

ST. GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR ARMENIAN CHURCH
6700 West Diversey Avenue, Chicago, IL 60635

1986 PARISH ASSEMBLY MINUTES

The meeting opened with prayer led by Rev. Fr. Vahram Hazarian at 11:56 a.m. Parish Council Chairman, Ed Pajian asked the Treasurer, John Mrofcza to conduct the Verification of Eligible Voters. Mr. Mrofcza reported that in 1986 there were 92 paid members. Thirty-one members would have to be present to constitute a quorum. After taking attendance, Mr. Mrofcza reported there were 40 members present and the meeting proceeded.

As last year's assembly chairman was not present to conduct the election of this year's assembly chairman and secretary, Mr. Pajian conducted the election. Mr. Nishan Babikian nominated Mr. Armen Zakarian for Chairman and Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza seconded the motion. As no other nominations were accepted, Mr. Zakarian agreed to chair the meeting. After numerous nominations and declinations, Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza volunteered to be the Assembly Secretary.

Mrs. Sandra Hitik read the minutes from the 1985 meeting. Mr. George Nahabedian moved that the minutes be accepted with the correction that under Budget indication be made that the \$5,000 transferred to balance the 1986 Budget would come from the Parish Council's Certificates of Deposit--not to be confused with the Parish's General Reserve Fund. The motion was seconded from the floor and the motion carried.

Mr. Raffi Hazarian presented the Pastor's Report on behalf of Rev. Fr. Vahram Hazarian. A copy of both the English and Armenian report is attached.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. Ed Pajian, Chairman gave a brief verbal report. Mrs. Mrofcza asked if she would be receiving a written report from the Parish Council. Mr. Pajian said he would submit one. *(revised)*

LADIES AUXILIARY

Miss Violet Koresian gave the report on behalf of the Ladies Auxiliary. The Ladies are turning over \$4,000 to the Parish Council. (copy of report attached)
The Ladies also presented the Sunday School with \$400.

WOMEN'S GUILD REPORT

Mrs. Marge Sarkesian gave the Women's Guild Report (copy attached). The Guild presented \$2,200 to the Parish Council.

NAIRI CHOIR

Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza gave the Nairi Choir Report (copy attached). The Choir turned over \$248.94 to the Parish Council. In addition, a check in the amount of \$5,879.14 was presented closing out the choir's Organ Fund account. It was asked that these monies be earmarked to be used for the building of a choir wardrobe and towards the possible purchase of a speaker for the organ. Lastly, it should be noted that the books on the 40th Annual Assembly of the Association of Armenian Church Choirs held Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 1986 had not been closed at the time of this meeting.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Mrs. Linda Zakarian reported on the first half of the year as the out-going Superintendent (copy attached). Mrs. Sandra Hitik, now current Superintendent, reported on the second half of the year (copy attached).

The A.C.Y.O.A. Sr. Organization was non-existent during the 1986 calendar year and therefore no report was submitted.

A.C.Y.O.A. Jrs.

Miss Cindy Baronian gave the A.C.Y.O.A. Jrs. Report (copy attached).

did not receive

TREASURER'S REPORT & AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. John Mrofcza presented his report (copy attached). Mr. Arnold Koresian asked if anything was being planned to increase income from membership dues. Mr. Mrofcza explained that part of the reason the income was down was because membership decreased from 111 paid members in 1985 to 92 paid members in 1986.

Mr. Armen Zakarian thanked Mr. Mrofcza on behalf of the Auditing Committee for his excellent bookkeeping as it made the task of the Auditing Committee much simpler. The committee found the books to be in order. Mr. Zakarian noted that the committee also audited the books of the A.C.Y.O.A. Jrs. and the Sunday School for June '85 through June '86 and both were found to be in order.

At 1:15 p.m. Mr. Zakarian called for a recess for lunch. At 1:50 p.m. the meeting was reconvened and Mr. Zakarian called for questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. As there were no further questions, Mr. Nishan Babikian moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Mrs. Sandra Hitik seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Mr. John Mrofcza read the Reserve Fund Committee Report submitted by Mr. Haig Pedian (copy attached). The report stated a beginning balance as of 1/1/86 as \$110,107.00. John Mrofcza said he would check on the apparent discrepancy as the Treasurer's Report indicated a beginning balance of \$111,050.07. The Reserve Fund Balance as of 12/31/86 was reported at \$121,413.00.

- 1987 BUDGET

Mr. John Mrofcza presented the Budget for 1987 (copy attached). Mr. Arnold Koresian asked Mr. Mrofcza how he arrived at the proposed budget. Mr. Mrofcza replied that as he has consistently presented near balanced budgets, he simply used his experience based on the trends of the past 5 years. Mr. Koresian then asked what are the planned activities for 1987--what considerations are being made to increasing the membership. Mr. Mrofcza replied that activities remain much the same as in the past recognizing that the church would be in financial danger without the successes from the annual picnic and the church anniversary commemoration.

