



AWKA UNION USA & CANADA

LOS ANGELES CHARTER

Minutes of the Meeting of November 14, 2015

An executive meeting was held an hour before today's general meeting. The general meeting will be briefed on that issue and its progress when the executive decides that it is prudent to do so.

1) **Call to order:** The executive meeting ended at 4:50 pm and the President called the general meeting to order at the same time. The general meeting continued with the opening prayer from the executive meeting.

2) **President's remark:** None made at the outset. His remarks were interspersed over the whole meeting.

3) **Attendance:** A total of 23 members were in attendance including; Benjamin Chinwuko, Azuka Anene, Lawrence Okoye, Izuchukwu Anene, Somtochukwu Anene, Chiagoziem Chinwuko, Emeka Ezenwa, Goddy Ezenwa, Oby Ezenwa, Godwin Ibe, Kanayo Ibe, Amuche Ibe, Reginald Ajakwe, Everest Offodile, Ify Nwankwo, Eunice Chine, Chucks Onuzulike, Ike Anagbogu, Ify Obue, Vivian Nwofor, Pat Ndigwe, Herbert Udeoba, Samson Nwangwu.

Excused absences include: Dubem Anunba, Amaechi Ajakwe, Chioma Chinwuko, Nkoli Ezenwa and Chimdalù Chinwuko.

Visitors: We had two visitors, Soyama Chukwuezugò and Mr. Onuzulike.

4) **Reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting:** Before reading the minutes, the secretary took the time to point out an error in the organization's name as shown on our stationary. Pat Ndigwe had discovered the error and pointed it out to the secretary. The Chapter's name reads "AWKA UNION USA & CANADA, LOS ANGELES CHARTER". It should be "... LOS ANGELES CHAPTER". The error will be corrected.

The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting and a couple of errors were noted; 1) Mrs. Ify Nwankwo's name was not properly stated; 2) The cleaning of the hall for the Christmas party is not covered by the extra \$100.00 we deposited, rather that money will be forfeited as well as the privilege of using the venue in the future, if the hall is not cleaned. The move to adopt was made by Amuche Ibe and seconded by Ogbuenyi Ezenwa.

5) **Matters arising:**

A) **National Teleconference Calls (TC):** The national executive teleconference meeting was not held this period.

B) Library: The committee chair, Lawrence Okoye updated us on the progress of the committee as follows:

1. Letter of solicitation; the committee decided it will be to our benefit to have a uniform talking point to lend coherency to our solicitation efforts. Emeka Ajakwe volunteered to draft a letter that lays out the chapter's mission to potential donors at a glance. That letter was drafted, circulated, reviewed and a final version was sent out early this morning.
2. Emeka Ajakwe also introduced us to a software package, Smartsheet that would be very instrumental in what we are trying to accomplish. It's sort of like WhatsApp. I signed on this morning and when we are all online, information exchange will be very seamless.
3. List of Donors; Lawrence Okoye volunteered to supply some lists of corporations that could be potential donors. Emeka Ezenwa volunteered to be our outreach to churches and schools.
4. 501-C(3) See report under this heading below.
5. Matching Donations; some philanthropic organizations seek to match an effort that fund raisers have put forward. For instance Dell Corp may want to give us 20 computers if we could show them the we have purchased about 10 on our own. We are looking to make this a fall back strategy. We will concentrate on non-matching donations for now.
6. Website; in researching for ways of soliciting for donations, we discovered that having the most basic visibility, for example a website, telephone, fax etc. are very essential. At the least a website must be established. It was suggested that we piggyback on the national body's website, but that was rejected because we have our own 501-C. A website lends legitimacy to any organization. If we could also get a phone number to show on the website, all the better. A suggestion was made to form a website committee but Emeka Ajakwe said it doesn't take much to establish a website and volunteered to do it to an applause.

