

ITEM B.201
FOR INFORMATION

Jinishian Memorial Program United States Advisory Committee and Governance Commission
Minutes February 5, 2014

I. Attendance:

United States Advisory Committee (USAC) present: Vicki Gehrt (Chair), Michael Haratunian, Greg Allen-Pickett (World Mission), Amgad Beblawi (World Mission)
Governance Commission (GC) member present: Jack Hodges

Staff present: Eliza Minasyan (Jinishian Memorial Program (JMP) Coordinator/Executive Director); Cara Taylor (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: USAC member Mark Momjian, GC member Martin Lifer

II. Relocation

Housing: Eliza Minasyan reported on her research since the fall meeting. She can receive only 20% additional compensation for her salary. However, property rental in the region is more than twice as expensive as Louisville, not taking other costs of living into account. During her family's December visit to Paramus, NJ, the Armenian Presbyterian Church gave a moderate price for rental homes owned by the congregation, and she determined that this was her best option. Yet in January she was informed that there are no foreseeable vacancies in these properties. Vicki Gehrt offered to make some contacts locally to determine why the Paramus property situation changed and will ask Mark Momjian to do the same.

Office: Regarding office space, Eliza also visited with Jarvie director Margaret Reiff and toured the Interchurch Building in uptown Manhattan. The initial proposal is for a home office in the Paramus area for everyday use with Interchurch Center conference space available in Manhattan for meetings. Michael Haratunian also offered the Karaguesian office conference room as available in midtown Manhattan, with no need for a contract. The Jinishian office budget would subsidize her housing costs.

Conclusion: The committee feels that the overall idea is workable. Eliza will make another visit to look for another house in our budget. In order for relocation to happen this year, property must be available for a move in June. Greg Allen-Pickett needs to look at the specific written proposal for world mission to check precedence and approve the relocation.

III. Strategic plan

Eliza Minasyan presented the strategic plan as distributed over email (along with comments from Syria country director Talin Topalakian who was absent at the fall Strategic Planning meeting), including the new vision statement proposed by country directors. Vicki Gehrt had formatting suggestions for the core values section. She suggested changing "we grow our" to "it grows its" in the new vision statement (referencing JMP as the antecedent). Approval needed for staff to develop and implement strategic plans for each country programs.

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY BOARD

April 23-25, 2014

World Mission Ministry Area

ACTION: Motion to accept the JMP Strategic Plan 2014-2019 was seconded. All present voted in favor with added vision statement: *JMP helps diverse, vulnerable Armenian communities to achieve a dignified life through devoted excellence in service and compassionate leadership as it grows its network and resources.*

IV. May Meeting location

Date decided last fall: May 15-16. Eliza Minasyan proposes Louisville, KY. Discussion deferred to a later email exchange with all present.

V. Funds Development Proposal for Southern California

Jack Hodges presented the proposal and offered his free services. He cannot accept compensation but will have travel expenses paid by JMP in accordance with Mission Agency Board ethics. He serves on JMP through the May 2014 meeting. Vicki Gehrt loves this concept to enhance our reputation and fundraising among Presbyterians and substantial Armenian population in the region. Greg Allen-Pickett is concerned about section III among Presbyterians because it could potentially step on the Presbyterian Mission Agency and their funds development goals. We are totally free to reach out among Armenian communities, but other PCUSA congregations would then be open to “solicitors.” Jack Hodges offered to remove section III (last page); Greg lent his full support. If individuals are already receiving our Jottings newsletter (about 1000 individuals and churches), then we may include them in the campaign.

ACTION: After answering questions, Jack Hodges recused himself from the discussion and the vote. Motion to accept the Funds development proposal for southern California, striking section III, was seconded. All present voted in favor.

VI. Overture to General Assembly

Eliza Minasyan presented the overture for Armenian Genocide recognition and gave update on the process of getting the PCUSA to acknowledge the Armenian genocide on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The overture draft has been developed with a team of friends from two Presbyteries so far and colleagues from the PCUSA. If we are successful in passing the overture at the three Presbyteries (one initiating and two concurrent), then it would be possible to bring it before the 221st General Assembly when it meets in June 2014.

Vicki Gehrt and Michael Haratunian noted that the overture was very well done and gave their full support. Michael suggests publicizing the initiative undertaken by JMP in Armenian-American media before General Assembly and then after—once accomplished.

VII. Visit to Beirut

Amgad Beblawi reported that finally the Presbyterian Foundation has seen our work in Lebanon. Foundation staff was very, very impressed with JMP staff and work there. Both sides were very happy to have met. Eliza is very thankful to Amgad for making that visit happen. He was in Lebanon at the invitation of the synod there, but he also met with President of the Armenian Evangelical Union. Last minute changes in plans meant the delegation was in Damascus on a Saturday when the JMP office was closed. They did see the Armenian Church adjacent to the office where an attack killed children last fall.