

Saint Sarkis Armenian Church- Dallas

Annual Parish Assembly Minutes

2-26-2017

1. Opening Prayer:

The meeting started with opening prayer at 1pm on Sunday, February 26, 2017.

2. Verification of voting members:

43 members present out of 93 voting members. A quorum was established.

3. Election of Officers of the day:

Suzan Kirazian motioned to appoint Patil Minassian as Secretary of the Day. Maral Aznavour 2nd. Motion passed.

Shevan Basmadjian motioned to appoint Raffi Ohanian as Chairman of the Day. Annie Graham 2nd. Motion passed.

4. Approval of the Proposed Agenda:

The Agenda was approved with the following edits: Item #4 (Verification of Voting Members) was moved to #2. Suzan Kirazian motioned to approve the Agenda as amended. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the previous assembly minutes:

There were no hard copies of the Minutes. The minutes were posted online to expedite the Parish Assembly Meeting. Boghos Kirazian pointed out that the minutes need to be reviewed and approved by Parish Assembly before being posted online. Anything that is published should be approved by the Annual Assembly prior to general public access. Boghos suggested that we need to send the draft minutes to eligible voting members **only** and not post them online.

Sam Simonian mentioned that this is just a draft. Ara Vatinyan also said that the minutes are online but not yet approved.

Raffi Ohanian said that Parish members need to go online, read and give their input.

Annie Graham said that if anyone has the minutes online on their phone, we can pull it up and read it.

Raffi Ohanian pointed out that when we gave hard copies at the meeting everyone received the draft copy. Boghos Kirazian respectfully disagreed saying that the minutes were handed out as the eligible voting members names were read.

Andrew Kourajian asked if nonmembers have the right to edit and comment? Raffi said no.

Motion to remove the minutes from the website and send the draft minutes exclusively to eligible voting members electronically. Joan Stuckmann 2nd. Motion passed.

Sam Simonian confirmed that the approved minutes can then be posted online.

Shevan Basmadjian said let's skip the approval of the minutes and discuss during the counting of the votes.

Sylva Dayian recommended removal of the Approval of the minutes from the agenda, send it to the members and get their responses electronically.

Suzan Kirazian motioned to approve the minutes. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

6. Annual Report of the Parish Council (PC):

Vahe Dayian presented the 2016 Parish Council Report: Elie Akelian is overseeing and approving every new church bill. The bills are sent to Vahe Dayian, Elie Akelian, Sylva Simonian and Elisabeth Altunian, Treasurer of the Building Committee. Basically there are 2 levels of accounting. To date, \$200-250,000 has been spent. The new church land was officially annexed by the City of Carrollton.

In 2016, The Parish Council had a Banquet dinner, Groundbreaking of the new church, Parish Special Assembly and New Year's party. The yearly pledges increased slightly: From \$78,000 in 2015 to \$80,000 in 2016.

Coming up in 2017: Piano Concert, movie by Bared Maronian and Casino Night.

Sylva Simonian mentioned that we have collected all but \$250,000 of the promised pledges for the new church.

Andrew Kourajian asked about the United Vision Fund and if it is a separate account.

Sylva Simonian explained that United Vision Fund was the old Building Fund that was created years ago. We have a separate account for the current new church.

Andrew Kourajian asked if this church is considered an asset.

Boghos Kirazian explained that since we are a charitable organization, depreciation is not applicable. So, from an accountant's perspective, it has no value.

Andrew Kourajian asked What is Unrestricted Net Assets.

Sylva Simonian explained that that is our total assets.

Sam Simonian further explained that those are assets that have no conditions and no liens on them.

Sam Simonian motioned to reevaluate the financial statement and reorganize our assets based on current market value. Elie Akelian 2nd. Motion passed.

Annie Graham motioned to accept the PC Report. Ara Minassian 2nd. Motion passed.

7. Pastor's Report:

Der Hayr reported that weekly announcements are being sent via email. In 2016, 379 emails were sent to the community. Currently we have 581 contacts; attributed to our Welcoming Committee and our new secretary. Der Hayr also mentioned that we are networking and collaborating with numerous other churches in the area. In summer of 2017, there is the Armenian Pilgrimage with 25 parishioners going.

Sandra Morath pointed out that there are no home blessings in the Pastor's Report.

Der Hayr explained that of course they were done but they were not included in the report.

Sarkis Kechejian asked about the schedule of our Secretary.

Der Hayr said the secretary comes once or twice a week.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian asked about the church office hours, pointing out that he has received multiple complaints about the lack of clear church office hours.

