

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH OF WESTCHESTER

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY - FEBRUARY 12, 1989

The sixteenth Annual Parish Assembly of St. James Armenian Church of Westchester commenced at 7:30 P.M. on Sunday, February 12, 1989. In the absence of last year's Chairperson, last year's Secretary called the meeting to order. John Boyajian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, took the floor. He stated that the Nominating Committee placed Al Darien as Chairperson, and Elizabeth Derderian as Secretary. As there were no more nominations from the floor, the nominations were closed and seconded, and these officers were voted in.

John Boyajian then went on to announce the candidates as follows:

Parish Council- Zaven Adourian, Taniel Bas, Paul Bashian, Shahen Guiragossian, Martha Gurahian, Hagop Hampartsoumian, Ara Ishkanian, Harry Keleshian, Alice Shimshidian, and Richard Varadian. Five of these ten were to be elected.

Nominating Committee - Anahid Birnbaum, Rose Darien, Diâne Davidian, Ellen Ishkanian, Gale Perzigian, Lygia Petrossian, Sylvia Sarkisian, Linda Varadian. Four of these eight were to be elected.

Auditing Committee - Grace Cassidy, Al Darien, Alice Kalađjian, Sarah Mushegian, Avadis Sakalian, Vickie Toutoundjian. Three of these six were to be elected.

As there were no more nominations for each of these categories, motions were made, seconded, and carried, to close the nominations. John Boyajian reminded the assembly that they must be dues paying members to vote - each member must sign the register, and receive an official green ballot to vote.

Al Darien, the Assembly Chairperson, came to the floor, and declared a fifteen minute recess for voting, coffee, and review of last year's minutes.

The assembly reconvened at 8:05 P.M. Al Darien announced that there were 107 paid members; 47 were present to vote. As a minimum of one-third of paid members is needed to constitute a quorum, there was a sufficient number of members present to proceed.

A correction to last year's minutes was made by Lionel Galstaun. On page 3, at the end of paragraph one, it stated that "Final approval is expected at the end of 1988". He corrected this to read, "Final approval could not be expected before the end of 1988". A motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the minutes of last year, as corrected.

The reading of the following reports then ensued, in this order: the Pastor's Report, the Parish Council Report, and the Diocesan Delegate Report. With each, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to receive them as read. A motion was then made to dispense with the reading of all the other reports, except that of the building committee. This was seconded and carried.

The Building Committee Report was then read by Ed Essayan. He stated that alternate sites for the proposed church complex were being investigated because of strong resistance from our neighbors, PEPA Board members, and the Harrison Planning Board; and the lengthiness and costliness to fight such resistance. The neighbors are strongly opposed to the building of the cultural hall, which they feel will be a "catering establishment" which would upset the tranquility of the neighborhood. He then went on to state that if we did find a new site, we would be spared the cost of preparing and defending a detailed Environmental Impact Statement. After investigating several sites, one, located at the corner of Kenilworth Road and Westchester Avenue, had strong advantages such as: 1) easy access, 2) anticipated easier acceptance by the Planning Board and neighbors, 3) availability of city water, 4) possible availability of natural gas fuel, 5) possible early availability of sewer.

The motion was made, seconded, and carried to accept the Building Committee Report.

George Guendjoian asked if a parish assembly had been called to authorize the committee to go ahead and look for a new site. He felt that a very good job had been done, but that a special assembly meeting should have been called. Lionel Galstaun explained that this was merely an information gathering activity. Before any action can be taken, a special parish assembly must be called. He stated that on April 19th, the Parish Council decided to explore these other possibilities.

George Gendjoian still felt that approval of this should have come from a parish assembly. Lionel Galstaun explained further that the whole situation had to be kept under a cloud of confidentiality - it was a very touchy situation and they had to move carefully. If it was not kept confidential, it would have killed our situation, and it would have stiffened the position of the planning board. George Davidian went on to explain that the Building Committee made a study of what could be done, under the approval of the Parish Council - nobody was signing any contracts. Paul Bashian stated that at least, we should have been kept up-to-date with certain details, i.e., as a matter of procedure. Vincent Gurahian concluded that the only thing that would have been accomplished by a special parish assembly would be to point out the problems that we have, and to decide to go ahead to look for other sites. What the Parish Council and the Building Committee did was perfectly proper, consistent, and there was no reason to call a parish assembly at that point.

Avadis Sakalian then read the financial report. He explained that they are trying to cut down on expenses as much as possible - there are only small increases to the Der Hayr, Hokadar, and there are car payments to be made over the duration of four years at 7% interest of approximately \$2800 a year. Regarding the cost of the new air conditioning unit, we expect to be reimbursed for much of the cost.

