

**MINUTES OF THE 1999 PARISH ASSEMBLY  
ST. LEON ARMENIAN CHURCH  
JANUARY 31, 1999**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bert Bedrosian, 1998 Parish Assembly Chairman at 12:13 PM. Father Vahan Hovhanessian opened the meeting with a prayer.

There were 104 members in attendance. Total parish membership for 1998 was 372.

Bert Bedrosian asked for any questions regarding the Annual Report. Dn. Charles Pinajian stated that John Vaniskhian had been left out as a member of the Parish Council. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes.

Chairman Bedrosian opened nominations for Assembly Chairman. The nominees were Krikor Ohannessian and Thomas Ashbahian. Thomas Ashbahian was elected Chairman of the 1999 Parish Assembly.

Chairman Bedrosian opened the nominations for Assembly Secretary. The nominees were Mary Ann Mozian and Linda Harutunian. Linda Harutunian was elected Secretary of the 1999 Parish Assembly.

Assembly Chairman, Thomas Ashbahian, appointed Joseph Basralian as Parliamentarian. The appointment was accepted.

The Assembly Chairman requested the report of the Nominating Committee and the presentation of the candidates for elected office. Dawn Hourdajian gave the report on behalf of the Nominating Committee and introduced the candidates. They were as follows:

**PARISH COUNCIL**

Jeffrey Boyajian	Charles Pinajian
Dr. Barry Halejian	Jon Royland
Barbara Hovsepian	Dennis Tarzian
Kevork Ohannessian	Allan Tossoonian

**AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Jonathan Der Boghosian Vahe Kiljian

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Margie Ajamian	Lucy Dabagian
Carol Ashbahian	Katherine Ohnikian
Lynn Beylerian	Edna Tungrian

**DIOCESAN DELAGATES**

Ara Hourdajian	S. Rex Kachigian
Leon Hovsepian	Arthur Ohnikian

Nominations were requested from the floor for the Parish Council, the Auditing Committee and the Nominating Committee. There were none. Ballots were distribute to all members present. and were collected upon their completion.

## PASTOR'S REPORT

Father Vahan pointed out that his report is published on pages 8 through 11 in the report. He commented on the highlights of his report and opened the floor for questions. Father Vahan thanked all for receiving him so warmly 6 years ago. He said this would be his last Assembly, since he will be leaving in September. He stated that it had been a great opportunity to serve, and hoped we would all welcome the new Pastor. Father Vahan then asked if there were any questions. Dn. Charles Pinajian asked what would happen to the Internet server. Fr. Vahan informed the Assembly that he had made contact with several of the youth in the parish to appoint a committee to be in charge of maintaining the Internet connection as well as the Web Site. The services will continue to be available through usage charges and generous donations. There were no additional questions. Chairman Ashbahian thanked Father Vahan for his report.

## PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Parish Council Chairman Richard Dabagian discussed two items which were not in the Parish Council Report.

- 1) A document of intent has been signed with Mr. Kirschner (owner of the property adjacent to the Church), that St. Leon would have first opportunity to purchase the property if it comes on the market. If this happens, the matter will be brought to the Parish.
- 2) We are in a Pastoral transition period. The Parish Council is in the beginning stage of searching for a new Pastor. He has hopes that the transition will be successful. Father Vahan will help with his guidance and input.

Mr. Dabagian then asked if there were any questions or comments. Barbara Hovsepian asked if the document had been signed. The answer was yes. Leo Manuelian asked if there would be a vote by the Parish to actually purchase the property. The answer was that a special Assembly would be called. Dn. Charles Pinajian asked about the cost (the market value). Mr. Dabagian said that it was inappropriate at this time to give any specific cost as it was not available at the present time. Bertha Vanishkian asked if there were any specific plans for the property at this time. The answer was that there were none.

Barbara Hovsepian asked what percentage of people attending Church are dues-paying members. She wanted to know if it was a good percentage. Mr. Dabagian could not answer that question. He mentioned that only 10% to 15% of the surrounding Armenian population attend Church. Maybe we should find a way to reach those people.

Question - Are there any zoning problems regarding the Kirschner property? Answer - We don't know at this time. This question would depend upon the final proposed use of the property.

Leo Manuelian asked about our choice of candidates for a new Pastor. Father Vahan answered that question. He said that the Bishop has initiated a new program. He has the right to send a Pastor of his choice to the Parish, but the Parish does have the right to accept or decline. He will make a list of candidates and upon a mutual agreement, the Parish Council will then do interviews. It will now be between the Bishop and the Parish Council.

The Bishop has sent his assurances that he will do everything he can to have a new Pastor in place by September 1, 1999. Haig Hovsepian asked if the new Pastor would be in place before Father Vahan leaves. Mr. Dabagian said there is not a large pool to choose from. There will, hopefully, be an appropriate amount of time for a smooth transition. The Parish Council will do whatever is feasible to have someone who will be here for an extended period of time.

