

ACYOA Central Council Abridged Meeting Minutes

Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Cheltenham, PA

Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 9:00 AM EDT

**Attendance: Ani Misirliyan (Chair) via Zoom, Jackie Russell (Vice Chair), Andrew Yenicag (Treasurer),
Dn. Garen Megrdochian (Secretary), Mara Najarian (Communications),
Sarah Tavitian (Ministries and Outreach), Alisha Panthier (Ministries and Outreach)
Jennifer Morris (Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries)**

Zoom Meeting:

1. Opening Prayer led by Dn. Garen
2. Adoption of Agenda - adopted
3. Acceptance of February Meeting Minutes -accepted
4. Review Liaison System and Updates (Jackie)
 - Jackie mentioned that May will be the last liaison email to send out
 - Jackie will send the May draft out by April 28th.
 - Jackie thanked everyone for sending out liaison emails quickly.
 - a. Connecting ACYOA regional chapters
 - Jackie reached out and hasn't received any responses and a few sent out a thank you.
 - Ani asked Jackie when everyone can send out the liaison emails for May.
 - Ani mentioned to send out the May liaison and Jenni also mentioned to send out as soon as possible to spread the word out for attending GASW in Detroit.
 - Mara mentioned that booking a hotel room is the deadline on May 1.
 - Andrew suggested that the chapters from the East Coast get free parking.
5. Communications (Mara)
 - a. Social Media, E-Blasts, and Website
 - Mara gave an update on the E-blast and it's going well.
 - Mara will duel post between GASW account and ACYOA to get more coverage through the audience.
 - Andrew is happy that some chapters are sharing Sports Weekend information.
 - Jenni suggested using collaborators for posting strategies
 - Jackie mentioned about the Award Nominations
 - Garen to familiarize himself with the website over the next 2 weeks and confirm that the information is correct.
6. Ministries and Outreach
 - a. Lenten Retreats
 - Jackie and Andrew both had a great Lenten retreat and had close to 20 participants.
 - Jackie enjoyed Fr. Diran's presence.
 - Andrew mentioned that a few new faces attended the retreat and Jackie mentioned that the Collage Project was a lot of fun.
 - Midwest retreat had lots of attendance and participation. Fr. Yeprem was also in attendance.
 - Sarah mentioned that New England had 40 participants at the Retreat and mentioned a few clergy attended the retreat.
 - Mara mentioned that she enjoyed the Small Group Discussion.
 - Garen mentioned that the Collage project went well and Small Group Discussions were one of the favorite sessions.
 - a. ACYOA Day

- Andrew traveled to St. Leon for ACYOA Day and it went very well and the program went well. Everyone enjoyed the ACYOA Video.
- Jenni gave Andrew positive feedback from Diran Jebejian.
- Mara gave an update and said a brief message to parishioners and it went well and also showed the ACYOA Day video to everyone.
- CC gave a shout out to Mara for a job well done on the ACYOA Day video.
- Alisha mentioned that she did Zoom in to speak to the Armenian Church of Atlanta Armenian School students and it went well and the kids asked questions.
- Garen mentioned that Palm Sunday visit in New Britain went well and gave a shout out to Fr. Haroutiun, Yn. Lucine and the ACYOA for a job well done organizing the Palm Sunday Dinner.

b. Prayer Pals

- Sarah gave an update on Prayer Pals
- Jackie suggests adding a spot in registration to ask what you are looking for out of prayer pals.
- Sarah mentioned what can we do like either pray or read the bible together.
- Sarah is wondering if there is another/better time to do this
- Ani mentioned if summer could be better for continuing it and having feedback.
- Jenni mentioned doing the new signup to get a new partner.

c. Podcast

- No updates on the Podcast.
- Are Fr. Krikor and Fr. Aren in the queue?
- Lenten Prayer recording views lowest on Spotify yet. ACYOA Say got 176 views on YouTube.
- Mara made highlights on the ACYOA Instagram for the Podcast.
- Andrew will connect with Mardig to get the Apple account working again.
- Andrew mentioned it had 13 streams total and an additional 28 views on YouTube and would like to continue it.

d. Bishop's 5K

- None of the May or June dates that Bishop Mesrop was available worked for those parish communities, still looking into September 20th and 27th.
- Jenni suggests to plan now for 2026 with it being the 80th anniversary of ACYOA.
- Dallas is doing a choreg run. Dallas wants to host one in 2026.
- Jackie suggests doing a Bishop K in the colder months in Dallas and Florida.
- Alisha is interested to helping out and volunteer
- Sarah is interested in helping out and volunteer
- Jenni reminded everyone to focus on the tasks at hand before over committing themselves to a future event.

e. ASP

- Jenni mentioned they are at 9 participants, hopefully 10 soon. The contract is at the most expensive and will negotiate the price with having triple rooms for boys and girls with Shake'.
- Ages span from high school seniors to 30-year-olds.
- Jenni mentioned to continue promoting to accept the request. We really want to hit 11 participants to bring the price down.
- The promotion for \$1,000 off will be sent to the dioceses then ACYOA. We did not hit it, but all the registrants thus far for Juniors and Seniors will receive it.