Abodi commended the committee for their efforts and asked if we do in fact have to have whatever we are asking an organization to match before asking them. We decided we do, but not necessarily in kind. Dr. Ajakwe suggested we combine our end of year party with fund raising and invite local businesses and other organizations. This is an event that will get the businesses to know us and we could invite the same donors the next time. He thinks we should have some skin in the game and do more than just donate old books.

Lawrence Okoye commended Robert Ajakwe for his contributions to the Library Committee.

The President thanked the committee for the work they have done and said he hopes that by the end of next year, we will be able to send donated items to Awka. He joked that we could also get computers from "Aswani".

C) Hall Acquisition: No update.

D) 501 –C; Emeka Ezenwa updated us on his efforts on this assignment. The document that was sent earlier did not get to us because it had a wrong address. He called the IRS and spoke with a lady who took information from him over the phone and later sent him email acknowledgement of their phone interaction and told him to expect the document (501-C) in about six weeks. That document came in less than six weeks later and was stamped 10/14/2015. Emeka read the full document out loud to chapter. Our 501-C(3) has been in effect since 03/03/2014 according to what he read. Prior to 03/03/2014, we were exempt under 501-C(4).

He said he would have to get with Sylvester Adigwe to find out what documents needs to be filed and

when, to stay in conformance with the 501-C. That is it we have our 501-C, he said, to a loud applause. The President expressed appreciation to Emeka for a job well done. He also commended S. Adigwe for doing such a great job at no cost to us, and on time but for the address. He reminded us that another Awka indigene gave us two quotes for the same service; if we pay him \$2,500.00 he will do it for us, if we pay him \$1,500.00 he will direct us to do it ourselves. But, Sylvester Adigwe, a true Awka man if there ever was one, did it for free. That shows how patriotic and civic minded he is. The President asked the body if it would be befitting for us to have the secretary write a letter of thanks to S. Adigwe. They said it is. So the secretary was charged with that task.

Ify Nwankwo brought up the need to be aware of the requirements of the 501-C, to know what we need do to maintain it. We may need to do some kind of fund raising activity as Dr. Ajakwe said earlier. We should all make out time to go to the IRS website to see what they want from us. Abodi suggested we do fund raising in place of the end of year party. Ben agreed, but suggested we combine the two or have them separately at different times. Emeka Ezenwa will discuss this and any other requirements there may be with Sylvester and report back to the body.

E) End of Year Party: Before the end of year committee report, the President pointed out that everybody in the room was enjoying the snacks and reminded us that those snacks are brought to the meetings almost always by one member alone, Eunice Chine (Nwanyamanari). He asked the meeting to applaud her selflessness. We applauded and thanked her. Ben commented that we could always tell when Eunice is late to the meeting if the snacks are not there at the start.

The President asked the end of year committee chair, Pat Ndigwe to update us on their work. Pat started by passing out two catering quotes, one from Veronica's Kitchen and the other from Jerry. A lengthy discussion on food items, quantity and prices followed. Ultimately we decided to go with Veronica's Kitchen.

Kanayo Ibe and his oliaku, Amuche Ibe gave \$200.00 cash toward the end of year party and Everest Offodile gave \$100.00 cash. The President asked for more pledges and reminded us that if we do not have enough money pledged, the party will not hold. He requested the total amount collected so far. Emeka showed he has collected a total of \$1,300.00. Pat Ndigwe read out the names of pledgees. Total pledged so far is \$1,800.00. Chukwudi Onuzulike gave \$200.00 for the party for a total of \$2000. Abodi suggested we form the end of year party committee early enough to start their work because it takes a lot of planning. Ben reminded everybody that the party is from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm and that the venue owners require that we clean the place after our party. There were suggestions to use the \$100.00 to hire two people to clean the place. It was suggested that somebody call Jerry and tell her we are not using her services anymore. Dr. Ajakwe will give the address of the hall to Ben to see if he could get the janitors at his place of work to come and clean the place for the \$100.00. Oba redeemed his pledge for the party.

