

ITEM B.200
FOR INFORMATION

**JINISHIAN MEMORIAL PROGRAM UNITED STATES ADVISORY COUNCIL AND
GOVERNANCE COMMISSION MINUTES, JUNE 8, 2015**

Draft – Not Yet Approved (until Approved)

Minutes of the Jinishian Memorial Program
United States Advisory Council and Governance Commission of the
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Sherman Oaks, CA
June 8, 2015

CALL TO ORDER AND
WORSHIP

The spring 2015 Stated Meeting of the Jinishian Memorial Program (JMP) Governance Commission (GC) of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board was held together with the meeting of the United States Advisory Committee for the JMP (USAC). Martin Lifer, called the GC Stated Meeting to order on June 8, 2015 at 9:15 a.m., confirmed the presence of a quorum, and opened the meeting in prayer. Vicki Gehrt called the USAC meeting to order.

ATTENDANCE

Those present for all or a portion of the meeting were:

Members of both the
United States Advisory
Commission and
Governance Commission

Vicki Chopourian Gehrt– Chair

Michael Haratunian

Mark Momjian

Greg Allen-Pickett—General Manager (World Mission)

Additional Members of the
GC Only

Rev. Martin Lifer—Governance Commission Chair

Rev. Jack Hodges

Staff

Eliza Minasyan—Coordinator/Executive Director (JMP)

Cara Taylor—Administrative Assistant (JMP), Recorder

Armen Hakobyan - JMP Armenia Country Director

Pauline Sagherian – JMP Lebanon Country Director

EXCUSED

Amgad Beblawi—Area Coordinator, Middle East, Europe, Central Asia
(World Mission)

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MINUTES – October 30-31,
2014
ACTION

The Governance Commission (GC) voted to approve the Minutes of the GC Stated Meeting of October 30-31, 2014. Jack Hodges was not present for the vote.

The United States Advisory Committee (USAC) voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the USAC Stated Meeting of October 30-31, 2014.

Jack Hodges was not present for the vote.

JMP FINANCIAL REPORT
INFORMATION

Eliza Minasyan presented JMP budget, expense, and endowment reports for 2014 and 2015(1st Quarter). The savings goal of \$500,000 was met for the balance of 2014. The market value of the endowment fund went up to \$31.95 million. The projected receipts went down according to the payout formula for 2015, but they are projected to increase for 2016. This should allow maintenance of the current budget without further cuts for the country programs. The cost allocation to the Presbyterian Mission Agency went down to 5%. The money transfer system through the Evangelical Union in Lebanon into Syria is working efficiently and on time. Syria staff is satisfied. The first payment for 2015 was made; the second will go this fall.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEVELOPMENT EVENT
INFORMATION

Vartan Jinishian's 145th Birthday Party Event was held at Bel Air Presbyterian Church on Sunday, June 7. Deep appreciation was expressed to Jack Hodges and the local Planning Committee. Honored guests were present from Presbyterian, Armenian Apostolic, and Evangelical communities. Los Angeles City Council commendation was presented to JMP and the PC (USA) for genocide recognition and service to Armenians. Attendance was 200 and revenue from donations and pledges about \$25,000. Jack Hodges and Eliza Minasyan will develop a plan regarding follow up and strategy for future events.

ACTION

The Governance Commission (GC) and USAC voted unanimously to send a letter of thanks to Bel Air Presbyterian Church and Los Angeles City Councilman, Paul Krekorian.

NEXT MEETING

The next stated meeting of the Jinishian Memorial Program Governance Commission and United States Advisory Committee was set for Thursday-Friday, November 5-6, 2015 in Wilmington, DE.

RECESS/RECONVENE

The GC and the USAC recessed at 12:00 p.m. and reconvened at 1:07 p.m.

LEBANON REPORT
INFORMATION

The Lebanon Country Report was presented by Country Director Pauline Sagherian. In addition to a budget reduction for the 11th consecutive year, conditions have worsened in Lebanon because of the vacant presidency and resultant political instability. An increase in Syrian refugees has strained the economy, health, and education systems across the board (over 27% population swell). JMP assisted about 600 Syrian refugees in Lebanon in 2014. Altogether, over 2600 beneficiaries received holistic medical and social services.

Reconstruction of the Kurkjian wing was completed. Six housing

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clients became owners. Application for a dispensary permit is underway, which would allow for uninterrupted operation of the pharmacy. Long-time retiring staff was honored, and the new personnel hired will bring fresh skills.

**ARMENIA REPORT
INFORMATION**

The Armenia Country report was presented by Director Armen Hakobyan. The published 2014 Annual Report details 40 active projects serving 131,567 (4% of population) indirect beneficiaries. Goals for project sustainability and funding diversification through ongoing partnerships, as well as staff development and overall operations are on target.

**SYRIA REPORT
INFORMATION**

The Syria Country Report was delivered by Eliza Minasyan on behalf of Talin Topalakian, who could not be present. Beneficiaries continue to multiply to include nearly every Armenian remaining in Syria—all but the most needy have left the country after nearly four years of war. The currency is devalued, but costs are going up. JMP increased salaries to adjust to changing costs of living in the country. Despite horrible conditions, work has continued uninterrupted. At personal risk, Talin travelled out of Aleppo to visit Kamishly and Damascus offices. Deep appreciation was expressed for Talin's devoted leadership. The question arose of potential future need to completely evacuate Armenians from the country.

ACTION

The Governance Commission (GC) and USAC voted to authorize a letter regarding shared use of the Kamishly property among the Armenian Apostolic Prelacy and the Catholic Church.

**JMP PROGRESS REPORT
INFORMATION**

Eliza Minasyan reported that operations continue in the Jerusalem office. She will return to evaluate the need for the clinic and to discuss a potential housing project with the Patriarch. Istanbul operations are naturally phasing out as beneficiaries age because no new families are being added.

A senior staff meeting and strategic plan workshop was held in Lebanon; country directors Armen Hakobyan (Armenia) and Talin Topalakian (Syria) joined Eliza and Pauline Sagherian in Beirut. Staff recognition was given.

Eliza reported activities in the New York metropolitan area. She connected with the Eastern Prelate, Fund of Armenian Relief, Karageusian Corporation, Prelacy of Armenia, and AMAA director. The Manhattan Office of the Karageusian Foundation is available for meetings. Cara Taylor also relocated to New Jersey.

ACTION

The Governance Commission (GC) and USAC voted unanimously to register an independent JMP booth for the 222nd General Assembly meeting

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in Portland, OR in 2016.

ACTION

The Governance Commission (GC) and USAC voted unanimously to communicate their prayers to all JMP staff overseas.

**ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
COMMEMORATION
REPORT**

According to the 221st General Assembly action (11-07) to officially recognize the Armenian genocide, JMP developed and published resources for congregational use on April 26 in observance of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Presbyterian churches. Christine Chakoian, David Gambrel, Vartkes Kassouni, and Cara Taylor were the main contributors. A centennial pilgrimage trip to Armenia hosted by Pittsburg Seminary is scheduled for October 2015.

**ADJOURN WITH
APPRECIATION AND
PRAYERS**

By general consent, the Governance Commission and the USAC respectively agreed to adjourn their respective meetings together with prayer. Vicki Gehrt gave thanks to Pauline Sagherian and Armen Hakobyan for their outstanding reports, event presentations, and presence. Jack Hodges offered a closing prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vicki Gehrt
JMP United States Advisory Committee Chair

Martin Lifer
JMP Governance Commission Chair

Eliza Minasyan
Jinishian Memorial Program Coordinator/Executive Director

Cara Taylor
Recorder