. He expressed thanks and appreciation to the dues paying members, the officers of the day, and the Parish Council members. Further, that although there may be divided opinion, we had a productive annual meeting and no person should leave here feeling victorious or defeated, that we are here for God's business. In closing, Father Diran said that our lives would be enriched by our volunteer service to the church.

Kevork Arslanian requested the assembly to support the pastor and the new Parish Council members. Dr. Goekjian complimented Jack Hacherian for the wonderful job this year as Council chairman. The assembly sang "Happy Birthday" to Father Diran.

Following the benediction by Father Diran, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Hacherian

Martha Hacherian
Assembly Secretary

Rev. Fr. Diran Papazian

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President

Ralph Chakerian

Ralph Chakerian
Assembly Chairman