

AWKA UNION USA/CANADA
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 02, 2013

The meeting came to order at 6:40 PM with an opening prayer led by Kanayo Ibe.

Roll; Kanayo Ibe, Lawrence Okoye, Ben Chinwuko, Herbert Udeoba (Oba) and Azuka Anene, Sampsom Nwangwu, Dr. and Mrs. Ajekwe, Emeka Ajekwe, Uzoamaka Ajekwe, Ifeyinwa Nwankwo.

Refreshment was provided by Azuka Anene and Ben Chinwuko.

We went over all the issues addressed at the emergency meeting earlier today to put finishing touches to every issue.

Issues addressed;

- 1) Cola nuts Ifeyinwa Nwankwo. Añala Oby.
- 2) *Hall decoration; Done. Comes with the hall rental. Oby will put some finishing touches with our uniform material.
- 3) *Pledged wines; One bottle of Henessey and seven bottles of San Antonio (SA) were used for the invites. The Henessey used was not from the pledged lot but the one presented to us by Dr Okeke for the wake-keeping of his father. Emeka Ezenwa was advised by Ben Chinwuko to buy seven bottles of Manischewitz in place of the used San Antonio wines for more variety.
- 4) *Snacks; Eunice asked if somebody else could do the boiled peanuts because she has to make the buns which takes time. Amuche Ibe is making the chin-chim.
- 5) Bar tending; The bar tender must not be a lush. Kanayo Ibe pointed out that anybody at the bar must be at least 21 years. It was decided we would need about three adults. Kanayo reminded us that we have not bought the ice for chilling the drinks. Ben said it was discussed earlier but a decision was made to buy ice from the store next door. Azuka Anene volunteered for bar tending. Dr. Ajekwe and Goddy Ezenwa were volunteered in absentia. Lawrence Okoye will be a backup in case any of these doesn't show up.
- 6) Gate staff; Oba and Samson Nwangwu will keep the gate.
- 7) Chairman(person); Dr Ajekwe told us he spoke to Dr Ndefo but he could not make it to the inauguration. Ben relayed his efforts on the errand we sent him on. He met with his pastor after service to talk to him about chairing the occasion. His pastor offered to give him an envelope to support us but Ben told him we do need his financial support but that we need his physical presence even more. Ben presented the bottle of wine to him and told him we want him to chair the occasion. He accepted the bottle of wine essentially agreeing to chair the occasion. He said he will be there by god's grace. Emeka suggested we have an Awka indigene be the chairperson. Azuka said he understood where Emeka was coming from, but that we are pressed for time. Ben suggested that Emeka be the

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- chairman. Emeka accepted the chairmanship. So for all intent and purpose Emeka Ezenwa is the chairman for the inauguration.
- 8) Advertizing; Chike is taking too long, Emeka will look into placing the advertisement in the ASA website himself. If Chike does not place one by tomorrow, Emeka will place one and if Chike places one later it is OK. Oba commented that its OK to have duplicated effort on the add.
 - 9) Music; Oba has acquired the music in his car. Kanayo suggested downloading Odudu music (Umuogbu) from the web (u tube). Oba said he has that. Kanayo has ogene okwomma from Ifite and Umukwa etc. Ben suggested Osadebe Oliver the Coque and other Ananbra music. Dr Ajekwe commented that most DJs have these kinds of music and was disabused of that notion.
 - 10) Food servers; Lawrence narrated the agreement of the general meeting of October 26 to use 4 servers from the caterer at a cost of \$240.00, and also the discussion earlier today where Eunice updated us on the on food serving. Apparently the ladies had decided that all we need is three servers because they (the ladies) and our children would serve the food this reduces the cost to \$180.00. The three servers will dish out the food and our kids and available women will serve. This seems to satisfy everybody because standing in line for food puts everything to a stand-still until everybody has eaten. When the food is served everybody is at their seat and the event is smoother. Azuka brought up an idea of Ifeyinwa's about renting a trolley to cart food around but Emeka and Kanayo interjected that there is not enough room for that. Azuka said it will take too long for two servers to serve everybody and volunteered his two young men (dimkpa nabo) to serve, Ben volunteered his daughters and son. The food dishing and serving will be supervised by the ladies.
 - 11) Record keeping; Since Emeka is now the chairman, Kanayo Ibe will work with Eunice, the Financial secretary in this function.
 - 12) Change; Financial secretary and treasurer to arrange for enough \$1.00 bills for change.
 - 13) Proceedings (Program of events); Introduce MC. MC introduces high table, prayer, opening speech/remarks by the chair, breaking of kola nuts, president's opening speech etc...
 - 14) Programs; Azuka read what he has for the program. We refined the contents of the program, agreed to the final product and assigned each part of the program to individuals.
 - 15) Brochure; Oby was not present to give an account. See discussion under general for resolution of the brochure issues. Lawrence went over how Oby was advanced the sum of \$200.00 to take care of the deposit with the printer. Lawrence had given her 100, Ben and Kanayo gave her 50 each for a total of 200. Now that we have an account, Emeka will deposit the checks and give us back the amounts advanced.

