

# AWKA UNION USA/CANADA

## LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

### **MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING HELD ON MARCH 22, 2014**

The meeting came to order at 5:22 PM with an opening prayer led by Emeka Ezenwa (Nnwa Jesus).

The chapter president Ben Chinwuko (Ogbuefvi Umunnanwezuoaku) implored members to be on time for the meeting.

**Roll** -Attendants: Kanayo Ibe, Ben Chinwuko, Eunice Chine, Azuka Anene, Ifeoma Obue, Vivian Nwofor, Emeka Ezenwa and Lawrence Okoye, Obiageli Nwafor.  
-Excused: Chuks Onwuzulike, Chidi Okoyeigwe, Amauche Ibe.

**Refreshments:** Abodi kept us happy with refreshments.

The minutes of the previous meeting was read and adopted with minor corrections. Also an issue discussed at the executive meeting was not mentioned. This was added to the agenda for the meeting. Abodi moved to adopt the minutes and Nnwa Jesus seconded.

### **Matter Arising**

#### Printing Accounting;

Emeka accounted for the printing of our stationary. He printed 500 copies each of the letterhead and envelopes. We also have the stationary in electronic format. He will forward the electronic stationary to the secretary. He has already given him a good quantity of the envelopes and letterhead. Abodi informed us he had designed an electronic stationary which may not be as fanciful as the professionally made ones, but it would have cost us nothing.

Emeka bought 4 generic receipt books and four note books, one each for the secretary, financial secretary, treasurer and provost. He will have stamps made and buy stamp pads to be used with the receipts.

Kanayo asked if the financial secretary has any software for record keeping. Emeka said there is an Excel based record keeper he and the financial secretary can use.

The president (Umunnanwezuoaku) asked about the folders that was supposed to be purchased for the financial secretary, publicity secretary and provost, Emeka will procure the three binders next time.

#### Incorporation and Entity Structuring;

Emeka also updated us on his efforts in the incorporation and entity structuring of the union which he was charged with. The estimate he got for our category was about \$800.00. He worked with Legal Zoom, after we gave him the authorization to proceed. As of now, we have obtained the 501C status. He would have brought the package with him to the meeting today but Legal Zoom had the wrong suit number on the package and it was sent back. We have the 501C at a cost of just over \$700.00. He will give us the exact amount when he brings the package in.

The tax exempt status is a two step process he informed us. First you obtain the non-profit status, which we now have, after that you deal with the IRS to obtain the tax exempt status. The process can take from 6 to 24 months and Legal Zoom has nothing to do with it. The cost for the tax exempt status is about \$600.00.

Based on our 501C he said, we can solicit for charity. The only problem is we are not a tax exempt entity yet, so donors would not be able to write off their donations. He suggested

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that, in the interim, we use the tax exempt status of the national body as suggested by the President General and Secretary General at the inauguration party.

Emeka told us that the new 501C requires a new employer identification number (EIN). The one he got when he opened an account for the union is no good now that we are a non-profit entity. The new EIN must be tied to a person that would be answerable to the IRS. The person must be sort of a trustee of the entity, and would be accountable when the IRS has questions. He explained that EIN is tied to a person's social security number and due to an experience he had in the past, he did not want to put his name as a trustee for the union.

This issue has already been discussed at the last executives meeting and it was deliberated on in depth. He informed the executives that instead of burdening a member with this, there is a service wherein a company would serve as such a trustee for a nominal fee. He knows such a company and their fee is \$200.00. The executives decided it would be better to use such a service than put a member in such a difficult position, but decided it is a decision for the general meeting. Emeka will apply for the EIN through that company after he gets the package back from Legal Zoom if gets approval to proceed at the general meeting.

The President, Ben Chinwuko informed the body that decision on this issue was deferred to the general meeting. He pointed out that since the union offices are tenured, officials change often, so it is not fair to burden a member with such a risk. One can be thrown into prison. It is better to pay \$200 to this company and have them assume the risk.

Kanayo Ibe (Ogbuefvi Chinedu); Can we change the trustee when officials change?

Emeka Ezenwa (Nnwa Jesus); Once your SS# is tied to an EIN, it is permanent.

Azuka Anene (Abodi); Even if it is possible, the person whose watch it is when trouble hits becomes responsible/accountable. It boils down to a person's SS#.

Ogbuefvi Chinedu; What if the IRS starts calling when the trustee company has folded up?

Emeka Ezenwa (Nnwa Jesus); The IRS can go after the trustee even when they are not in business.

Abodi; Do we pay tax while waiting for our tax exempt status.

Nnwa Jesus; A for profit corporation has to pay \$800/year to the IRS, but I will find out if we as a non-profit entity, are liable for any such fees.

Ogbuefvi Chinedu; If we do not solicit, do we pay taxes?

Nnwa Jesus; If we do not solicit, we just file and show zero income.