- ASP Juniors have 8 participants signed up and registration is now closed because they had to buy group flights.
 - GYF is at 28 participants after 2 were canceled. Mostly first-generation American participants. 2 participants are in an accelerated course to learn Armenian. This is a promising number for a first-year program. It has been very time-consuming for Jenni.
 - There will be a Zoom meeting for GYF participants in early June, and for the ASP Jrs and ASP Srs groups with the trip leaders.
- f. Chapter Reports (Ani)
- No reports have been filled out yet, the deadlines have past and been extended.
 - If any liaisons have questions, please answer them or use the link to familiarize yourself with it.
7. Review Goals
- Jackie read the review goals with CC.
 - Andrew confirmed we have met our first goal of creating an alumni committee
 - Alumni committee has not officially been announced to the public. We have 9-10 participants as of right now.
 - A few Alumni Committee members are creating a survey and will get the results by the diocesan assembly.
 - No feedback from the chapter reports and it will come.
 - Fostering the Juniors and Seniors is a priority to build relationships.
 - Liaison email in May for putting names of graduates of high school or college to publish into the database.
 - Social Media presence is improving and it will continue to grow.
 - Andrew added that to evaluate by using the Google calendar and add in our events and local chapter events.
 - Developing faith-based programs is a great ministry to use to follow the Five Circles of the Cross and it will continue to stay close to God and deepen their faith.
 - The history of the ACYOA video or podcast would be a great initiative and will continue.
 - Jenni mentioned that utilizing Social Media would be best and how we get short one-minute clips and focus on sharing what's out there.
 - Andrew asked how it can connect the clergy more and how we can continue to build that bridge.
 - Alisha mentioned to do the short video to ask the clergy questions on what's coming up and it can be published on Social Media.
8. If Additional Time: Begin GASW Prep
- Sarah mentioned if it's ok to publish on social media if anyone is interested in running for Central Council.
 - Ani asked to review the Nominating ballots.
 - Jackie suggested using the database from ASP and GYF reachout as an idea basis.
9. New Business

In-Person Meeting:

1. Opening prayer led by Dn. Garen.
2. Committee Updates
 - a. Detroit GA/SW Committee/Overview (Alisha and Sarah)
 - Jenni had a meeting with the committee, they meet weekly, registration is extremely low (120 compared to 220 last year)

- Jenni asked that the liaison emails to remind them about GASW be sent before the end of the weekend.
 - The hotel block is nowhere near the contract
 - CC will review last years registration and start personal reach outs.
 - There are no Sports teams registered.
 - Jackie asked the committee if any of the packages decreased, Jenni and Mara stated they will not as package prices are already low. The hotel is cheaper this year compared to last.
 - Alisha and Andrew discussed buses from the east coast.
 - Mara mentioned promoting the museum for delegates and was vetoed by parish leadership.
 - Jenni shared that the ad book will be promoted at the Diocesan Assembly and the clergy will be informed to register and attend.
 - There are a few clergy registered for the General Assembly.
 - Mara says the committee is asking each chapter to be represented in the AD book. Mara asked all of CC to encourage their chapters to submit a page.
 - Ani reminded CC that we put an ad in the book. Andrew will prepare a check and Mara will design the page.
 - Jenni reviewed registration and saw 2 refunds despite all purchases being final. Jenni will ask Celene why those were refunded.
 - Alisha mentioned to post it on social media more to keep promoting it.
- i. Review GA Agenda (Ani and Jenni)
- Jenni said use Canva to make a QR code that does not expire.
 - Sarah will make a QR code for the google drive for GA that lives in the upper right corner of the agenda
 - Breakfast is 8-9 and the first shuttle is at 7:45, the bus will be looping around until 9am. Anyone arriving after 9 needs to Uber.
 - Celene is the committee lead for GA.
 - Jenni shared how the committee is setting up the room, oriented facing the stage.
 - Jenni mentioned finding someone to share the laptop with throughout the assembly. Alisha will bring a second laptop.
 - Jenni shared, morning service will be in the sanctuary.
 - Andrew reached out to Tanner asking if he will be at GA, as last years Vice Chair, he will need to open GA.
 - Jenni mentioned that there will be elections of chair and vice chair.
 - CC will be meeting the week before GA to appoint parliament.
 - CC needs to figure out who will be running elections. Jenni recommended Ani, Andrew, and Jackie.
 - Jackie will help Jenni in running election buddy
 - Jenni reminded us that CC elections go first and then the nominating and auditing committee.
 - Our bylaws state that you must win by majority.
 - Jackie asked about the alternate delegate for CC, as we were in a situation last year with 2 candidates from the same parish, where one fell off because one person got onto CC.
 - Lunch will be provided at the Vartan Room by the Bishop and GA Awards will be presented.
 - There will also be a museum tour during lunch that is self-guided.
 - Nominating Committee and Auditing Committee Elections will be one round of votes.

