

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH OF WESTCHESTER
MINUTES OF THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

FEBRUARY 9, 1992

The Nineteenth Annual Parish Assembly of St. James Armenian Church of Westchester commenced at 12:11 pm on Sunday, February 9, 1992 with an opening prayer by the Pastor, Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian after which he declared the ballot box open.

Marguerite Sagatelian, Assembly Chairperson of 1991 conducted the election of Assembly Officers. Subsequently, Douglas Tashjian was elected Chairman and Margaret Brophy Secretary of the Assembly, both unanimously.

The Chairperson then asked Ellen Ishkanian of the Nominating Committee to announce the candidates. They were as follows:

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| Parish Council | - Garo Bashian, Alice Basmajian, Michael Guroian, Ashod Kassabian, Khachik Khodadadi, Ara Momjian, Vilma Nakashian, Zaven Tachdjian, Douglas Tashjian. |
| Nominating Committee | - Zaven Adourian, Pauline Babakian, Karnig Chookhachian, Ara Ishkanian, Dawn Papalian, Gale Perzigian, Noemik Poulatian. |
| Auditing Committee | - Annette Bashian, Grace Cassidy, Alice Kaladjian, Dawn Kasparian, Ruth Sanossian. |

Motion was made and seconded to close and the Assembly adjourned for lunch and voting.

When the Assembly reconvened, Douglas Tashjian, Chairman, announced that there were 165 dues paying members of which 155 were eligible to vote. The balloting closed with 81 actual votes.

Motion was made and seconded to accept last year's minutes as submitted.

Motion was made and seconded to accept the reports of the various church organizations as presented.

Der Hayr read his report adding that Avadis Sakalian, Aida Pisani, Toros Mangassarian, Ara Momjian and Zaven Tachdjian have completed two years of service as Parish Council members and Lionel Galstaun completed six years. The report was received with appreciation, especially for the 37 new members that Der Hayr enlisted during 1991.

Michael Guroian questioned Der Hayr as to what he meant by "a bone of contention" in his report regarding the use of both languages. Der Hayr explained that many opportunities were offered in the way of language studies, with very few members taking advantage of them. He added that greater effort should be made to learn Armenian and to use it more extensively in the church community and in the home. Michael Guroian stated that while appreciating the suggestion made, we should continue showing tolerance towards those who are unable to speak it.

Karen Sirabian asked about Stewardship money status and was advised that a call to the bookkeeper would answer any current inquiries as to how much each family owed before the end of the year. The parish was informed that in the future, periodic statements will be mailed to eliminate any confusion.

Vincent Gurahian, Diocesan Delegate had no supplemental comments to make regarding his report and opened the floor to questions. Marguerite Sagatelian asked for an explanation regarding the method by which the number of Diocesan Delegates is calculated. In addition to the Parish Priest and the Parish Council Chairperson, there is one delegate for the first 100 dues paid members and an additional delegate for every additional 100 dues paid members, after a minimum of 25 added members over the previous group of 100.

The Building Committee report was opened for discussion. Joe Berberian expressed his concern in that he felt the new Boy Scout property would be too small compared to our present site. Edward Essayan explained that 5½ acres would be sufficient and Lionel Galstaun added that we do not utilize all the property we now have. George Sanossian questioned whether there would be any objections to building on the new property. Edward Essayan explained there would be easements to work around and/or change and IBM's "right of first refusal". He added that IBM was delighted that the property was being sold to another non-profit organization. In answer to questions asked by George Guendjoian as to who makes the decisions concerning new building matters, he was advised that the Building Committee reports to the Parish Council and then to the Parish Assembly.

Berge Derdarian, Edward Essayan and John Babakian expressed their concerns about the investments of the Building Fund, advocating that a smaller percentage of the funds be invested in stocks. Ara Momjian explained that the rate of return of the investments was superior to other options and assured the assembly that the monies are safe. The status of these funds has been and will continue to be evaluated at every Parish Council meeting.

George Sanossian expressed his feelings that legal fees should not be paid out of the Building Fund. Ara Momjian explained that it would not work if such costs were charged to the regular budget and Lionel Galstaun added that all payments had been made with the approval of the Parish Council.

Der Hayr mentioned that Ara Momjian's expertise as an investment advisor was sought at last year's Diocesan Assembly, therefore, as a recognized expert, his efforts on behalf of the parish are appreciated. The Building Fund report was accepted.

Martha Gurahian, Treasurer, opened the floor to questions concerning the budget. Ed Essayan asked about the rising cost of property insurance. Lionel Galstaun reported that Aetna had bid \$3,000, which provides the same coverage with less premium expense. Income was also discussed. The Parish Council is expecting that the increase in membership will result in an increase in Stewardship participation.

Michael Guroian expressed his concern about the lack of a plan to address the physical needs of the church, the parish house and the grounds. Specifically, there are some significant safety issues; the glass windows, the pool, the septic system, and there are some needs that should be met, in the interim, between the present situation and any future move. Ara Momjian made a motion that the Parish Council address these concerns and formulate a specific plan and budget. A discussion followed. The proposal was accepted.

The budget report was accepted.

Comments and questions were entertained under New Business and Lionel Galstaun advised the assembly of a proposal to retire the present mortgage by borrowing from the Building Fund and paying back the fund instead of paying the mortgage to the bank. He offered a list of 14 alternatives with which to pay back the Building Fund. His recommendation was 'alternative #5' - to pay back in 11 years, 10 months, but at a rate of 5% interest. A discussion followed. The proposal was accepted and the schedule is attached hereto and made part of the minutes. (See 3-A)

George Guendjoian suggested that members of the Auditing Committee should not have a conflict of interest and Elma Davidian explained that our numbers were too few to always avoid overlapping duties. Vincent Gurahian stated that there were no restrictions to holding office except for those put forth in the by-laws.

Vilma Nakashian advocated the importance of participating in such educational programs and projects as the Amnesty International activities as they relate to imprisoned Armenians in Azerbaijan and other issues of community interest.

Michael Guroian expressed his concerns about the care and safety of the parish house, i.e., the glass windows, the pool, the septic system. Lionel Galstaun advised him that the pool hazard had been dealt with by George Davidian. Ara Momjian made the motion to charge the Parish Council to address the matter of spending the monies for these capital improvements. Michael Pisani seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

In response to inquiries, the assembly was advised that earthquake relief reports would be made available for anyone interested in picking them up in the parish house lobby.

Der Hayr thanked Shahen and Sally Guiragossian for their efforts in preparing a delicious and abundant luncheon. He went on to announce February 27, 1992 Badarak at 7:30 pm on Vartanank Feast and March 1st Poon Paregentan luncheon, when voting and pledging members will be guests of the Parish Council. He thanked all who participated in the day's activities and the Nominating Committee who reported the following election results:

- Parish Council - Garo Bashian, Alice Basmajian, Michael Guroian, Ara Momjian, Zaven Tachdjian and Douglas Tashjian.
- Nominating Committee - Pauline Babakian, Ara Ishkanian, Dawn Papalian and Gale Perzigian.
- Auditing Committee - Alice Kaladjian, Dawn Kasparian and Ruth Sanossian.

After a blessing Der Hayr gave for the new Parish Council members, the Assembly closed at 3:50 pm.

Fr. Karekin Kasparian

Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian
Pastor and President

Douglas Tashjian

Douglas Tashjian
Chairperson

Margaret Brophy

Margaret Brophy
Assembly Secretary