Mark Derderian questioned why there was a transfer to the Building Fund Account of \$17,316.77 in the cash reconciliation, as it had been decided not to do that transfer this year in the parish council meeting. Avadis Sakalian responded that when Jack Hachigian had been chairman of the Parish Council, a proposal was made that out of each year's surplus as of December 31, 1987, 50% would go to the Building Fund, 25% would go to the Capital Fund, and 25% would go to the Contingency Fund. Mark Derderian stated that this year the Parish Council decided that the minutes of previous meetings did not give them authority to do so. Lionel Galstaun responded that the intent of that proposal was that it should be done every year.

Martha Gurahian explained that Jack Hachigian made this resolution and it was passed by the Parish Assembly, and the intent of the resolution was that it was to be done every year, but the minutes don't reflect that. Lionel Galstaun said that since the minutes do not reflect that, he will bring up a proposal in New Business that will make it official for all time. Mark Derderian maintained that it should not have been done this year. Lionel Galstaun said that earlier this year, if the transfer was made it would put the operating budget in the red, but since this did not materialize, the decision was made to stay with the previous practice.

A motion was then made, seconded, and carried to accept the financial report, and the proposed budget for 1989.

It was now time for New Business. Lionel Galstaun then presented the proposal by the Parish Council which read as follows:

WHEREAS

Previous Parish Assemblies have resolved to transfer surplus funds from the operating account at the end of the year to the Building, Capital and Contingency Funds, and,

WHEREAS

A review of the Resolutions as recorded in the Minutes indicates that the Resolutions were to be applied only for the specific year in which they were approved, and

WHEREAS

It is desirable to establish a policy which will be applicable for the transfer of future surplus funds,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

At the end of each fiscal year, surplus funds, which

means the excess of operating income above operating disbursements, shall be assigned as follows:

1) A maximum of \$15,000 to the operating fund of the succeeding year to defray expenses incurred before normal income is received,

2) One third of the balance, after deducting the first \$15,000, to the Building Fund,

3) A second third of the balance to the Contingency Fund, up to a maximum of ten percent of the Operating Budget for the succeeding year, and

4) The balance to the Capital Fund without limitation on maximum accumulation, which fund or any part thereof may be spent only on approval of the appropriate authority as defined in the By-Laws.

Mike Pisani asked what the differences were between Operating, Capital, and Contingency Funds. Lionel Galstaun clarified that the Operating Fund handles normal expenses of the Church; the Contingency Fund is set aside to care for emergency situations (usually 10% of the budget); and the Capital Fund is there to pay for major improvements in facilities, furniture, etc.

The Parish Assembly then voted to pass the resolution.

Der Hayr then announced the results of the balloting for the various offices. They were as follows:

Parish Council - Richard Varadian, Ara Ishkanian, Alice Shimshidian, Martha Gurahian, Paul Bashian. Alternate: Harry Keleshian.

Nominating Committee - Sylvia Sarkisian, Linda Varadian, Anahid Birnbaum, Diane Davidian. Alternate: Ellen Ishkanian.

Auditing Committee - Al Darien, Avadis Sakalian, Alice Kaladjian. Alternate: Grace Cassidy.

Der Hayr congratulated all the winners. The business of the assembly ended here.

Harry Keleshian then wished to discuss a trip to Armenia by Americares pointing out that our community was very helpful in bringing in the fifteen patients from Armenia. He thanked all that were involved in this, especially Elmas Davidian, Avadis Sakalian, AND GEORGE Leylegian, He pointed out that our parishioners are very willing and cooperative, and that it was very satisfying helping these patients come over. He and George Leylegian are negotiating to bring more people in. Ed Essayan expressed his deep appreciation to Harry Keleshian for coordinating this.

Der Hayr then went on to fill us in on the eight day

visit of the two Catholicoi. George Leylegian asked what progress had been made on the unity issue. Der Hayr said that mutual regard and respect was created, and whatever happens from here is up to the local leaders; he feels that there is no reason to postpone the implementation of the guidelines, to proceed with the spiritual mandate both Catholicoi have given us. Harry Keleshian is in the process of proposing to Archbishop Manoogian, the bringing in of the next two planes of patients from Armenia jointly. Der Hayr concluded that it was very inspiring to see both Catholicoi together on this "mission of mercy".

At 9:40 P.M., the motion was made, seconded, and carried to close the Sixteenth Annual Parish Assembly. Al Darien thanked all who were involved. Der Hayr closed with prayer.

Fr. Karekin Kasparian
Reverend Father Karekin Kasparian
Pastor and President

Albert T. Darien
Al Darien
Chairman

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Derderian
Elizabeth Derderian
Assembly Secretary