- Andrew will present a financial report at the General Assembly.
 - No one from the auditing committee will be present at GA.
 - Jenni reviewed all the speakers and reports that will be shared and by who.
 - This year's theme for the diocesan assembly is "love one another" often times the GA theme is similar to give feedback.
 - Mara suggested the discussion for GA ask chapters for ideas for the bylaws.
 - Andrew thinks it's a good opportunity for the Alumni committee to find a few people to review quarterly or twice a year to reach out to chapters.
 - Jenni does not disagree with Mara, she shared that we are chapters by name and not action, we're struggling to get GASW registration.
 - Andrew mentioned a mandatory check-in with the chapter chairs. Jenni agrees but challenges how you do that.
 - Jackie proposed that the CC makes it a goal to learn their bylaws for the 25-26 year.
 - Jackie mentioned a discussion topic asking people how to engage them but the counter to that is that people at GA are the ones who show up and are engaged.
 - Sarah asked that we utilize social media to share our bylaws and reach families.
 - Jackie mentioned that the goals will be great for the next term.
 - Jenni will get information about the Diocesan assembly breakout sessions in the next week, CC will provide feedback via google doc to be reviewed on our zoom session the week before GA. "How can we love one another by strengthening our organization"
 - They don't have any business proposals and St. James will send in the bid for 2026 and no bids have been proposed for 2027.
 - Jenni pointed out that Resolutions and Courtesies will likely be removed from the General Assembly.
 - Jackie suggested that a solution is to change the format of the Resolution and Courtesies
 - Alisha thinks that the chapter presentation is a good idea to present. Ani agreed that an open forum people would share, no need to prepare anything beforehand.
 - We discussed where in the agenda a chapter presentation would go. Jackie suggested to make it the new #23.
 - Based on the timing this new section can be as long or as short as necessary.
 - Ani reminded CC that they are expected to be at the church before 8am.
 - Jackie suggested to decide which CC member will be at check in
 - Andrew suggested reaching out to ACYOA Alumni and would like to zoom in and say a few words and have some insights.
 - Jackie would like Andrew and Garen to share the ACYOA Alumni Committee Update to GA, not for Alumni to present themselves.
 - Andrew will organize a meeting with the Alumni Committee before GA.
 - Jenni will be working on the talking points for the nominating committee and day of chair.
1. General Assembly Registration
 - Ani reminded Garen to check the CC email for registration
 - St. Gregory is the only chapter that has sent in responses
 - Jenni and Ani made sure Garen knew where to access the spreadsheet for GA registration
 - Ani asked Garen if he had any questions.
 2. Election Buddy
 - Jackie and Jenni will work on this.
 - Jenni shared we have a tutorial document that she will share with Jackie.
 - Jackie asked if the ACYOA had an account with the platform.

