

**MINUTES of the TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY  
ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH of WESTCHESTER  
Purchase, NY**

**March 3, 1995**

1. Invocation and Call to Order

The assembly was called to order at 12:45 by Van Krikorian, Chairman of the Twenty-Second Annual Parish Assembly after the opening prayer by the Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, Pastor.

2. Verification of the Eligibility of Members and Quorum

A quorum consisting of 92 out of 188 dues-paid members was confirmed.

3.1 Appeal from Stewardship Committee

Paul Keyishian, Chairman of the Stewardship Committee, introduced Kevork Adourian, member of the Committee, urging all members to become stewardship pledgers.

3.2 Parish Council Nominations

Mike Guroian, Nominating Committee, moved Election of Assembly Officers to Item 3.5 on the agenda. Harry Gurun, Parish Council nominee, noted that he would like to commit his energies to the newly-formed Armenian School committee. Van Krikorian noted that the Diocesan Bylaws require that two nominees be presented for each available slot, then opened the floor to nominations for Parish Council.

Ed Essayan nominated Michael Guroian; nomination was seconded, Michael accepted.  
Ara Momjian nominated Meline Kasparian; nomination was seconded, Meline declined.  
Mike Pisani nominated George Davidian; nomination was seconded, George declined due to health reasons.  
Sally Guendjoian nominated Puzant Sirabian; nomination was seconded, Puzant declined.  
Eva Jevahirjian nominated Hagop Hamparsoumian; nomination was seconded.  
Ruth Sanossian moved to close nominations, Ara Momjian seconded, motion was passed.  
Lionel Galstaun made a motion to accept the slate as amended, motion was seconded.  
James Najarian made a motion for unanimous consent, motion passed.

3.3 Nominating Committee Nominations

There were no nominations from the floor. Lionel Galstaun moved to close the nominations, motion was seconded. Lionel moved for unanimous consent, motion carried.

3.4 Auditing Committee Nominations

There were no nominations from the floor. Lionel Galstaun moved to close the nominations, motion was seconded. Lionel moved for unanimous consent, motion carried.

3.5 Parish Assembly Officer Nominations

Betty Salbashian was nominated for Parish Assembly Chairman. The motion was seconded. Noem Dodakian was nominated for Parish Assembly Secretary. The motion was seconded. Lionel Galstaun moved to close the nominations, motion was seconded and carried.

The meeting was adjourned for voting and lunch at 1:00 pm.

The meeting resumed at 2:00 pm. Van Krikorian announced the Parish Assembly Officers - Douglas Tashjian, Chairman; Meline Kasparian, Secretary.

#### 4. Reading of Minutes of February 19, 1995 Parish Assembly

Doug Tashjian assumed control of the meeting, and entertained a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes of the 1995 Parish Assembly. Ruth Sanossian made a motion to waive the reading with the 1995 minutes; the motion was seconded and carried.

#### 5. Report of Pastor

Fr. Karekin Kasparian read his report to the Parish Assembly which consisted of a brief summary of various aspects of the St. James parish life over the last fifteen years. Doug Tashjian thanked Fr. Karekin on behalf of the parish for his hard work. John Vakassian made a motion to accept the report as written and read; the motion carried.

Doug explained that discussion is not limited to the agenda presented, and that other discussion topics should be presented to him and would be discussed under new business.

#### 6. Report of Parish Council

Lionel Galstaun, Parish Council Chairman, read the Report of the Parish Council, after which questions were entertained.

Various questions were raised about the possibility of using tufa for the new church, and Lionel informed the Assembly that the freight would cost approximately \$100,000 in addition to the price of the material itself.

Ruth Sanossian asked whether the rug sale could be held on the new church property, and Doug Tashjian responded that the current space was not adequate to hold the rug sale.

George Davidian asked why the previous bookkeeper Nancy Kayekjian had been paid but the current bookkeeper, Elmas Davidian, had not been offered the same salary.

Ed Gulbenkian made a motion to pay Elmas Davidian the same salary of the previous bookkeeper. Doug Tashjian asked that the motion be brought up under the budget discussion.

Ed Essayan asked about the rug sale and the method in which it is currently handled. Doug Tashjian recommended that the item be brought up under new business.

Ellen Ishkanian moved to accept the Parish Council report.

#### 7. Reports of Church Organizations

Ellen Ishkanian asked about the practice of church organizations turning over their balances at the end of the year. Lionel Galstaun responded that a letter had gone to all organizations asking for any balance over \$1,000. A discussion took place on why various organizations hadn't turned in money. Aida Pisani explained that the Armenian School year runs from September - June, and that while there was currently a surplus, there would be no balance in the account by June.

\* Ellen moved that the Armenian School financial report be amended to reflect balance as of August. The motion was seconded and carried. Ellen asked about the choir, the ACYOA Seniors and the Cultural Committee. Noem Dodakian reported that the choir turned in funds after 12/31/95, the date listed on the report. Judge Gurahian recommended that the report be accepted as amended. The motion was seconded and carried.

\*Future annual reports will reflect 2 balances.

1 for the end of the Armenian School fiscal year in August.