Nnwa Jesus; I will find out if we if we have to pay any taxes or fees.

Abodi; I doubt that we will not pay any taxes because at the last meeting Ify mentioned of an association that was paying so much tax that they had to file for the 501C.

### Account Reconciliation

Nnwa Jesus; Everything is up to date. The only outstanding issue is the brochure. Oby will give account of that. He said Abodi paid \$140.00 that was not recorded and this reconciled the account. This brings everything into balance. He said he has collected money from everybody that sold tickets.

Eunice Chine (Nwanya manari); I have not paid for the tickets I sold.

An argument about recording keeping followed. There was confusion about recording the brochure and ticket sells. Emeka read out the names of members who gave him their money; Nkoli \$200.00, Ben \$160.00, Ify \$74.00, Kanayo \$200.00, Lawrence \$140.00, Azuka \$140.00, Oby's sales he said was not recorded because she sold a lot, part of it is in the printing. Oby said she sold \$300.00 and gave that to Emeka.

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Ben commented that we did not record all transactions, therefore the account has not been reconciled. Azuka also commented that the recording was not complete. Emeka said it will be reconciled in due course.

Oby said she has another meeting going on at her house and asked to be allowed to give account of her dealings and be excused from the meeting to attend the one at her house. The total sales from the brochure is \$1475.00. From this, we paid Chike Nweke \$1065.19 for the printing. This leaves a balance of \$409.81. Of that amount she has \$125.00 with her, that means a total of \$284.81 is still to be collected. She has a record of the transactions but it is not in a clean format. She will print it and send to the financial secretary.

Ben and Azuka asked that she call out the names of people who have not paid. She started with Ben \$100.00, Ify \$50.00, Azuka \$100. Azuka said he paid \$100.00 for somebody that's on the list and his own \$100.00 was paid with the expenses of \$85 in receipts plus \$15.00 in cash. He said he gave the receipts along with a five dollar bill and a ten dollar bill to Emeka.

Kanayo Ibe complained that he paid the full \$100.00 for the brochure photo. He was refunded \$50.00. This was as agreed to at a general meeting when the cost was lowered to \$50.00 for members.

Ben suggested that all payments go through the financial secretary who will then give the funds to the treasurer.

Oby requested to be excused from her official duty of provost due to personal issues. She is not able to juggle her business and the post.

This was accepted.

Oby gave Eunice the cash in her possession, \$75.00 and will give her a full account later.

### Constitution

Not enough people read the constitution so ratification was put off to the next meeting.

### Letter of Appreciation

The Secretary has drafted the letter. Once he received the electronic stationary he will send the letter to members to distribute.

### Insurance

Dubem and Chidi were not present today. We are told they have good news.

### Baby Shower

Dr. and Mrs. Ajekwe invited members to their baby shower. Ogbuefvi Chinedu and 6 other members were in attendance to represent us. Ogbuefvi Chinedu said it went well.

Oby showed us some pictures from before the inauguration party. She will get all the hard copy pictures from Chike by the next meeting. With this she excused her self and left.

### Late Coming

Umunnanwezuo said the issue was to be discussed today but suggested we put it off to the next meeting.

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### **Agenda Issues**

#### Election of Officers

Umunnanwezuo articulated the need for vice president, assistant secretary and now a provost. It was decided to present this to the general meeting and if approved a timeline will be set for the election. It was decided to hold these over to the next meeting.

#### New Members

We have a new member, Chizoba Vivian Nwofor of Umuobgunu. The meeting gave her a resounding welcome. Ify paid \$50.00 for brochure and \$50.00 for her registration fee. She informed us she wants to welcome Chizoba into the meeting by paying the registration fee of \$50.00 for her. She was applauded.

#### Nwadiana

Umunnanwezuoaku related the interest expressed by a member of their church to join the meeting. This potential member is a "nwadiana of Umubeele" from Enugu State. Ben said he expressed an interest in joining the meeting if we will allow him. Ben said he told him that our constitution does allow membership of "umu nwadiana". He may attend the next meeting.

#### Feeding

This was discussed at the executive meeting. It was suggested that we make a schedule and members will take turns maybe once every two years. The meeting concurred. Emeka volunteered to be the first volunteer. Azuka was charged with making the schedule and sending it to members.

#### Finance

Lawrence paid \$60.00 for the year's membership. Kanayo Ibe paid \$50.00 registration for Sampson Nwangwu. Eunice paid \$125.00 for brochure.

Abodi pointed out the fact that Nwanya manari has never come to any of the meetings without bringing some goodies. She brought something today. We appreciated her with a round of applause.

Abodi informed the meeting that he made an extra effort this time in addition to the regular text reminders to reach every member who has not been coming. Some of them promised to come but somehow attendance was even lower than usual.

Emeka Ezenwa moved to adjourn and Kanayo Ibe seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM with a closing prayer by Eunice Chine.