



CMEAA
COMMISSION ON MIDDLE EASTERN
AMERICAN AFFAIRS
M I C H I G A N

Meeting Minutes

February 8th, 2018, 12:00 P.M.
Arab American & Chaldean Council
363 W. Big Beaver Rd. – Suite #300, Troy, MI 48084

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

Manal Saab, Chair	Haifa Fakhouri
Michael Romaya, Vice-Chair	Ronald Haddad
Lina Hourani-Harajli, Treasurer	Fadwa Hammoud
Suzanne Sukkar, Secretary	Adel Mozip
Susan Dabaja, Trustee at Large	Abe Munfakh
Bing Goei, Ex-Officio	Nabeel Obeid
Dave Abdallah	
Fay Beydoun	

Commissioners Absent:

Sharif Hussein, Second Vice-Chair

Staff: Ron Robinson (Assistant Attorney General), Annie Fenton (MONA), Karen Phillippi (MONA), Raya Fares (CMEAA Coordinator)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Manal Saab at 12:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Chair Saab introduces and welcomes Dr. Nabeel Obeid and Ms. Fadwa Hammoud to their first meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Sukkar moved to accept the agenda. Motion supported by Commissioner Fakhouri. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Romaya moved to accept the minutes of September 14th 2017. Motion supported by Commissioner Harajli. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Harajli provided the Commission with both an updated 2017 spending plan and reviewed financial details with the Commission. Chair Saab reminded the commission of the \$25,000 budget increase for the 2018 fiscal year.

V. LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Director Bing Goei described the Legislative Advocacy Committee. House Bill to make English an official language. The Legislative Advocacy Committee is working with MAPAAC to endorse HB4110 (Fred Korematsu Day). HLCOM has brought to the attention of the committee HB8443, which would require farms to not empty their septic waste facility for 60 days.

Chair Saab has informed the commission that Commissioner Hammoud has graciously accepted her nomination to serve on the Legislative Advocacy Committee.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Commissioner Mozip provided the Commission with an update on the Environmental Justice Committee. He mentions that the committee worked in 3 stages: learn, listen and analyzing and recommending. Today, there is a 36 page report which will soon be presented to Governor Snyder. Commissioner Mozip informed the Commission that the EPA has a grants available, which would need a 25% matching and would like the Commission to consider the opportunity.

VII. LARA/MONA DIRECTORS UPDATES

MONA Director Bing Goei spoke to the commission of the collaboration between the three ethnic commissions. At a recent meeting between the ethnic chairs, a few ideas of collaboration flourished, which include but are not limited to: Joint Newsletter, Joint Ethnic Innovation Summit, and Joint Ethnic Committee Meetings. Director Goei noted that planning for the 2018 New Americans Appreciation Gala is underway. Awards will be given to business leaders, and newly added this year, leaders in areas of humanitarianism, philanthropy and public service. Nominations should be made before June 1, 2018.

MONA Deputy Director Karen Phillippi spoke to the commission about MONA's agricultural workforce development initiatives, the refugee navigator program which launched in the summer of 2017, and a more recent reskilling pilot program to help address gaps in professional readiness.

VIII. ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY UPDATES FROM WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

MOTION: Commissioner Sukkar moved for the commission to enter into closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268(a) to evaluate Wayne State University personnel hired as an agent of the commission to conduct an Economic Impact Study. Motion supported by Commissioner Dabaja. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Sukkar moved for the commission to leave executive session. Motion supported by Commissioner Beydoun. Motion passed by unanimously.

IX. NATIONAL ARAB ORCHESTRA

A brief presentation on the National Arab Orchestra (NAO), including the goals, objectives and initiatives was given by NAO Chairman Usama Baalbaki and NAO Executive Director Sherri Richards.

MOTION: Commissioner Sukkar moved to commit \$25,000 of CMEAA's budget each year to support the National Arab Orchestra for the next three (3) years, pending budgetary approval. Commissioner Fakhouri moved to support the motion. Motion adopted by unanimous vote.

X. SHORT TERM GOALS

Tabled until next meeting.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

None.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XIII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m. by Chair Saab.

Suzanne Sukkar, Secretary

Manal B. Saab, Chair