

MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY
ST. MARY'S ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH
February 25, 1996

The Parish Assembly was called to order at 12:15 p.m. on February 25, 1996. The reading of the roll revealed that 85 dues paying members were in attendance which constituted a quorum. Nominations for Assembly Chair and Secretary were Brig. Gen. Albert Kaehn Jr. and Linda Ekizian, respectively. A motion was passed to close the nominations and by a secret ballot the election confirmed the above names, with 83 and 82 votes respectively.

1. Minutes of the 1995 Assembly

The minutes of the 1995 Assembly were accepted without comment.

2. Proposed Renovation

Don Hogan, Architect and Steve Evereklian, financial and contract advisor presented this report. Don Hogan explained that this project commenced two years ago with the goal to solve structural problems (e.g. difficult access from the front steps and lack of handicap accessibility) and to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Church to conform with Armenian traditions. Acknowledgement was made to Martin Zakarian who had contributed extensively in regard to the aesthetic element of the proposed renovation. The projected renovations were published in advance of this meeting in a booklet form and the presenters offered further elaboration of the schematic renderings. It was noted that front access is restricted by D.C. codes to 10 feet. An external chair lift to the side of the building is projected. It could be independently operated by those served by the lift. A dome befitting Armenian Church traditions would be added to the existing roof structure. A choir loft and aesthetic renovations to the Altar are also proposed. Mr. Evereklian stated that this project, with an estimated total cost of \$549800.00, would ideally proceed in three phases over a three year period commencing in late Spring/early Summer, as follows:

- 1 - Renovations to front steps and inclusion of chair lift
- 2 - Construction of dome and choir loft
- 3 - Altar renovations

The Chairman emphasized that the costs are an estimate and that the Parish would not be expected to pay the total costs at one time. The proposed renovations are submitted as components and could be approved incrementally as funds become available.

A detailed question and answer period followed this presentation. In this session, it was revealed that the cost of an internal elevator was excessive; that the choir loft could be multi-purpose and would meet acoustic standards; that the tower would be glass or wire enclosed to prevent bird entry; that the natural light on the Altar would be diminished in this design and artificial lighting would be incorporated. It was noted that the total cost estimate would be reduced by \$70,000 if the choir loft was not constructed. It was also stated that our Church renovations should elevate our visible position in the Nation's Capital. It was suggested that, as such, fund raising should be broader than the local Armenian community. Some parishioners shared the view that other structural renovations

need to be addressed, notably additional classrooms and additional seating in the sanctuary. The designers noted that building a third floor on the school building to accommodate additional classrooms would cost approximately \$300,000. Partitions have been implemented in the Church hall for additional classrooms. (Note: Additional classrooms would cover some 2400 sq. ft. at a cost of \$125 to \$150 per square foot, the cost would easily approach or exceed \$300,000.)

The question was raised as to whether the retail value of the Church property was worth the estimated costs of the renovation proposal and whether building a new church would be a better alternative. This discussion surfaced again later in the meeting.

Parish Council Chairman, Paul Murad, read Proposal I (attached to these minutes) and submitted a motion that it be recognized: the motion was seconded and discussion continued.

Ed Onanian suggested that an assessment of the re-sale value of the Church should be made (with or without proposed renovations); additionally other real estate (whether building or land) options should be examined. A debate regarding the re-sale value of the Church followed. Some parishioners offered a historical perspective of real-estate options considered by St. Mary's over the past twenty-five years. It was stated that the prospect of purchasing a separate Church hall (for various functions, e.g. banquets) had not been investigated.

The Chairman inquired as to whether the motion (i.e. Proposal I) should be changed. Ed Onanian suggested the following as an information item:

- 1) The front steps could be renovated for 45K from restricted or unrestricted funds or insurance claims
- 2) The chair lift could be installed provided that the appropriate financing is raised
- 3) Sanctuary and dome renovations (i.e. Phase II) would be suspended until other real estate/re-sale options are investigated

Paul Murad made a motion that the following amendment to Proposal I be added to paragraph (b). (See the attached Proposal I - amendment in italics.)

The amendment was approved by voice vote. The Proposal I (as amended) was voted upon and the motion was carried by 58 yeas, 5 nays.

After the vote, the Chair was requested to review what had just been approved (for information and clarification). The Chair stated that the Assembly had fundamentally approved in concept a renovation as described in the architectural renderings, and had authorized a redo of the front stairs and the installation of an outside elevator (both described in the booklet).

3. ACYOA Juniors Report

A report of the year's activity was offered. The Juniors now welcome new members from Baltimore. \$1000 has been donated to the Parish Council. A decorative coin was presented to Dean Shahinian for his service to the youth. Enthusiastic appreciation was offered to Yerezgin for her guidance and support. The report was accepted as read.