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General;

Emeka inquired as to the whereabouts of Mazi Ibe. Kanayo informed him that he is busy with his clients but that he will be at the event. Azuka wanted to know who will be picking up the money being sprayed. Emeka responded that the kids will do that.

Oba presented \$100 for his raffle sales.

Dr Ajekwe redeemed his pledge for the DJ, \$300.00. Emeka asked if we have given any money to the DJ so we could ascertain how much we have in the account and the answer was no.

Emeka updated us on the assignments he is charged with; 1) He registered the union as non-incorporated organization with a fictitious business name and obtained an EIN. 2) He opened an account with the EIN at Chase Bank in Van Nuys. So far he is the only signatory in the account, the president and financial secretary will have to go with him to be added as signatories to the account. 3) He also secured a business address for the union which is:

Awka Union USA
P. O. Box 14153
Van Nuys CA 91409

He suggested ordering a letterhead with the new address. He opened the account with a total of \$897.00 all the union money in his possession. Still has to buy 7 bottles of wine (Manischewitz) from this. Also the caterer's money is not complete. The budget as everyone knows is \$1600.00. So far we have only put \$500.00 towards that. That leaves a balance of \$1100.00. So the \$897.00 is far from enough since we still have to buy the prizes for the raffle a flat screen TV, a microwave oven and a blender. We budgeted \$400.00 for these. Obviously we still need money for the food bill.

Lawrence suggested that members who have not had the opportunity to pledge towards the event do so to help defray the food bill. Ben reminded us that the deposit toward the food bill was taken from the membership dues, therefore the bill in actuality is still \$1600.00 and urged for pledges towards it.

Dr Ajekwe and his oliaku pledged \$200.00 towards the food bill. This is in addition to the \$300.00 he had already pledged for the DJ.

Emeka went through the pledge list to update us and to let us know what is pledged and what is outstanding.

Emeka Ajekwe who was attending for the first time was moved and pledged \$150.00 towards the food bill.

Emeka Ezenwa will print more tickets to be sold at the gate to help offset the food bill. He was also concerned about attendance at the event and didn't want the hall to be empty. *Ka ebgene fve akona anyi onu.*

Sampson suggested we use canopies if more people show up. Emeka said that canopies are costly to rent. Some young people could stand outside if the hall is full. Emeka also expressed concern that the brochure is still not full according to an email from Azuka. He thinks this is because the price is too high and suggested that we lower the price so every member can place their pictures. Ben explained that it was decided to leave the prices at \$100/page and \$75/half page to be fair

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to the people who have paid the full price. Emeka suggested that we cut the price down to \$50/page for members. A strong argument followed regarding making it compulsory for members. Lawrence suggested that we find out how many pages have already been sold by now. Emeka called Oby but was not able to get her on the phone. We decided to charge members \$50/page on a strong argument by Azuka Anene and Emeka Ezenwa that our brochure should be very full to look as good as other peoples brochures they have seen. After all this is AWKA. Since we are out of time, it was suggested that everybody should email their pictures to the printer at awkaunion777@yahoo.com. The printer's email is chike67@yahoo.com. Just send your picture even if you have nothing to say. The printer has a basic verbiage to go with every picture.

