

St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church
Minutes of the Parish Assembly
February 9, 1992

The meeting was called to order at about 12:30 p.m. on February 9, 1992 after an opening prayer by Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian. A roll call revealed 127 out of a possible 231 dues paying members were present. Also in attendance were approximately 24 new dues paying members for 1992; however, these new members were not allowed to vote. The election for officers to preside over the Assembly (Tivan) was held. Paul Murad and Hratch Semerjian were nominated for chairman, and Judy Hagopian and Lucia Magarian for secretary, respectively. Voting by secret ballot revealed the following results: Paul Murad-41; Hratch Semerjian-82. As Judy Hagopian was absent, Lucia Magarian was elected with 82 votes.

Dr. Semerjian and Mrs. Magarian took their seats. The Chairman thanked the Assembly for this honor, and designated Dr. Edward Onanian as the parliamentarian. Following this, Dr. Semerjian gave some general instructions on protocol and the conduct of the meeting. He then reminded the people in attendance that only dues paying members could participate in the discussions and in voting. Much heated disagreement on this principle occurred; Dr. Semerjian read Article 7 of the Diocesan By-laws to establish the veracity of the policy.

Dr. Semerjian then asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. Mr. George Derderian wanted to know where the charitable fund report was. Dr. Semerjian reassured him that it would be included and also agreed to add a Report on the Armenian Life Series. The Chairman then asked Col. George Juskalian, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, to present the slate of candidates for the 1992 elections. Col. Juskalian introduced the candidates and opened it for nominations from the floor. The Chairman then explained how the Auditing Committee election was to proceed. Article 14(F) of the By-laws had been amended; therefore, three members would be elected with staggered terms. Since this is the first year for this procedure, the highest vote getter will serve for three years, the next for two, and the next for one. It was revealed that last year a tie occurred between Mike Tashjian and Arut Koseian on the Finance Committee, and a new vote was now needed to break the tie. Der Hayr reminded the Chair that the tie should have been submitted to the President last year for a resolution rather than being postponed. Regarding the election of Parish Council members, the Chair explained that the seat vacated by the resignation of Dr. Markarian would be filled by the alternate from last year's election, Mr. Richard Hatchik. Then a motion to close the nominations was made and carried. The Nominating Committee was instructed to prepare the ballots.

Pastor's Report

Father Kalayjian invited everyone to turn to pages 25-27 in the Annual Report (distributed during the meeting) and follow along in English while he delivered his report in Armenian. When he concluded, Mr. Stepan Ohanian expressed his appreciation for all the work Der Hayr has done. He said that Der Hayr worked hard to attend to the needs of this parish, and we need to demonstrate our support so that we may continue to uphold Der Hayr's contributions.

Parish Council's Report

The Parish Council report was presented by Mr. Mike Tashjian, Chairman of the Council. He expressed his disappointment for the lack of participation by the parishioners, and encouraged everyone to become more active. He said that the contributions and dues payments were so low at times, and the funds were so scarce, that the Treasurer had difficulty paying the bills during the lean months of summer. This led to a general discussion on raising funds. Mr. Vartkes Keshishian asked about the Parish Council's activities to raise funds. Mr. Tashjian listed many of the activities held during the year: the bazaar, rug sale, picnics, etc. Mr. Tom Magarian wanted to know if any of the funds raised to help Armenia had affected the Church's ability to raise funds for its own operating budget. This led to an explanation that the chief source of funds comes from the membership dues and pledges, and when people don't participate, the Church suffers. Referring to the general participation within the community, Mrs. Lucy Murad reminded everyone that it was not unusual in the past to have as few as 40 people at meetings and at the annual Parish Assemblies. Mr. Tashjian added that, during the past year, even the Parish Council had trouble mustering a quorum in many of their meetings. A discussion followed on the feasibility of raising dues and actively encouraging more pledges. In response to some inquiries as to what the average combined contribution was, Der Hayr revealed that, to date, 1992 figures showed that 57 individuals had responded with an average pledge of \$200. It was pointed out that this figure was misleading, because it included a few individuals who contribute significantly more than the rest, and a more accurate figure would be an average of little more than \$100 per person. Mr. Derderian then spoke about the illogic of such arithmetic. He said: "Some people think if they give \$150, they've done 50% more than they have to; and if they give \$200, they think they've done twice as much as they have to. The truth is, we have a problem of understanding our real Christian, Biblically mandated, responsibility". Then he directed everyone to read the prophet Malachi in the last book of the Old Testament to find out what we should do.

Diocesan Delegates' Report

Dean Shahinian, Esq. presented the Delegates' report on the Diocesan Assembly and explained that Dr. Semerjian and himself were the delegates to the Assembly in New Jersey. He, too, referred to the complete report included in the Annual Report, and explained that the more dues paying members a church has, the more delegates it can send to the Diocesan Assembly. Among the topics which were covered at the last Diocesan Assembly were: Earthquake Relief, an Armenian Village Program, Physician Exchange (with Armenia), Unity in The Church, Young Adult Participation, and Finances.

A motion was made to accept the Parish Council and Diocesan Delegates' reports. The motion carried.

