



AWKA UNION USA & CANADA

LOS ANGELES CHARTER

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2015

1) Call to Order/Opening Prayer:

The president, Benjamin Chinwuko, called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM with an opening prayer led by Samson Nwangwu

2) President's Remark:

The president remarked that this is the earliest we have started the meeting and commented that it would be great if we could keep it up. He also congratulated everybody on our performance at the end of the year party and prayed that we would multiply our efforts by 10 times this year.

3) Attendants- Sixteen members were in attendance including; Kanayo Ibe, Amuche Ibe, Godwin Ibe, Ben Chinwuko, Azuka Anene, Emeka Ezenwa, Lawrence Okoye, Pat Ndigwe, Reginald Ajekwe, Herbet Udeozo, Dubem Anumba, Samson Nwangwu, Nkoli Ezenwa, Obiageli Nwofor and Ify Obue

4) Visitors- Mrs. Lady Pat Ajakwe (America).

5) Reading of Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the previous meeting was read and adopted with two corrections. The corrections were; 1) The Dallas Chapter was not the chapter that sanctioned their errant members, but the Maryland Chapter. 2) The name of the member of the Dallas Chapter whose clique was ostracized is Ben Nwosu not Ben Nwankwo. Motion to adopt the minutes was moved by Abodi and seconded by Obguevfi Chinedu.

6) Matters Arising from the Minutes:

a) Wake-Keeping of Mrs. Margaret Okoye; The President commented that the minutes did not mention the wake keeping of Mrs. Margaret Okoye, the secretary's mom which was well attended. The wake-keeping of Mrs. Margaret Okoye was held as scheduled on Saturday November 08, 2014. The event was well attended and the Union presented an envelope to the Secretary, Lawrence Okoye fulfilling the Union's constitutional obligation to him. Lawrence expressed his appreciation to the Union and especially to those who attended.

The president also brought up the \$30.00 levy that was decided on to offset the bereavement payout and asked the financial secretary if everyone has paid the levy. She said not everyone and readout the names of the 13 members who have paid. Emeka informed her that three more people have paid while she was gone, namely Godwin Ibe, Emeka Ezenwa and Eunice Chine. A total of 16 people have paid so far. Ben implored those who have not paid to do so.

b) Update on our tax exempt efforts; The President, Ben Chinwuko asked the treasurer, Emeka Ezenwa for an update on the issue. Emeka explained that we have given the money to Sylvester Adigwe (SA). So far we have paid the amount (\$400.00) he requested and we are waiting to hear from the IRS. He told us that if anymore fees are requested, he will let us know. Ben said that SA called him and asked if we have heard from the IRS because he has filled for the tax exempt status. Ben is the contact person for the IRS so any correspondence will come through him. A member asked if that means there is more fees to the IRS later and was told that the \$400.00 is the fee we have been assessed so far. If more fees are charged we will know as we go.

- c) Awka Day (End of Year)- The president remarked again that the end of year party went very well. There was a lot to eat and drink. Everybody that came enjoyed themselves and asked for others opinions and comments on the party. Emeka Ezenwa commented and agreed with Ben that it was a swell party. He thanked Ben for the gifts he provided that made the party very lively and made kids win lots of stuff. He also commented on the treatment of a member that he felt was not fair. Apparently a member, Chidi was accosted by a member at the gate when she was leaving the party with a bottle of champagne from her table which she did not drink because she did not want to drink and drive. She was offended and left the wine at the table. Emeka and a few other members felt that every member has the right to take a bottle of wine they did not drink if they want to. Other members felt that members should not take drinks without permission. This drew an unnecessarily long and heated argument for and against. A vote was taken to put the issue to rest. Four votes in support of taking wines and sundry drinks and 8 against it. A suggestion to write a letter of apology to the member was tabled, but Ben assured us he spoke with the member and everything is OK. Pat Ndigwe gave an account of the food pledges. Abodi thanked members of the party planning committee for their efforts and gave a special thanks to Dubem and Amuche for their extra efforts. He also expressed appreciation to all who redeemed their pledges, his expectations he said was exceeded by members who brought everything pledged before the party started. He also mentioned Everest Offodile who is not a member yet, but brought a case of wine and requested that it go on record.
- The President asked Godwin Ibe to express our thanks to the party planning committee on behalf of the organization. Mr. Ibe addressed the meeting and thanked the committee for the swell job they did. The meeting applauded the committee members. Ben concluded by praying that God will bless all who put their hearts into, one by one.
- d) Finance- Ben paid his annual dues of \$60.00 and two months of insurance premium of \$40.00.

7) General

The President enumerated a list topics needing deliberations; briefing from the national teleconference that took place on January 22, 2015, voting on the insurance, equipping libraries in Awka, and finally hall.

a) Teleconference: The Dallas Chapter/Ben Nwosu Clique: the lawsuit against Ben Nwosu's clique in the Dallas Chapter is still on. An organization that sided with that clique was sued also but they settled monetarily with the Chapter. The case is scheduled for 2/2/2015. They requested our moral support. It was agreed that we will give them the moral support and the secretary was charged with writing them a letter and sending it by email.