4. Pastor's Report

Der Hayr urged and encouraged the Parish to participate in Church sponsored events emphasizing the educational programs which are designed for the parishioner's spiritual growth. Der Hayr also noted that we have a growing Church membership from Armenia and these new members should be welcomed and aided by our community. He also stressed that the community become aware of the financial obligations of the Church. While some events are profitable, not all proceeds are submitted to the Church; participation does not necessarily offer relief to the financial burden of the Church. The report was accepted as read.

5. Parish Council Report

The Chairman pointed out that the 1995 Annual Parish Council Report was contained in pages 15 through 21 of the Annual Report prepared for the Parish Assembly. He called for questions or comments; there were none. The Parish Council Report was accepted as read by voice vote. (Note: This action gives Assembly approval to the Memo of Understanding between the Parish Council and Reverend Kalayjian for calendar year 1996; further, the Assembly accepted the 1995 Bazaar and Rug Sale reports in approving the Parish Council Report).

6. Diocesan Delegate Report

The Delegates report had attached to it a report on the National Ecclesiastical Assembly submitted by Dean Shahinian, Delegate to the National Ecclesiastical Assembly. Ed Onanian reported that there has been no advancement re: unity since the May 1995 discussion. He offered a historical perspective to the issue, which is a political one. The report was accepted as read.

7. Finance Committee

The Chairman referred the Assembly to the Finance Committee Report which was presented on pages 22-23 of the Annual Report prepared for the Parish Assembly. It was pointed out that the financial situation of the Parish Council is not strong. Operating costs were such that the Finance Committee responded to the Parish Council request and transferred \$10,000 to the operating fund -- this kind of action depletes our reserve. Without a cash cushion in operating funds, cash flow problems become acute. Keep in mind that many of the assets managed by the Finance Committee have been designated for expenditure on specific projects; and funds are set aside in reserve for contingencies. The Finance Committee did show that some \$230,000 are available (total assets); these funds could be available in whole or in part for allocation components of the proposed renovation. However, prudent management suggests we must have a reserve; renovation dollars

must be raised via fundraising, and the operating fund must become strong and stable to support the day to day activities of the Church.

8. Women's Guild

Zivart Bolat, Takuhi Hallajian and Jean Sayian were added to the report's list of committee members. Alice Baker encouraged Parish participation in Women's Guild events. A question was raised as to whether the Bazaar should take place in October (when the weather is generally better) instead of November. This will be referred to the Women's Guild for consideration. The report was accepted as read.

9. Choir Report

Clara Andonian reported that the dinner dance raised \$1588. Appreciation was offered to Dr. Boyajian and Arto Hovanessian for their dedicated service. The report was accepted as read.

10. Shnorhali School Report

Dn. Hamlet offered his thanks to the teachers, Linda Ekizian and Jerry Hekimian for their assistance. He noted that the school enjoys 99 students, with 60-65 attending each Sunday. He recounted Ms. Der Stepanian's meeting with the teachers of the Armenian studies program. The need for additional classrooms (notably for third grade classes) was stressed. A question was raised as to whether the library could be converted into a classroom. It was pointed out that the Library would eventually be moved to the location formally occupied by the bookstore, after the front Church steps are renovated. Partitions were again cited as being used in the Church Hall for additional classrooms. The report was accepted as read.

11. Library Report

In answer to a query regarding the utilization of the Library, Der Hayr stated that the Library is utilized by the community as a resource center for research and school papers. The report was accepted as read.

12. Three M

Thanks were given by the Parish Council for Three M's financial contribution to the operating budget. The report was accepted as read.

13. Endowment Fund

A motion was carried to remove this report as a separate agenda item, since it is covered in the Finance Committee's report.

14. Operating Budget

Items on the budget were corrected as follow: under Income, Candles should show \$4820; under Expense, Transfer should show \$22463. Many accounting problems have surfaced due to frequent changes in personnel doing the treasurer function. Poor record keeping was cited. The Auditing Committee has made an offer, which the Parish Council has accepted, to conduct audits of the operating and restricted fund accounts on a quarterly basis. The Auditing Committee is working to recreate details of the Restricted Funds account. Tighter controls and improved procedures are badly needed. A budget for 1996 was not presented to the Assembly. A motion was made, seconded and approved as follows: *The Parish Council will mail a proposed 1996 operating budget (showing projected income and projected expenditures) to voting members of the Church not later than April 1, 1996. A Special Parish Assembly meeting will be called within one month after the mailing date to act on the 1996 budget. In the meantime, The Parish Council will cover expenses at a rate not exceed the expenditure rate of calendar year 1995.* The report was accepted as read.