POINT OF ORDER - Mr. George Nahabedian made a point of order that the President of the Assembly was absent. A member was asked to find Der Vahram and ask him to rejoin the assembly already in progress. He did so.

Mr. George Nahabedian moved to accept the Budget for 1987. Mr. Nishan Babikian seconded the motion and the motion carried.

ELECTIONS

Mr. Armen Zakarian called for John Mrofcza to take another roll-call to verify the number of paid members as others had arrived after the first roll-call. It was suggested we simply add the number to the already reported 40 members. Mr. Zakarian asked the assembly whether they would accept such a suggestion. The body agreed. It was then reported five (5) more paid members had arrived so the total number of eligible voters was now 45.

Mr. Zakarian called for the Nominating Committee to present the Slate for the Parish Council Elections. Michelle Babikian reported that the out-going members were:

- John Mrofcza
- Scott Paklaian
- Charles Babikian

Of them, only Scott Paklaian agreed to run for office again. The Nominating Committee presented the following slate:

- Scott Paklaian
- Nick Eghoian
- Harry Paloian
- Jack Cholakian
- Barkev Hitik

Mr. George Nahabedian made a Point of Order that he understood that there were individuals presented that were not paid members and therefore ineligible to run for office. Mr. Mrofcza verified that indeed Mr. Paloian and Mr. Cholakian were not paid members.

Mrs. Sadie Marcantonio moved to remove the 2 individuals from the slate. Mrs. Pauline Nahabedian seconded the motion. Mr. John Mrofcza asked that Mrs. Marcantonio amend her motion to read that Mr. Harry Paloian and Mr. Jack Cholakian be removed from the slate for Parish Council as they were not paid members. Mrs. Marcantonio withdrew her motion. Mr. Mrofcza then moved to remove Mr. Paloian and Mr. Cholakian from the slate for Parish Council as they were not paid members. Mr. George Nahabedian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

After many nominations and declinations from the floor of the assembly, Mr. Mrofcza agreed to run again. Scott Paklaian re-nominated Charles Babikian. John Mrofcza seconded the nomination. Mr. Babikian accepted the nomination. Miss Cynthia Paklaian was nominated from the floor and duly seconded. Ms. Paklaian accepted the nomination.

Mrs. Alice George moved to close the nominations. Mrs. Linda Zakarian seconded the motion and the motion carried. Mr. George Nahabedian suggested the Nominating Committee submit an amendment to be submitted to the Diocesan Assembly allowing parishes to not have to submit 2 names for each office since so many times it is difficult getting people to agree to run. The Chairman asked Mr. Nahabedian to hold that matter until New Business. Mr. John Mrofcza called the roll while members of the Nominating Committee gathered the votes. While the votes were being tabulated, the Nominating Committee presented the slate for the Nominating Committee. The Committee announced the only people willing to run were Walter Baronian and John Mrofcza. The floor was opened for nominations and the following people were nominated and duly seconded:

- Shooshan Paklaian
- Sadie Marcantonio
- Nishan Babikian
- Arnold Koresian
- George Nahabedian

The Assembly Chairman directed the Nominating Committee to remove John Mrofcza's name from the ballots as he was running for the office of Parish Council and the vote was tabulated as yet. John Mrofcza called the roll while the Nominating Committee collected the votes.

The Nominating Committee announced the results of the Parish Council elections.

- Scott Paklaian	35
- Nick Eghoian	15
- Charles Babikian	24
- Cynthia Paklaian	12
- Barkev Hitik	34
- John Mrofcza	9

The 3 new members to the Parish Council were Scott Paklaian, Barkev Hitik, Charles Babikian with Nick Eghoian as Alternate.

While the votes were being tabulated for the Nominating Committee, the Committee presented the slate for the Auditing Committee as follows:

- Mary Battle
- Mathew Klujian, Jr.
- Helen Paloian
- Armen Zakarian

It was asked that Helen Paloian's name be removed as she was not a paid member at this time. The following people were nominated from the floor: John Mrofcza, Alice George and Michelle Babikian. At this point, the Committee announced the results from the Nominating Committee Election:

- Walter Baronian	20
- Shooshan Paklaian	19
- Sadie Marcantonio	12
- Nishan Babikian	21
- Arnold Koresian	29
- George Nahabedian	19

The Nominating Committee for 1987 was elected to be Walter Baronian, Arnold Koresian and Nishan Babikian.