Der Hayr asked that all complaints be referred to him. He is at the church most of the time and and there are few visitors. Der Hayr only takes Mondays off.

Boghos Kirazian said that he is happy there is a secretary helping us and truly appreciates the welcoming committee. He pointed out that Der Hayr does not need to be physically present at the church all the time. The phone can be routed to Der Hayr's cellphone.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian disagreed saying that there should be someone at church.

Joan Stuckman suggested that we have a schedule of 2 days a week at church and all the other times, the church calls can be routed to Der Hayr's phone. It was suggested that Der Hayr alternate times with the secretary so that there is someone at the church each day.

Suzan Kirazian motioned to approve the Pastor's Report with recommendations. Annie Graham 2nd. Motion passed.

8. Reports of the Subordinate Organizations:

St. Sarkis School: Report was presented by Maral Aznavour: The school currently has 68 students, an increase of 13 students from the previous year. New this year: Daycare. Maral Aznavour explained that School is on Sundays to accommodate according to the availability of teachers/volunteers. The school has introduced a lecture series for the upper grade students. Guest lecturers (Boghos Kirazian, Annie Graham, Stephen Tabanian...) come in to present on certain topics. The School has amazing teachers and school board!

Annie Graham thanked Maral Aznavour for all her work and dedication.

Suzan Kirazian pointed out that these kids are not participating in the liturgy.

Maral Aznavour explained that they started to be part of the Khostevanag this year.

Suzan Kirazian said that we should encourage these kids to serve on the altar.

Maral Aznavour mentioned that the kids are at the church attending the service on all the 5 major feast days.

Der Hayr mentioned that the altar is small and it would be best if the children rotate serving on the altar. Der Hayr also said that we need to work on having a Junior choir.

Annie Graham proposed that the older kids can pass the collection plate.

Andrew Kourajian asked about the tuition reimbursement on the School Financial Report.

Sandra Morath explained that that was a reimbursement for children of teachers as they do not pay tuition.

Ara Minassian motioned to accept the St. Sarkis School Report. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

ArmeniaFest Report: Raffi Gostanian reported that the net totals from ArmeniaFest are almost the same each year. New attractions like the photo booth and t-shirt printing have been added to create more excitement and interaction in the hall. Raffi expects the new church will generate a healthier return. He thanked Maral Aznavour and all the volunteers.

Shevan Basmadjian thanked Raffi Gostanian for all his efforts.

Boghos Kirazian also said that he appreciated everyone's efforts and asked how are we preparing the next generation to run ArmeniaFest. Boghos also asked why the positive amounts in the financial report are written as negatives and negative amounts are written as positives. He further inquired why we had such low numbers for plant sales.

Raffi Gostanian said that both issues were addressed.

Sarkis Kechejian asked if it is known percentage of visitors are first timers.

Raffi Gostnarian replied that we do not have an exact way to measure that but we do ask at the ticket sales how they heard about ArmeniaFest and if this is their first time.

Maral Aznavour said that when she is announcing and presenting the dances, she always asks the crowd how they heard about the Festival almost 90% say "my friend gave me the flyer."

Raffi Gostnarian said that typically it is word of mouth and maybe the festival should spend less on advertising.

Elie Akelian said that \$640 on advertisement is very low.

Raffi Gostnarian explained that the bulk of advertising was donated.

Elizabeth Klachian motioned to accept the ArmeniaFest Report. Ara Minassian 2nd. Motion passed.

Women's Guild (WG): Serena Gostnarian presented the WG Report: 27 members and 4 honorary members including Mari Peca. 2016 Activities included: Christmas lunch, Michink, Father's Day lunch, Hampartsoum, Blessing of Grapes lunch, Holy Cross lunch, ArmeniaFest preparation, November election of new WG board members, Hokehankist. The WG gave \$22,000 to the church in 2016.

Shevan Basmadjian motioned to approve the WG Report. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

ACYOA: Sevag Koulian presented the ACYOA Report: 2016 activities included a Christmas event, Angel tree and donation of clothes. Payments that were made out for 2015 and 2016 dues and 1 payment for Palm Sunday expenses.

Sarkis Kechejian asked how many members are in the ACYOA. Sevag replied 25 members and its growing with lots of events planned for 2017.

Maral Aznavour congratulated Sevag for doing a great job!

Annie Graham asked why the \$9200 is not being transferred to the church.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian said that yes, that will be done.

Annie Graham motioned to accept the ACYOA Report. Ara Minassian 2nd. Motion passed.

Seniors and Choir Report: The Reports were presented by Annie Graham: **Seniors:** The elderly greatly appreciate the regular visits. The Seniors Group transferred \$10,000 to the new building fund. That money came from money donated in lieu of flowers for funerals.