Patrick Kaprelian asked if the Parish Council plans to have a membership drive. Mr. Dabagian said that a concerted drive has not been done, but plans can be made.

Assembly Chairman Thomas Ashbahian thanked Richard Dabagian for serving as Parish Council Chairman.

## REPORTS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS

The Assembly Chairman called upon officers of all organizations to comment on their reports.

**ACYOA Juniors.** There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the ACYOA Juniors.

**ACYOA Seniors.** There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the ACYOA Seniors.

**Armenian School.** Armenian School Board Chairperson Mary Ann Mozian said everything is running well. There are 42 students. There is a Lenten luncheon planned for March 21, 1999. Dn. Charles Pinajian asked about conversational Armenian classes. Mrs. Mozian said this was done in the classroom. Mr. Rex Kachigian asked if there was enough cash on hand. The answer was yes, that from tuition, the luncheon and donations from ACEF, there are enough funds for the year. Mrs. Mozian wanted to thank everyone for their donations. Linda Tarzian said that she enjoyed Conversation Armenian class for adults. Father Vahan enjoyed offering these classes, and may resume them after February. He went on to discuss that if a professional teacher became necessary, there would not be enough money, but people should let the office know if they were interested.

**Church Choir.** There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Church Choir.

**Men's Fellowship.** The organization chairman, Ara Hourdajian, spoke about their success in distributing videos to schools regarding the Armenian Genocide.

**Senior Center.** There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Senior Center.

**Sunday School.** Father Vahan thanked Superintendent Andrea Carden. He also thanked Araxie Moundjian for her dedicated service in the past. Rex Kachigian asked who are our Sunday School teachers. Andrea Carden said they were listed recently in the Lradoo. All teachers present were asked to stand and received a round of applause.

**Women's Guild.** There were no questions from the Assembly on the Report of the Women's Guild.

## AUDITING COMMITTEE.

Bill McMahon said there were no additional comments to add to the report.

Before proceeding further, Parish Council Chairman Richard Dabagian asked for a vote regarding the Proposal in the Annual Report, since it would affect the Budget Proposal.

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL:** "In Order for the church to meet its financial obligations, we propose to increase the minimum annual dues for adults from \$125 to \$150 per person, and with respect to families from \$250 to \$300, while leaving the Senior Citizen's and Student's rates unchanged."

Chairman Ashbahian asked for a second on the motion, then called for discussion on the motion.

Last year a volunteer system for paying additional dues was appropriated. This plan has fallen short. It has been years since the last increase despite increased expenses.

**DISCUSSION:** Dn. Charles Pinajian said that the Diocesan dues eat up most of our membership dues. We need a certain amount of money per week just to keep the doors open. Rex Kachigian supported the resolution. He said maybe the dues could be raised even a bit more and asked if they had considered that. Mr. Dabagian said other figures had been discussed, but they had all agreed on the numbers given. Mr. Kachigian said that direct donations are only 20% of the Budget. Leon Hovsepian said that the last increase was at least 5 years ago, and that this is a modest increase, less than inflation. Dovie Tilbian recommended that the Senior dues be raised from \$50 to \$75. An amendment to the motion was made and seconded. Mr. Ashbahian stated that 50% of our seniors donate at least their regular membership dues. Mary Ann Mozian said that a majority of seniors pay more than their dues. Mr. Ashbahian would like to increase envelope donations by \$8,000. Jon Royland stated that only if all dues were increased would we receive \$9,000 more per year. Leon Manuelian asked if the Parish Council was acceptable to increasing the Senior Citizen dues. The answer was yes. Chairman Ashbahian restated the amended motion and called for any further discussion on the amended motion to increase regular dues from \$125 to \$150 per year and Senior Citizen dues from \$50 to \$75 per year. Lucy Dabagian made a comment that this is only \$.50 a week. Mr. Ashbahian asked Mr. Basralian if we would vote both increases with a single vote. The answer was yes. Mr. Ashbahian called for a vote and the motion was passed unanimously.