Mr. John Paklaian moved to close the nominations for the Auditing Committee. George Nahabedian seconded the motion and the nominations were closed. A moment was taken to tally the votes resulting in the following:

- Mary Battle	21
- Mathew Klujian, Jr.	19
- John Mrofcza	22
- Armen Zakarian	26
- Alice George	24
- Michelle Babikian	10

The Auditing Committee for 1987 was elected to be John Mrofcza, Armen Zakarian and Alice George.

OLD BUSINESS

Renovation Committee

John Mrofcza explained that the established committee turned over the proposals it had received and that the Parish Council had been remiss in taking action, but certainly that the new Parish Council will review the matter. As much time had elapsed from the inception of these talks, it was asked that the original motion be re-read. Mrs. Sandra Hitik re-read the motion from the 1985 minutes.

Mr. Michael Jack Hagopian suggested that we table this matter (the renovation) and call a special meeting informing members as to the same. Mrs. Stephanie Hagopian thought it might be a good idea to post plans on a wall of the church to be studied by the parishioners. Mr. Michael Jack Hagopian made a motion that indeed the plans should be posted for all to see. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hrach Hitik. Mr. John Mrofcza suggested that they add further to the motion by setting a target date. Mr. Hagopian said that would not be a part of his motion and it would be up to the Parish Council to set a date and inform the congregation accordingly. The motion was passed by a show of hands.

The chair advised that the Parish Council was already under a directive and should act accordingly as soon as possible. Mrs. Mary Dadian asked if the Parish Council could also be asked to see to the more immediate needs such as refrigeration before the various upcoming important events and that these concerns would be addressed before major renovation. Mrs. Alice George moved to direct the Parish Council to address the refrigeration problem within the next 2 months prior to the Palm Sunday Dinner. Mr. Nishan Babikian seconded the motion. DISCUSSION: Mr. John Mrofcza asked if this motion superceded the motion made at the 1985 Parish Assembly. The chair did not see that it did. Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza called the motion to a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

At this point the Nominating Committee gave the results of the Auditing Committee Election as follows:

Mary Battle	21
Matt Klujian, Jr.	19
John Mrofcza	22
Armen Zakarian	26
Alice George	24
Michelle Babikian	10

The 3 individuals elected to serve on the Auditing Committee were John Mrofcza, Armen Zakarian and Alice George.

NEW BUSINESS

George Nahabedian said that the Annual Parish Assembly Agenda should include a Prayer Service for those members who passed away during the year and should not be part of the blessing of the table. The Parish Council will make note of this suggestion for next year's meeting.

Mr. George Nahabedian moved to place the \$12,079 received at this meeting from the various organizations be placed into the Reserve Fund of the Parish and not into the General Fund to be used for operating and salary expenses. Mr. Nishan Babikian seconded the motion. DISCUSSION: Miss Violet Koresian said it just wasn't feasible to expect the Parish Council to operate without these monies. John Paklaian asked Mr. Nahabedian if he could elaborate on the reason for this motion as it would appear he had a good reason for making it and there was a need to understand the reasoning behind the motion and could he suggest where then would the necessary dollars come from. Mr. Nahabedian explained that the \$5,879 received by the choir was money donated to the Organ Fund and that those people donating the money did not intend for the extra dollars to go towards general operating expenses of the church. Furthermore he said that in the past the Parish Council has sat on their hands and has not acted responsibly with regard to the operation of the church. For example, no fund-raising attempts had been made other than the annual picnic (which netted \$15,000) and the Anniversary (which netted \$5,000). In addition, we are paying \$23,000 in salary and we are not getting a return on our money. Enough isn't being done. Mr. John Mrofcza responded that the choir had already requested in their report (attached) that their dollars from the Organ Fund be ear-marked for a speaker and a choir wardrobe so that wasn't an applicable example. He did explain however that when money is placed into the reserve fund and there becomes a need for more money it is very difficult to transfer those monies -- first, a special assembly must be gathered and second, penalties may apply for withdrawals. Mr. John Paklain urged the assembly not to pass this motion. He agreed that it would appear that the Parish Council had been lax in their responsibilities but he also reported that the Parish Council elected was a new and inexperienced one and that given the opportunity the newly elected council would work hard on seeing to all the needs of the parish. He continued that last year's council at least kept the parish relatively close to where it had been the year before and that with the support of the members the new council would move forward. Mr. Arnold Koresian said that the Parish Council had survived financially in the past and that by placing all the money in the Reserve Fund the council would be stimulated to work harder--on the other hand you won't get a better return on money to leave it in Reserve Fund. We have to work at bringing the church back to where it was. Mr. Armen Zakarian said we were are experiecing frustration in trying to measure the return on dollars when the returns can't be measured in dollars and cents. Mr. George Nahabedian said financially we are in better shape than most parishes, however, spiritually, culturally and socially we lag far behind most. He suggested that if there was a need that as provided in the By-Laws a special assembly be called to OK the transfer of money. Mr. John Paklain directed the assembly to look at the Budget to see that the Parish Council depends in part on these monies as their operating budget. The motion was called to a vote. There were 13 in favor and 18 opposed. The motion was defeated.

Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza said it should be clear from the above discussion that the dollars are not the issue. We are experiencing a lack of growth and something must be done about it. Mrs. Sadie Marcantonio said we had better re-think our position. This should be top priority to find out why people are not coming to church. She directed her concerns to Der Hayr explaining we are not seeing a move forward. Miss Naomi Nahabedian said she would be willing to assist the Parish Council with putting together a questionnaire. Miss Violet Koresian responded that Parish Council was already working on this idea and that she was welcome to assist in the preparation of an appropriate questionnaire.

Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza moved that the excess dollars turned over to the Parish Council be the organizations (excluding the Organ Fund money) be deposited in the Parish

General Fund. Mr. George Nahabedian seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. George Nahabedian asked the assembly for their support in submitting an amendment at the Diocesan Assembly that with regard to elections, parishes experiencing difficulty finding at least 2 people to run for an office would not be bound to that provision and only need to submit one name per office if need be. Mr. Nishan Babikian seconded the motion. The motion carried and Mr. Nahabedian was given permission to prepare such an amendment.

MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Nishan Babikian reminded the body that everyone needs to be a dues paying member and especially if you are a member of an organization. Mr. Zakarian said that this system was already established and that we need to exercise our right. Miss Naomi Nahabedian said maybe we should remind all organizations and the nominating committee of this and that the organization chairs could remind their respective members. She also suggested that Parish Council supply the Nominating Committee with a paid membership list before they solicit candidates for office. Mr. John Mrofcza said as Treasurer he worked with the Nominating Committee informing them who was paid. However, the problem still remains that people wait until the last minute to pay their dues. The message here is pay your dues now for 1987--not the day of next year's meeting.

HEATING/AIR-CONDITIONING

Mr. John Paklaian reported that the old service had been terminated because of their inability to fix the problem. As a result the bill had not been paid and a new service had been retained who not only fixed the problem but suggested that we consider looking into a new heater as the existing one was wasting money as the original heater was too big. The Parish Council will be looking into this matter.

PARISH PRIEST

Mr. George Nahabedian expressed concern over our current situation with parish spiritual leadership. He reminded the assembly that our Der Hayr is not a voting member of the Diocese. He is only serving our parish as the spiritual advisor. Something should be done to evaluate our situation and a decision should be made to either consider termination if we are unhappy with Der Hayr's overall performance or consideration of submitting a request to have Der Vahram recognized by the Diocese if we are happy with his service. Mr. Charles Babikian said speaking on behalf of the Parish Council, that we are not prepared at this assembly to take such action, however, it is quite apparent from the comments made throughout this assembly that some action will have to be taken soon. Mrs. Georgette Mrofcza moved to have the Parish Council call a special meeting by March 1 to discuss this problem. Miss Cynthia Paklaian seconded the motion. DISCUSSION: Several people were disturbed by this motion and expressed their feelings. Mrs. Stephanie Hagopian said she was happy with the service of Der Hayr and that even though she was brought up Catholic and does not understand the Armenian language she still comes to church because it is a place where she can pray. Mrs. Mrofcza responded that her motion did not necessarily imply that she wished to see Der Hayr dismissed, however she had great concern over the needs of her family and of other Armenian families and whether or not they were being met by the church. She felt that many individuals who marry Armenians are at a disadvantage because Der Hayr is unable to adequately communicate with them--and the children who come up to church in Sunday School get little out of the service. Recognizing that Der Hayr is trying his best, it still remains that we can see the results of the lack of leadership and that as hard as it may be we must address this concern. The motion was called to a vote and the motion carried.

Mr. John Mrofcza moved to direct the Parish Council to report back to this Assembly by April 15, 1987. Mr. George Nahabedian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

BINGO


Mr. John Paklaian informed the Parish Assembly that the Parish Council was seriously looking into the possibility of holding regularly scheduled Bingo in the Cultural Hall.


At this point Rev. Fr. Vahram Hazarian addressed the Assembly. He said we all do that which we can do for the church. He thanked everyone for the efforts this past year and today and prayed for the newly elected members. He offered his appreciation to the outgoing Parish Council members and committee members for their service.

Mr. George Nahabedian moved to adjourn the meeting. Alice George seconded the motion.

The motion carried. Mr. George Nahabedian thanked Mr. Armen Zakarian for chairing the meeting. The meeting adjourned and closed with prayer led by Der Hayr at 4:55 p.m.

Respectively submitted,


Mrs. Georgette L. Mrofcza
1986 Parish Assembly Secretary


Armen Zakarian
1986 Parish Assembly Chairman