Choir: Trying to create a Children's Choir.

For the Non-Armenian newcomers; We have community members like Chris Rhea, who have Der Hayr's approval, who can quietly explain the service. We had 13 youth from the Orthodox church attend our service and they loved it. They liked the Bilingual liturgy books.

Boghos Kirazian motioned to accept the Senior and Choir Reports. Maral Aznavour 2nd. Motion passed.

Armenian Professionals: The Report was presented by Alex Aleman: This group is in its 2nd year. Previous year was a trial run. They have a new event every month. Anyone between the ages of 25 and 40 can join.

Suzan Kirazian asked if the members are required to be church members.

Der Hayr explained that the members are young professionals who are still young and don't have a connection to the church, but that is the long term goal.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian motioned to accept the Armenian Professionals' Report. Elizabeth Klachian 2nd. Motion passed.

9. Election of Officers:

Parish Council: Nominees are: Sarkis Altunian (incumbent, 3-term); Sylva Dayian (incumbent, 3-term); Ara Vatinyan (incumbent, 2-term); Maral Azanvour; Kevork Koulian; Sandra Morath.

Raffi Ohanian opened the floor for nominees.

Boghos Kirazian asked that we nominate Vahe Dayian although he has been in PC for 3 consecutive terms and thus ineligible to be nominated. Boghos argued that we nominate him for the sake of continuity of our church and then asked for acceptance from the Diocese.

Der Hayr said no, referring to Sec. 26 in the by-laws, mentioning that only small churches can be exceptions.

Elie Akelian asked who decided what is "small"?

Vahe Dayian said that he will accept the nomination if the exception is made.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian supported the nomination of Vahe Dayian and then asked for Serpazan's approval.

Sylva Dayian said if we go by eligible voting members, our church is small since we have only 93 eligible members. If Serpazan does not approve then Vahe Dayian can be the liaison between the Building Committee and the PC.

Boghos Kirazian motioned to nominate Vahe Dayian for PC pending the acceptance from the Primate. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

Annie Graham nominated Raffi Ohanian. Raffi respectfully declined.

Maral Aznavour nominated Annie Ghannoum. Annie Ghannoum accepted the nomination.

Sylva Dayian nominated Andrew Kourajian. Andrew respectfully declined.

Boghos Kirazian motioned to close the floor nominations. Manas Sherenian 2nd. Motion passed.

Summary of ADDED Nominees: Vahe Dayian (incumbent, 4-term) and Annie Ghannoum

Nominating Committee: Nominees: Elizabeth Klachian, Annie Graham, Serena Gostanian (incumbent) and Nora Dayian (incumbent)

Open floor nominations: none

Suzan Kirazian motioned to close the floor nominations. Dn. Sarkis 2nd. Motion passed.

Auditing Committee: Nominees: Andrew Kourajian and Vahe Dayian.

Boghos Kirazian said that we need one more nominee.

Suzan Kirazian nominated Patil Minassian. Patil respectfully declined.

Boghos Kirazian nominated Ara Minassian. Ara respectfully declined.

Suzan Kirazian nominated Boghos Kirazian. Boghos accepted the nomination.

Shevan Basmadjian nominated Raffi Ohanian. Raffi respectfully declined.

Manas Sherenian motioned to close the floor nominations. Ara Minassian 2nd. Motion passed.

Summary of ADDED nominee: Boghos Kirazian

Diocesan Delegate: Nominees: Daron Bolat, Dn. Sarkis Altunian and Sarkis Kechejian.

Open floor nominations: Joan Stuckmann nominated Annie Graham. Maral Azanvour 2nd. Annie Graham accepted the nomination.

Suzan Kirazian motioned to close the floor nomination. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passes.

Summary of ADDED nominee: Annie Graham

10. Raffi Ohanian asked the Building Committee to present their Report. Elie Akelian reported that the project is still on schedule with a start date in late March. One major issue: To access the North and West border of the property, there needs to be access to LISD (Lewisville Independent School District) property. Plans shall continue as scheduled and deal with that issue when the time comes.

Joan Stuckmann asked if any bids have been received yet for the building.

Elie Akelian explained that they are currently working with a few different contractors for grading the land which will give them a general idea of how they are. They will officially ask for bids later.

Andrew Kourajian asked about the exterior of the building.

Elie replied that the exterior is pre-cast architectural concrete and the roof zinc metal.

Annie Graham thanked Elie on behalf of the church community and the boost he gave to the community.

Sevag Koulian asked if there a phase 2 fund in case ACYOA wants to donate to Phase 2 (soccer field) only.