1 for the end of the parish's fiscal year in December.



## 8. Report on Building Project

Richard Papalian presented the report of the Building Committee, after which questions were entertained.

Various questions were raised about the design of the church, including the shape of the entrance to the church and the possibility of using tufa in the project. Richard noted that with respect to the shape of the entrance the issue was not structural, and slight changes may be made if necessary while the church is being erected.

Discussion was held on the new, streamlined committee (consisting of Richard Papalian, Dan Mushegian, Zaven Tachdjian and a fourth individual to be named) which will handle the bulk of the decisions on the building project going forward. This Administrative Committee was appointed by the Parish Council recently, to take the place of a Building Committee.

Ruth Sanossian thanked Richard for his hard work, and moved to accept the report as presented. The motion was seconded and carried.

## 9. Authorization to sell Lincoln Lane property

Lionel Galstaun moved to authorize the sale of our current church property on Lincoln Lane by the Administrative Committee to the highest bidder. There was discussion on the motion, including whether or not to include a dollar amount in the authorization, whether or not to include a time limit, the potential need for renting another space, and the price of church interior furnishings.

Richard Papalian moved that the Parish Assembly authorize the Administrative Committee to sell the Lincoln Lane property for no less than \$1.2mm, net, and retain possession of the property until at least March 1997.

There was further discussion on the motion. Richard made an amended motion to authorize the Building Committee to sell for no less than \$1.35MM the Lincoln Lane property and retain possession until at least April 1997. The motion was seconded and carried.

## 10. Fundraising Committee Report

Ara Momjian, Chairman of the Fundraising Committee, presented the report. Discussion ensued about the "soft costs" mentioned in the report, and other expenses incurred at the North Street property. It was noted that monthly account statements are available for examination by the parishioners.

Doug Tashjian moved to accept the report of the Fundraising Committee. The motion was seconded and carried.

## 11. Presentation of the Financial Report for 1995 and approval of the proposed budget for 1996

Harry Tavitian, Parish Council Treasurer, presented the financial report. He thanked Elmas Davidian for her hard work as bookkeeper, and mentioned that a more traditional accounting system is being put in place with the help of George Sanossian. He then took questions on the proposed budget. Various issues were discussed including the poor financial performance of the rug sales compared with projections, and the Diocesan assessment and its percentage of the operating budget.

A question was raised as to the absence of a raise for the Pastor in 1996. Der Hayr explained that he had asked for a pay cut as an expression of empathy and support regarding the projected budget shortfall.

Lionel Galstaun made a motion to accept the budget as presented. The motion was seconded and carried.

## 12. New Business

Ed Essayan asked about the seminarians using the North Street property, as well as the financial impact of their living there. Der Hary responded that they remained at the North Street house for two semesters and that the Seminary paid the utility bills.

Ed Essayan asked about the possibility of getting the annual report out to the members in advance. Der Hayr commented on the lack of cooperation of the various organizations within the church in submitting reports on time.

Ed Essayan commented on the rug sale and the lack of availability of reasonably priced, high quality items. A group consisting of Doug Tashjian, Garo Bashian and others agreed to meet by the end of March to discuss the matter further and make recommendations to the parish council.

Ed Gulbenkian moved that Elmas Davidian be paid the same salary as her predecessor for bookkeeping services. The motion was seconded and carried.

Ed Gulbenkian brought up the issue of the cost of furnishing the interior of the church. Ara Momjian commented on the existence of the memorial funds which are devoted to a portion of the church furnishings. Richard Papalian mentioned that approximately \$1MM in additional pledges is needed to complete the project. Discussion was held on the topic of Fundraising Banquet attendees who have not yet pledged to the new church project. George Davidian suggested that those who made pledges be encouraged to pay their balances early. Richard Papalian said that we will reduce the project before we take out a mortgage.

#### Election Results

Doug Tashjian read the election results in alphabetical order:

#### Parish Council

Kevork Adourian, Louise Yacobian Garofalo, Michael Guroian, Ara Ishkanian, Michael Pisani  
Laura Shimshidian, and Krikor Salbashian (alternate)

#### Nominating Committee

Agnes Bostonian, Sally Guendjoian, Ara Momjian, Avadis Sakalian, and Harry Ekizian (alternate)

#### Auditing Committee

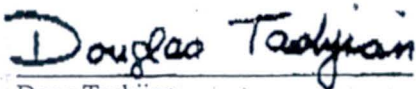
Grace Cassidy, and Stella Choukachian

There was a run-off for the third slot between Agnes Babian and Russell Sirabian, after which Russell was elected and Agnes Babian became the alternate.

#### 13. President's Closing Remarks and prayer

Der Hayr gave closing remarks, encouraged a show of support for the new building committee, thanked the Auditing and Nominating Committees as well as the outgoing Parish Council members, congratulated the reelected and newly-elected Parish Council members, thanked Paul and Gail Keyishian for the luncheon during the Assembly, and the Assembly officers. He then blessed the new Parish Council members, and the meeting was adjourned after a closing prayer at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Doug Tashjian  
Assembly Chairman



Meline J. Kasparian  
Assembly Secretary

  
Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian  
Pastor