Elections

The Chairman reminded everyone how much time it takes to serve on the Parish Council and urged those nominated to take their responsibility seriously and to respect the by-laws. He also explained that, if any member "fails to attend four consecutive meetings of the Council without a reasonable and compelling reason", he or she could be removed. The voting took place by secret ballot with a roll call. While the votes were being tabulated, the Chair called on the Parish Council Treasurer to present his report and the proposed budget.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Levon Andonian, the Parish Council treasurer, called attention to the budget that appeared in the Annual Report and asked if anyone had any questions. Der Hayr wanted an explanation on the "transfer funds" and "reimbursements" , which was provided by Mr. Andonian.

Mr. Andonian then proceeded to present the proposed 1992 budget. There was a general concern among the Assembly members that the church showed an apparent deficit of \$19,000. The explanation provided was that several income items (such as bazaar proceeds and annual dues/pledges for 1991) had not been actually deposited in the bank account by the end of the 1991 year but were deposited in 1992. Nevertheless, it was observed that there were a few special expenses (coke machine, landscaping, etc.) which were in the budget, and the fact that pledge and membership dues have not kept pace with expenses has resulted in a less than favorable financial situation. Both the Treasurer and Dr. Onanian suggested to the Assembly that we all would have to "dig deeper" into our pockets in the coming year. Mr. Andonian closed his presentation by encouraging more young people to take part in the church activities.

The next item of discussion was the "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) between the Pastor of St. Mary's Armenian Church and the Parish Council. There was much heated discussion and disagreement concerning the MOU, the attached "Operating Guidelines for St. Mary's Armenian Church" and the Pastor's response to the proposed MOU and Guidelines. Several parishioners spoke up and suggested that the document ought to be thrown out. Mr. Khajak Balekjian stated that Der Hayr was not an employee of the Parish Council and that he should not be treated as one. It was stated that the by-laws should be upheld and should be sufficient for the smooth operation of the Parish Council. More heated discussion followed. Col. Juskalian introduced the following motion. "I move that the subject now before the Assembly be referred to an Ad Hoc Committee to be chaired by Diocesan Council Member Edward Onanian, and consisting of the Pastor, the Parish Council Chairman, one additional member of the Parish Council, the Diocesan Delegates -- Hratch Semerjian and Dean Shahinian -- and former Parish Council Chairlady Lucy Murad for study and recommendation to a Special Parish Assembly to be convened on Sunday, March 1, 1992." The motion was seconded. Another round of heated discussion followed. The Chair again explained parliamentary procedures regarding voting and closing of discussion. A motion to close the discussion was made, which carried. However, before voting on the original motion, several parishioners wanted to know the position of the Pastor and the Parish Council Chairman on the motion. The Chair requested a brief answer from

the Parish Council Chairman and the Pastor on the acceptability of the motion. Mr. Tashjian's answer was positive. Der Hayr's position, however, was that it needed clarification from him before he could say yes or no. Der Hayr was then given the opportunity to address the congregation. He proceeded to register his objections to the inclusion of "The Guidelines" and stated that he would accept the role of the Ad Hoc Committee if these "Guidelines" were removed from the record. A vote was then taken on the motion to delegate the task to the Ad Hoc Committee and it carried. Dr. Onanian concurred that these were internal documents, and should not have been in the Annual Report to start with; he made a motion to expunge "The Guidelines" and all other related documents from the record; this motion carried.

Dr. Onanian then made a motion regarding the Budget. He asked that it be accepted as it was presented with the exception of the item regarding Der Hayr's stipend which would be resolved at the March 1st assembly meeting. This was seconded and carried.

The election results were then announced by Col. Juskalian, which were as follows:
[an asterisk means elected]

For Parish Council: (elect four)

David Andonian	30
Socrates Boyajian	34
Stephan Evereklian	91*
Vartkes Keshishian	83*
Alfred Moosakhanian	33
Stephan Ohanian	69*
David Sahr	62*
Onnig Sivaslian	58 (alternate)
Beth Ann Tutunjian	20

For Nominating Committee: (elect three)

Carl Bazarian	119*
Edward Bodurian	117*
Grace Shahinian	116*

For Auditing Committee (elect three)

John Kavookian	59* 1 year term
Thomas Magarian	38
Elise Vartabedian	53
Hratch Semerjian	92* 3 year term
Levon Garabedian	80* 2 year term
Avedis Ozkayan	30

For Finance Committee (elect one for a five year term)


Robert George Jr 68*
Archie Hovanesian 60

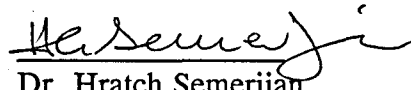
For Finance Committee (elect one for a four year term)

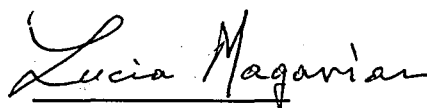
Mike Tashjian 52
Arut Koseian 75*

Due to the late hour of the day, Dr. Onanian made a motion to postpone consideration of the other reports and the remaining items on the Agenda to the March 1st Assembly Meeting which had just been approved. The motion carried. Then a motion to close the meeting was made, seconded, and carried by unanimous vote. Der Hayr took the opportunity to thank the Chairman and the Secretary of the Assembly and to congratulate the newly elected officers of the Parish Council and the other committees. The assembly was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. after a closing prayer by Der Hayr.

Respectfully submitted,


Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian
President


Dr. Hratch Semerjian
Chairman


Mrs. Lucia Magarian
Secretary