F) Election: The President summarized the election we held at the last meeting. The new officials will assume office in January. All but three officials retained their posts. The new Financial Secretary is Ify Nwankwo. The new Vice President is Dr. Ajakwe who protested. Chiagoziem Chinwuko is the incoming Provost. Obguefi Chinedu pointed out that Chiagoziem makes it the third person to hold the post in one electoral season, and that all three are from Umuonaga. It was suggested that maybe the village should

be considered before we elect the next provost. Ben commended the body for the election including the people who protested.

G) Group insurance: Dr. Ajakwe updated us on the Insurance Committee's efforts. He received a quote from another insurance company that he was waiting on before the last meeting when Baron came to talk to us. He said he had two issues with Baron's quote; the first issue is the 85-year age limit and the second issue is that when the coverage expires there is no guarantee you can get a renewal. You have to pass another medical exam. This new quote is much better because it has what is called "guaranteed renewable". That means that in 20 years, no matter your state of health, you are guaranteed to renew based on your health status when you first signed on. For instance, if you are signed on as A+ status today, in 20 years you will be able to renew it based on A+ status. In addition you can get coverage up to age 100. This made Ben very happy because he plans on living to 120. The policy has the same premium about \$33/month, but the payout is a little less, \$30,000 and \$35,000. About 16 people have signed on. So far only one person has been denied but that person actually dropped out before the denial so no one has really been denied. All who have not joined should join now before their next birthday, he said, because this is a great deal. The first month premium has been paid from our account. The next issue going forward is how we pay our premium. Do we go monthly, quarterly and yearly? He suggested we go quarterly or semi-annually. He reiterated that those who have not joined should do so. Usually the insurance agent will contact you, come out to your house and ask you a few questions. Some times he has to draw blood and some time he doesn't. Some members mentioned that the agent did not draw their blood. Ben said the reason he did not draw blood is because he is not from Umuzocha or Umubele.

The President made an impassioned plea for the insurance case and implored all to get on board because the constitution will be amended to reflect the insurance. No body knows when death comes. It has no respect for age. The alternative is the \$250.00 each occurrence and people would have issues coming up with that much money. As for the payment options, he asked for suggestions because people may have issues paying if the amount is much at a time. He thinks quarterly is doable.

Mrs. Amuche Ibe suggested that since we already have an account, it would be easier to pay monthly into the account. The payment to the insurance could be quarterly but we pay monthly into the. She also asked if our children could be in the insurance. It will bring the premium down if they could. It was decided that it is better to give the payments to Dr. Ajakwe personally for record keeping. If anybody pays directly into the account, they should tell Dr. Ajakwe for his records.

Chukwudi Onuzulike, Samson Nwangwu and Everest Offodile all joined the insurance for a total of 19.

6) Financial Report: No financial report. Ben implored all members owing any dues to see the financial secretary. Emeka Ezenwa said that most people are paid up per his record.

7) New Member: Everest Offodile joined the meeting officially today, but he has been involved occasionally in the past.

8) General: Goddy Ezenwa and his oliaku are the hosts of tonight's meeting. They did a great job. Ben Chinwuko will host the next meeting. The five Almanacs from the national convention were sold to members at \$5.00 each. Lawrence Okoye, Samson Nwangwu, Eunice Chine and Kanayo Ibe each paid \$5.00 for an Almanac.

9) **Closing:** The President expressed appreciation to all for attending. The meeting started on time today. The executives had another meeting that started an hour earlier and rolled into the general meeting. The executives met to tackle an issue of significance. The advice the general meeting on that issue later as needed. He praised the general deliberations of the meeting, which was marked by applause and laughter. That's how it is supposed to be and it makes him happy. He reminded those who have not pledged for the end of year party should endeavor to do so. Those who have not joined the insurance should endeavor to do so.

The meeting ended at 8:15 pm with a motion for adjournment moved by Azuka Anene but was not seconded. He asked for volunteer to lead us in the closing prayer. Samson Nwangwu volunteered and said the closing prayer. There was no move or seconding to adjourn the meeting.