

MINUTES OF THE 25TH ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY - FEBRUARY 22, 1998

AT ST. NERSESS ARMENIAN SEMINARY

The 25th Annual Parish Assembly of St. James Armenian Church, took place at St. Nersess Seminary on February 22, 1998. The Invocation was given by Der Hayr in the Chapel and the meeting called to order by Martha Gurahian, Chairperson of last year's Assembly at 12:35pm.

Avadis Sakalian, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee presented the slate of candidates for Parish Council, Nominating and Auditing Committees. Nominations were closed after no additional candidates were nominated from the floor.

Nominations were presented for Chairperson and Secretary of the Assembly, and there being no nominations from the floor, Marguerite Sagatelian and Harry Nakashian, respectively, were elected as Tivan. A motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting for voting and lunch.

The Assembly was called to order at 1:15pm by Chairperson Marguerite Sagatelian. Eighty six ballots were cast.

The reading of the 1997 minutes was waived and approved by the body.

Report of the Pastor: Der Hayr's brief report was accepted with much appreciation for a significant "transitional year". Der Hayr concluded thanking all those that made 1997 a memorable year.

Report of the Parish Council: Ara Ishkanian, Chairperson, presented the Parish Council report. Among other things, he reported that recently a decision was made concerning a micro station for Bell Atlantic to be placed on our property in the form of a wooden pole with several 4' antennae on it and surrounded by a small fence and nicely landscaped. Safety factors were noted, but 40 watts would pose no hazard. We would receive \$2,000 per month and \$1,000 for the months during construction. The Council recommended its acceptance with the provision that if any hazard existed to our children or parishioners, the contract could be rescinded. Judge Gurahian noted that a copy of the proposal be sent to the Diocese for approval. Motion was made to accept the report, seconded and duly passed.

Report of Diocesan Assembly: A motion was made to eliminate reading the report and it was seconded and accepted.

Reports of Church Organizations: The reading of the organizational reports was also waived with full consent.

Operational Expenses Report: This report was presented by Mack Basil. Among other things, he stated that the rug sale profit was \$12,000, thanks to Paul Keyishian and our Der Hayr, and the immense help provided by Elma Davidian and Gale Perzigian who were in control of the office work. In discussing the new budget, there was much concern shown, but also positive possibilities. Income would also be generated by the rentals of the hall and class rooms, as well as the Bell Atlantic installation. Regarding the Building Fund, Harry Ekizian reminded the members of increasing maintenance, insurance and other related costs to be considered.

Vilma Nakashian spoke of how essential it is for the organization of all of our activities to realize the great potential our total facilities have for full utilization. Martha Gurahian's question on the "20/20 Fund" was answered by Lionel Galstaun who explained the deficit, therefore no division of assets was possible. A motion to waive this fund was seconded and carried. The Assembly approved the budget for 1998 at \$212,790.

Building Project: Richard Papalian read his report which focused on completion of the Hall and landscaping, parking areas, class rooms and the reception area. Mention was made of the Interior Committee's disbanding and Ed Essayan noted that the short term aspect of doing that were not appropriate for such a hardworking committee. Mr. Papalian stated that their sole function was to make recommendations. The question of applying for a Certificate of Occupancy for the Hall, kitchen and class rooms was raised. The response was that it would be for a year with extension possible, observing the fire codes and the necessity of sprinklers. The necessity was noted for having wood floors in the Hall, and the fear of many members that linoleum or carpeting would be installed was allayed by the fact that wood was recommended quite early by the Interiors Committee. Ara Ishkanian noted the many variables that were involved in making choices, that the input from the Architects, the legal and governmental matters that they had to be concerned with and that income from caterers was dependent upon a fully functioning kitchen. Mr. Galstaun gave thanks to Richard Papalian and Zaven Tachdjian for their total dedication. A question was raised as to the possible help from the Diocese and Judge Gurahian said that the Diocese had no money.

Fundraising Report: Mack Basil disclosed that that the balance in the Memorial Fund would be preserved while at the same time be incorporated in one Building Fund Account. To delay the construction and re-start would result in an additional \$200,000 which would make our shortfall even greater. Loans and various options were discussed by Mr. Basil and the popular consensus by experts and members was that costs were prohibitive. No new contracts were made because of the present zero balance as noted by Richard Papalian and Zaven Tachdjian. Michael Pisani remarked, that "we've talked for years about a church and now that we've started, it's time to finish it". In a proposal, as described earlier, Mack Basil, after a passionate appeal to the Assembly, passed around a sheet of paper, asking that each single vote would mean \$3,000 and asked that the Assembly subscribe to his appeal. 21 families noted Mr. Basil's urgency and signed the sheet; some committing for less than \$3,000. John Vakassian personally donated \$10,000. A short window of opportunity exists to keep the building continue uninterrupted and raising the \$300,000 was possible if full participation was achieved. Martha Gurahian made a motion to create a list of past donors which was seconded and carried. Mike Guroian congratulated Mack Basil for an excellent report. Also noted, in respect to possible loans from banks, that the parishioners would also be held liable for debts incurred and that such an imposition was too great to consider.

New Business: Ara Ishkanian said that the Parish Council had been putting off an increase in church dues, but that the time had come to consider raising it to \$100 per person per year to effectively help in the increased expenses of our new facility. Students dues would remain at \$60. A motion was made by Ruth Sanossian to raise membership dues to \$100 per person as of the current year. It was seconded and carried.

Der Hayr thanked Marguerite Sagatelian and Harry Nakashian as the Tivan of the Assembly, as well as the members of the Nominating and Auditing Committees and the outgoing Parish Council members (Kevork Adourian, Michael Guroian and Louise Yacobian Garofalo). A special appreciation was expressed to the three people most actively involved in the construction project; Richard Papalian, Zaven Tachdjian and Mack Basil. Der Hayr then read the election results as follows:

Parish Council

Menas Daderian
Mark Derderian
Harry Gurun
Ara Ishkanian
Michael Pisani
Laura Shimshidian
Ruth Sanossian, Alt.

Nominating Committee

Mary Ashjian
Meline Kasparian
Rita Kurkjian
Betty Salbashian
John Boyajian, Alt.

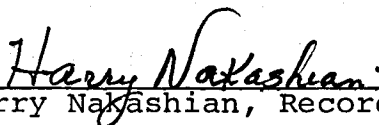
Auditing Committee

Grace Cassidy
Marilyn Keosayian
Irene Shadoian
Arsham Antreasyan, Alt.

Motion was made to adjourn the Assembly, seconded and carried. The 1998 Parish Assembly meeting came to a close at 4:30pm with an announcement by Michael Guroian that our annual picnic will be held on August 30 on the grounds of our future church on North Street.


Rev. Fr. Karekin Kasparian, President


Marguerite Sagatelian, Chairperson


Harry Nakashian, Recording Secretary