3. Discussion Questions?
 - Ani confirmed that the questions are good to go.
- ii. Proposals/Bids
 - Ani shared we don't officially have one from St. James, so that we can actually vote on it.
 - Andrew asked if the bid would be under the agenda.
 - Ani will email Vinney if not hearing back regarding the bid for 2026.
- iii. Review GA Task List and Assign (Ani and Jenni)
 1. Parliamentarian:
 2. Sergeant of Arms:
 3. Secretaries:
 - Move to the zoom meeting the week before GA as there are no registrants to pick from.
- iv. GA 101 Workshop?
 - Jackie liked the workshop and said we could see how registration looks.
 - Ani asked Andrew to join the call for treasure documents
 - CC will promote this for better success
 - Jackie will also be on the call.
 - Ani reminded Alisha and Sarah to make sure there is CC coverage on the GASW meetings.
- v. Award Nominations (All)
 - The award nominations are selected.
 - Jenni reminded CC the ACYOA Awards descriptions.
 - All CC members will present the awards.
 - Sam Nercesian Service Award Presented by Garen (Ani will review)
 - Gregory Arpajian Leadership Award Presented by Sarah (review with Alisha)
 - Very Rev. Fr. Haigazoun Melkonian Award Presented by Jackie
 - Rev. Fr. Haroutiun & Yn. Patricia Dagley Award Presented by Mara
 - Juniors Chapter "A" Award
 - Abp. Tiran Nersoyan Service Award
 - Abp. Tiran Nersoyan Vision Award
 - Abp. Tiran Nersoyan Leadership Award
- b. Nominating Committee Update (Garen)
 - Sevana from the committee will be in attendance but will be coming late (10:30am)
 - Garen will reach out to Serien if she will be at GASW.
 - Garen will have anyone who said not sure to be reached back out to again.
 - Garen will reach out to the nominating committee to have them reach out to the new proposed candidates.
 - CC put out some candidates to run for Central Council
- c. Auditing Committee Report Update (Andrew)
 - Andrew gave an update on the auditing committee report.
 - Andrew gave feedback and had suggestions to format, there were two transactions that were received and confirmed.
 - Jenni would like to have CC review the Auditing Committee report.
 - Jackie asked why the leadership conference is still on the budget.
 - Jenni made sure other first-year CC members had inside knowledge.
 - Mara mentioned regarding to religious educational programs and asked why they are not in the budget expenses.
 - Jackie asked why we keep ASP budget income high in 2024 but it was not met in 2023.
 - Jenni gave a distribution regarding the ASP expenses.

- Jackie asked why the fundraising underperformed in Bishop's 5K.
 - In 2024, it was donated over \$1500 to AYO and a few years ago, it partnered with Hoops for Hayastan.
 - Jackie recommended not to split Bishop's 5K and partnered to have a large portion.
 - Jenni mentioned the CC the list of endowment funds, also mentioned the investment fund, the money will continue to grow.
- d. Alumni Committee Update (Andrew and Garen)
- Andrew and Garen gave an update on the alumni committee.
 - Andrew informed us the structure decisions for the future.
 - We're hoping to publish the Alumni survey to send to newsletter and other publications.
 - Alisha asked if the questions were discussed.
 - Jenni recommended editing the responses in the survey.
 - Central Council will reach out to the Alumni Committee and recommend that every response in the survey looks good.
 - Ani asked which platform they were using to send out the survey.
 - Jenni will create the QR Code for using the survey.
3. Financials (Andrew)
- Andrew will update the removed lines in the 2024 actual and 2026 budgeted report
 - Andrew will update approved budgets w/ actuals tab for the 2024 actuals in the 2025 master spreadsheets
- a. Financial Report
- b. 2024 Stewardship Status (collected in 2025)
- St. Sarkis in Dallas has given \$100
 - Andrew will follow up with them for number of stewards, names, and emails
 - Remember to remind stewards at large to make donation
 - Jenni reminded other first year CC members regarding stewardship.
 - Mara informed us that St. Mary in DC had changeover in the chairperson. Jenni will update the Chapter Database and Garen will update the website.
 - Garen will update the website award pictures after GA. and in the Other ACYOA Awards section
- c. 2024 Year-End Financial Report to be presented at 2025 GA
- d. Review Finalized 2026 Budget to be presented at 2025 GA
- Jackie mentioned ASP has not reached the budget.
 - Mara asked why the religious educational programs have increased compared to the 2024 approved budget.
 - Reminder that chapters who bring stewardship to GA still need to submit their list of stewards either day of or followed up.
 - Andrew needs to submit the financial summaries for GA to Jenni before May 7th, when they will be shared with all the delegates
 - Andrew will reach out to BoA
4. Upcoming Dates
- a. GASW Prep Meeting: May 14th at 7pm EST
 - b. GA 101 Workshop Date: May 15th at 7pm EST
 - c. GASW May 22-25
 - Possible July/August dates:
 - July 12 - all but Ani
 - July 19 - Ani possibly
 - July 25 & August 2nd, August 9, August 16 - Jenni not available
 - August 23 - Not an option

- August 30 - Labor Day Weekend
 - July 12 or 19 will be the first meeting for the new council
- 5. Closing Prayer led by Andrew Yenicag