15. Auditing Committee Report

The library and bookstore were not audited. The auditors did reconcile the Bookstore account, which as of 02/24/96 showed a balance of \$2100.08. Auditors appealed to activity chairmen and treasurers to keep checkbooks current; keep good records; make deposits in a timely manner; and reconcile discrepancies early (do not wait until year's end and be forced to attempt to explain actions from memory) The auditors strongly recommended that Restricted Funds be separated out from Operating Funds; that these funds be held in separate accounts to give a clearer picture of the financial condition of the Church. The Assembly Chairman expressed the consensus of the Assembly that this be done as soon as possible. The Chairman thanked Ed Onanian, Raffi Karahisar and Harry Derderian for their guidance and account reconciliation efforts. Auditors recommended that proceeds from the Bazaar and Rug Sale be transferred to the Parish Council and Finance Committee in the same calendar year that the events were held. The report was accepted as read.

16. Proposal II; Membership Dues (see addendum II)

The motion was carried to increase membership fees from \$100 to \$150. The need for increased supporting members was emphasized.

17. Election results

Parish Council Members

*Mrs. Anahid Ayrandjian	61
*Mr. Raffi Bardizbanian	58
*Mr. Harry Derderian	61
*Ms. Susan Ohanian	57

Nominating Committee

*Mrs. Rita Bush	60
*Mrs. Sandra Riley	57
*Mrs. Grace Shahinian	60

Auditing Committee

*Mr. Raffe Karahisar	44
Mr. Varougan Varoujanian	15

Finance Committee

Mr. Vartkes Keshishian	13
*Dr. Edward Onanian	48

* indicates elected

PROPOSAL I

Whereas:

At the request of a Special Parish Assembly held on 24 September, 1995, the Parish Council was instructed to intensify the planning and gathering of data regarding the Sanctuary Renovation Project to allow deliberating more meaningful decisions.

Therefore:

In fulfillment of these Special Parish Assembly requirements, a booklet was published and mailed to the Parish to inform them of the subsequent Master Plan that includes designs and preliminary cost estimates for the various renovation components;

Thus, the Parish Council in consultation with both the Renovation Committee and the Finance Committee makes the following proposal:

It is moved that:

- a) The Parish Council is hereby authorized to accomplish the Sanctuary Renovations in three phases at a cost not to exceed \$550,000 with an 8% allowance permitted for unplanned costs; moreover, the Parish Council agrees not to enter into any contract until it has the required funds on hand.
- b) The first phase has an urgent nature considering the current deteriorating condition of the front steps; these steps will be replaced in accordance with the Master Plan. In addition an elevator access will be included for the handicapped. The time period will be 1996-97 at an estimated cost of \$81,000. Amendment included here, to wit: *Furthermore, the Parish Council will form a committee to investigate other options and discuss its findings with a Special Assembly before starting the second phase.*
- c) The second phase shall include refurbishing the deteriorating front facade and addition of a traditional style dome above the vestibule as well as inclusion of a loft that may be used either for the choir or approximately 20 to 40 additional parish members. The time period will be 1997-99 at an estimated maximum cost of \$316,000.
- d) The third and final phase shall be the alteration of the sanctuary interior and will include altars, windows and a baptismal font. Estimated time period will be from 1999-2001 hopefully in time to celebrate the 1700th Anniversary of Armenia accepting Christianity. Estimated maximum costs are \$153,000.

It is our considered opinion that it will cost the church less if we expeditiously move to take advantage of current costs for materials and mortgages involved in these activities.

The Parish Council

Proposal II

Whereas:

There are problems with managing the Parish Council operating budget due to the competing effects from the funding cycles of income and expenses as well as a requirement to set aside restricted funds that need to be separated from the operating funds.

In fulfillment of previous Parish Assembly requests regarding the operating budget, many discussions were held during Parish Council meetings on how to find means for raising funds for the operating budget.

Therefore:

The Parish Council in consultation with the Finance Committee makes the following proposal:

It is moved that:

The dues of Parish members shall be increased from \$100 to \$125 per annum to help defray such cycles and add stability to the Council's operating budget.

The Parish Council

This motion was amended to increase the dues to \$150 per annum: the amended motion was passed by the Assembly by a greater than 2/3 vote.

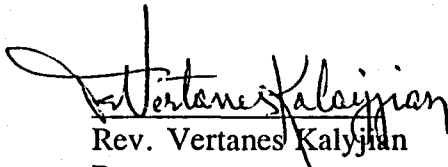
18. New Business

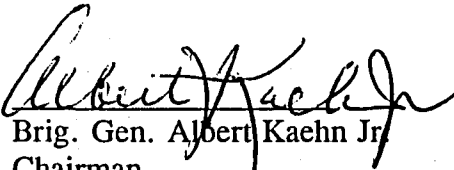
None to report

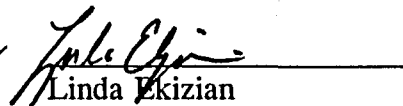
19. Closing of the Meeting

The Chairman thanked Linda Ekizian for graciously offering her services as Secretary. Der Hayr expressed appreciation to the outgoing Executive members and welcomed and congratulated those elected. He concluded the meeting with a prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Rev. Vertanes Kalyjian
Pastor


Brig. Gen. Albert Kaehn Jr.
Chairman


Linda Ekizian
Secretary