Convention: the convention will be held the last weekend in June at a Best Western Hotel. Rooms are \$95.99/night. Tickets are available are \$100.00 each and \$150.00/couple. The National Body is planning gifts for everybody that attends the convention. To cover the cost of the gifts, they plan to charging as much as \$50.00 for entry into the meeting. This generated some argument. Awka do not charge people to attend a meeting. Instead they should scale down the value/cost of the gifts. The committee will iron that out in their meeting. Brochure: the convention brochure front and back covers was priced at \$250.00 each. This was rejected. The covers should be on a bid basis and can command as much as \$1000.00 each. The center page is set at \$150.00 and the rest of the pages are \$100.00 each. Almanacs: every chapter should forward a group photo and the chapter presidents should also forward their photos to the committee for the almanacs at no charge. The almanacs will be sold to attendees to pay for the cost of producing it. All submittals should be in by April 15, 2015 (tax day). The invitation is almost ready and this is the time to invite anybody who wants to come to the US from Nigeria. The national convention committee will send them the invitation. It is very easy to get a visa with the invitation. Any member who wants to invite anybody should get their name, postal address and email address. They will forward the invitation by email. They mentioned they want to honor the elders who have served the union a long time. A committee was nominated to handle that. Youth Program Development: the only issue they did not reach agreement on was the youth program development. The youth program should be a local chapter issue that can grow over time to the national with proper guidance and healthy competition. Election of Officers: the PG has served the maximum term. There will be an election of national executive officers including the PG. Each local

president was tasked with nomination a member of their chapter to serve in the election committee. Ben nominated our Vice President, Kanayo Ibe who protested as usual. Mr. Ibe was voted in by 11 votes to 1.

b) Insurance; The president asked Dubem to talk about the insurance. She told us that the decision on the amount of coverage and mode of benefit disbursement is ours. We have opted for \$100,000.00 coverage with \$240.00/year premium. Her boss is of the opinion that members do not want the organization to have total control of the benefits but thinks that maybe half and half will be better. He is waiting on us. A lengthy discussion on benefit disbursement followed. It was finally decided that 50% should go to the beneficiary and 50% will go to the organization. The percentage of the left over money to go back to the beneficiary will be debated at the next meeting. The next step according to Dubem is the premium payment and blood work. Abodi proposed a motion to void the section of the constitution dealing with bereavement. Ben suggested that the inception of the insurance voids the bereavement section of the constitution. We agreed. Ben also suggested that we start collecting the premium now to be submitted when needed. A three person Insurance committee was created to handle the premium collection to keep it separate from the organization's coffers. The members are Dr. Reginald Ajakwe, Dubem Anumba and Nkoli Ezenwa.

c) Library; A library committee was created. The members are Lawrence Okoye (Chair), Kanayo Ibe, Pat Ndigwe, Emeka Ezenwa and Ify Nwankwo. Ben said that our EIN is good for soliciting because we have filed for the 501-C. This is according to Sylvester Adigwe. We are charged with soliciting goods to send to the library at Awka.

d) Hall; The President made a formal suggestion for a hall. It would be a good thing for us as Awka to take the lead in acquiring a real property as an organization. It could start pay for itself in time. It could have several uses depending on the type of structure. Part of it could be leased to a church if it has enough space and we could, as time passes create services like day care and employ our people in need of jobs etc. The only issue will be down payment. Samson came to the meeting for this issue. Samson apprised us on the properties he looked at and the various ways we can go about acquiring/financing it. Emeka pointed out that we are a new entity without credit, how are we going to acquire a real property without credit. We need an individual with good credit to buy the property for us, but this is not the best way to go. People get greedy when equity builds up. It was decided that we could build up the credit in about a year. We agreed that the hall is a great investment when the time comes.

b) Credit Committee; A four man committee comprising Emeka Ezenwa, Godwin Nnama, Godwin Ibe and Samson Nwangwu was formed to handle the building up of our credit and to look into acquiring the hall.

e) Youth Forum Committee Report; Kanayo Ibe said it is work in progress. They will convene to decide how to proceed. Detailed report at next meeting.

b) Meeting Venue; Nkoli expressed desire for having the meeting in the valley at least two times a year. Ben said it is a serious matter, if we want to rotate the meeting we can, we just have to decide. Godwin Ibe suggested that we try and go to the Valley at least once or twice a year. Oba, Emeka and Lawrence are in support,

Law Dibuo (Omelora) called from Phyladelphia to campaign for the president general position. He has our votes.

Dr. Reginald Ajakwe's mom who graced us with her presence introduced herself.

6) Closing- The meeting came to a close at 8:15 pm with a motion for adjournment raised by Abodi aka Azuka Anene and seconded by Emeka Ezenwa aka Nnwa Jesus. The closing prayer was said by Ify Nwankwo.