Elie Akelian explained that although the sewer line will be brought to phase 2 from now, the western most part of the land will be a giant storage for now.

Boghos Kirazian proposed that there be a meeting between the ACYOA and the Building Committee and they can discuss fundraising opportunities and share ideas.

Joan Stuckmann asked if they are finding that their costs are increasing due to increase in construction costs.

Elie Akelian said that he can't answer that question directly and said that they will do their best to complete the project on time and within budget.

Zepur Ohanian said that anytime we can rally the youth, we should all support them.

11. Presentations and Approval of 2017 Budget:

Annie Ghannoum asked that why in the Disbursements, Special Concerns was decreased from \$4810 in 2016 to \$1000 in 2017. Sylva Simonian explained that that was for the Armenian Genocide. We are not expecting as much expense this year in that category.

Andrew Kourajian asked about Sacrements: why the decrease from \$16,000 in 2016 to \$10,000 in 2017.

Sylva Simonian said that she looked at previous years as well and that the \$10,000 was the average of the previous 2 years.

Andrew Kourajian asked if leaks and crack repairs are in the expenses of our current church.

Raffi Ohanian explained that they are included in Operating Costs.

Dn. Sarkis Altunian motioned to approve the budget as presented. Joan Stuckmann 2nd. Motion passed.

12. New Ideas:

Sam Simonian motioned to qualify our church as SMALL CHURCH indefinitely, until Serpazan decides otherwise. Manas Sherenian 2nd. Motion passed.

Ara Vatinyan suggested to move up the New Ideas to the beginning of the agenda to have full participation and energy.

Raffi Ohanian mentioned as well that every year we spend lots of time in the beginning. Let's try to read the minutes and reports in the email prior to coming to the meeting.

Sylva Simonian said that that was the intent with sending everything electronically. On another note, Sylva said that the Annual Parish Assembly date should be earlier on. The problem is that it is very hard to get reports from the Subordinate organizations. Receiving late reports and numbers inhibit the timely audit process.

Annie Ghannoum suggested we follow a fiscal year and not the regular year.

Boghos Kirazian asked if there is an automated process that other parishes follow that we can follow. Also, he mentioned that the Diocese operates by year. Audits are very important. Also, this Parish Assembly is once a year. It is better to take time and not rush through the meeting.

Raffi Ohanian emphasized the importance of spending more time on new ideas and other related items.

Zepur Ohanian said that the subordinate organizations need to submit quarterly reports.

Sam Simonian said that Sylva Simonian has been asking the subordinate organizations to submit their reports since December. This is an issue of willingness and procrastination.

Annie Ghannoum said when it comes to ArmeniaFest committee, they will introduce a deadline at the end of October for people to submit their receipts for reimbursements. Those receipts not turned in on time will be considered a donation. That will speed the ArmeniaFest Report.

Raffi Ohanian reiterated the importance of appointing Treasurers in the suborganizations that are up to the responsibilities and deadlines.

Boghos Kirazian asked Der Hayr if he could have quarterly meetings with the suborganizations with the presence of PC Treasurer.

Der Hayr agreed.

Sylva Simonian said except for WG, there is not much going on in December. All suborganizations can work on their Financial reports in December and then all they have to do is add December.

Sandra Morath asked if all suborganizations have access to online banking because St. Sarkis School doesn't.

Annie Ghannoum said no.

Sylva Simonian explained that adding new members is not done at local level anymore, thus more complicated.

Zepur Ohanian reiterated the importance of mandating quarterly reports.

Elie Akelian motioned to put a process in place to mandate quarterly reports. The first 2 meetings, Boghos Kirazian will guide the meetings and Der Hayr will later take over. Dn. Sarkis Altunian 2nd. Motion passed.

Raffi Ohanian asked if there is any new or old business.

None.

13. Election Results:

Parish Council:

1. Vahe Dayian
2. Ara Vatinyan
3. Maral Aznavour
4. Sylva Dayian

Alternates: Sarkis Altunian, Annie Ghannoum, Kevork Koulian

Nominating Committee:

1. Nora Dayian
2. Annie Graham
3. Elizabeth Klachian

Alternate: Serena Gostanian

Auditing Committee:

1. Andrew Kourajian

Alternate: Boghos Kirazian

Diocesan Delegate:

1. Daron Bolat

Alternate: Dn. Sarkis Altunian

Zepur Ohanian motioned to close the Assembly meeting. Sylva Simonian 2nd. Motion passed.

Closing Prayer at 3:46pm.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by:

Patil Minassian

Secretary of the Day