We went over the program of events as prepared by Azuka and refined it.

Lawrence will update the program as refined and send back to Azuka/Oby for inclusion in the brochure.

Lawrence and Ben updated the body on the status of joining the national body. We have sent our constitution to them as required, but decided to hold out on sending the names of members till we discuss it in the meeting and agree on how to proceed. This is because they require that we send them a check for the full membership dues for every name on the list. We have the names of our active members, but could not send them a check for two reasons; 1, we do not have an account yet to write a check on and 2, we are not sure who among the active members are willing to pay the national membership due of \$60.00/year. We decided to table it here and act on the decision of this body. Concerns were raised as to whether the PG Ken Chinweze could inaugurate us without us being active in the national union. We will ask Ken before he comes to the inauguration. It was agreed that we should get comfortable in our organization before joining the national union.

Dr Ajekwe redeemed his \$200.00 for the food bill.

Ben updated us on the person from Washington State who wants to be an out-of-state member of our union. He explained the ramifications of having an out of state member as we have discussed at the emergency meeting and tabled the topic for debate. Emeka asked to be reminded what our constitution has to say about out of state membership. Lawrence read Article 2, Section 3 "Out of Los Angeles Member" and Article 5, Section 1; Sub-section 1 "Death of an Active Member" of the Constitution. Dr Ajekwe asked if other chapters have out of state members and Ben said they do. Ajekwe is concerned that we may not be able to fulfill our obligation at least at this early stage. Emeka suggested that somebody with the zeal to join the meeting from out of state should be given the opportunity. Dr Ajekwe suggested that we amend our constitution to accommodate an out of stater. This issue has been raised and discussed at the emergency meeting. Azuka summarized what we discussed at the emergency meeting. A lively discussion followed. It was decided to amend the constitution to limit the benefits for out of state members to what will not task our resources unduly.

Azuka suggested that we provide the same benefit for financial members and out of state members. This received objections from people who argue that a national active member is entitled to some benefits from the national union. If we treat

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them as financial member, how can we receive their benefits from the national body and keep it. Lawrence argued that the constitution is a document we are drafting. We can draft it as we like, if anybody reads it and agrees to it, he/she can become a member. Whatever benefit the national body sends will be passed through to the estate of the deceased.

We voted to amend the constitution and accept out of staters. The constitution drafting committee is charged with amending the constitution as discussed. Emeka Ajekwe wanted to know what happens to the balance of the collections after the death benefits of a financial member is met. Kanayo explained that the \$250 levy is only for active members. The \$1500 for a financial member is divided among the members. This means if we have 15 members, the levy will be \$100.00 each. Oba asked why an active member who pays \$250 for other members will get less when his turn comes. This spurred another spirited discussion and we decided that every active member will receive the same dollar amount but that we will not be able to organize a wake keeping for out of staters. Ben suggested that we let members know that due to proximity we will not be able to organize wake-keeping but we can send delegates. This was received well. The constitution will be amended accordingly.

Azuka urged everybody to be on time for the event. Kanayo suggested we get there by 5:00 PM to arrange the venue and chill the drinks.

Ify and Oba will bring big coolers for chilling the drinks. Azuka said he will need to rent a U-hall to carry all the drinks to the venue.

Azuka urged the president to impress the importance of being on time. Ify and Emeka suggested we fine late comers. Ben enumerated the tasks we need to handle before the event starts. A fine of \$20.00 was decided on.

Kanayo informed us that his wife has a prior appointment and will be late.

New members were introduced; Emeka Ajekwe and Uzoamaka Ajekwe.

Azuka Anene moved to adjourn the meeting and Dr Ajekwe seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM with a prayer by Oba.