## 1999 BUDGET REPORT

Bob Ishkanian thanked Greg Ashbahian and Bill McMahon for all their help. He noted the changed format of the Report. He wanted a more complete account. The Balance Sheet on Page 30 is a new report. Mr. Ishkanian said that as of today the ACEF loan had been reduced by \$37,000. This came out of Cash on Hand. Dn. Charles Pinajian asked if the \$133,000 included money from the organizations. The answer was yes. Rex Kachigian asked if the Cash on Hand was in interest bearing accounts. Mr. Dabagian -Yes, some of the money is in CDs and the rest in Dreyfus funds. There are no risky investments. Dennis Tarzian asked if the debt was being paid on a specific schedule. The answer was no. If we have cash, we make a payment. If all pledges

were paid, we could completely pay off the ACEF loan. We hope to have it paid in full in 1999. A question was asked about the vehicle listed on Page 30. Answer - that money is authorized for future needs. Mr. Kachigian said he thought the vehicle fund was in place to purchase the new vehicle we bought. Why is the fund still so much? (\$11,524.00). Mr. Gabrellian donated the funds for the new vehicle, so the money was left there for the future. Rex Kachigian asked if we were going to put money in it every year. The answer was yes - \$1,000 per year. Lynn Beylerian stated that Father Vahan's car is leased because there weren't enough funds to purchase a car when it was needed.

Mr. Ishkanian asked everyone to look at Page 28 in the Annual Report. He showed that plans have been made for a modest increase in disbursements for 1999. Linda Chagachbanian asked about the expenditure for a Sister Parish. Father Vahan said that the Bishop sent letters to all Parishes to help fund a Sister Parish in Armenia. This donation will be made annually. Father Vahan further explained that for \$3,000 an entire Parish can fully function for one year. The monies go directly from us to Armenia. We will receive reports from the Pastor.

Mr. Ishkanian explained that the rental income decreased because LeBar has moved out. He was asked why the dividends and interest is so high. He explained that this is now a consolidated total. Leon Manuelian inquired why the monies expected from affairs is so much higher. Answers - 1) needed to balance the budget, 2) 50/50 raffle income, 3) do hope to increase. Another question was asked regarding the large increase of In Lieu of Flowers. We were told that this year larger amounts were put aside for endowment funds.

A motion was made to accept the Budget Report as presented. It was seconded and accepted.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Ashbahian asked for all to remember those men we lost last year, George Dabagian, Sarkis Soutanian and Sarkis Gabrellian. These men made up the Building Committee and are sorely missed. The Parish Council has now taken over their activities.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Leo Manuelian mentioned how complete the Treasurer's report was. He suggested that next year perhaps the Parish Assembly could be held on the 2nd or 3rd Sunday in February. It would give more time to get all the reports together. Father Vahan said that was not feasible, since the Diocese gives us a due date when they need all the information. There is too much work for the office staff to do if it is done too late. Carol Soojian asked about the Memorial Plaques. What is happening? Answer - they are being worked on now. Mrs. Ishkanian recommended that the financial reports should follow the same format as this year. Dn. Charles Pinajian made a motion to recognize the dedication of Helen Mazoujian who has served the Choir until she recently became too ill. Father Vahan recommended that the Parish Council make a plaque along with a letter from all and a visit. Mary Ann Mozian said we had given Aram and Helen Mazoujian a plaque in the past. Father Vahan said we will do something for her. A resolution was made by Rex Kachigian and passed unanimously. There was no additional New Business.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dawn Hourdajian thanked Father Vahan, the office staff, Carol Ashbahian and Susan Yediblian for their help. She also thanked all the candidates. Mrs. Hourdajian reported the results of the balloting

## PARISH COUNCIL

Dr. Barry Halejian	Charles Pinajian
Kevork Ohannessian	Dennis Tarzian
Jeffrey Boyajian (alternate)	Allan Tossoonian (alternate)

## AUDITING COMMITTEE

Vahe Kiljian

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Carol Ashbahian	Lucy Dabagian
Lynn Beylerian	Margie Ajamian (alternate)

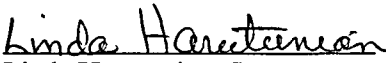
## DIOCESAN DELEGATES

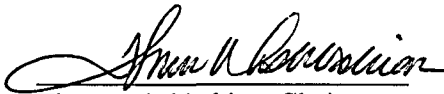
Ara Hourdajian	S. Rex Kachigian
Leon Hovsepian (alternate)	

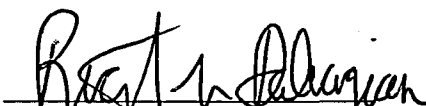
A motion was made to close the Assembly. It was accepted, seconded and approved.

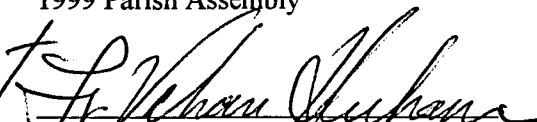
The meeting ended with a prayer, led by Father Vahan, and was adjourned at 2:15PM.

Respectfully submitted.

  
Linda Harutunian, Secretary  
1999 Parish Assembly

  
Thomas Ashbahian, Chairman  
1999 Parish Assembly

  
Richard G. Dabagian  
Parish Council Chairman

  
V. Rev. Fr. Vahan Hovhannessian, Pastor  
President, 1999 Parish Assembly

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