



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

Meeting Minutes

May 17th, 2017, 12:00 P.M.

A Arab American National Museum - Annex
13624 Michigan Avenue
Dearborn, MI 48126

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

Manal Saab, Chair	Wendy Acho
Michael Romaya, Vice Chair	Bishr Al-Ujayli
Lina Hourani-Harajli, Treasurer	Susan Dabaja
Mariam Bazzi, Trustee	Adel Mozip
Bing Goei, Ex-Officio	Abe Munfakh
Dave Abdallah	

Excused: Sharif Hussein, 2nd Vice-Chair, Suzanne Sukkar, Secretary
Fay Beydoun, Haifa Fakhouri, Ronald Haddad

Staff: Shelly Edgerton (LARA Director), Mike Zimmer (Cabinet Director), Karen Phillippi (MONA Deputy Director), Nicholas Payne (Cabinet Liaison), Ron Robinson (Assistant Attorney General), LeAnn Droste (LARA Finance), Raya Fares (CMEAA Coordinator)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Manal Saab at 12:02 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

MOTION: Commissioner Romaya moved that we elect Commissioner Mariam Bazzi as pro tem secretary in the absence of Commissioner Suzanne Sukkar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dabaja and passed unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Bazzi moved to accept the agenda. Motion supported by Commissioner Romaya. Motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Mozip moved to accept the minutes of February 8, 2017. Motion supported by Commissioner Harajli. Motion and passed unanimously.

Chair Saab congratulated Commissioner Bazzi on the most recent her appointment to 3rd Circuit Court. and announces that Commissioner Bazzi will maintain her position on CMEAA in addition to as Trustee at Large on the Executive Council.

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Harajli provided the Commission with a both an updated spending plan and expense report and reviewed details with the Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Romaya moved to accept the CMEAA Treasurer's Report. Motion supported by Commissioner Bazzi. Motion and passed unanimously.

V. RFP/MEA Study

Coordinator Raya Fares provided the commission with details of the study, including information on the mailed survey and focus groups. Raya mentioned that at the moment, the study team is working on collecting the data from the various ethnic groups of the Middle Eastern American Community in Michigan. Chair Saab appoints Commissioner Mozip Hourani???-Harajli and Commissioner Mozip to the Impact Study Committee.

Chair Saab reminded the Commission of Coordinator Raya Fares's request to provide the commission with a list of MEA individuals who would be eligible for nomination to other state boards and commissions. Director Goei reiterates that this task is in every ethnic commission's mandate to assist the Governor's Office and the Office of Appointments to have our communities represented.

VI. PATRIOTS & PEACEMAKERS RECEPTION

Coordinator Raya Fares thanked Vice-Chair Hussein for hosting the reception and his work in ensuring the attendance of dignitaries. A brief presentation highlighted photos and special moments from the reception. Chair Saab reiterates her appreciation to Vice-Chair Hussein for chairing the event. Commissioner Mozip mentioned his appreciation to LCC, CMEAA, and the Arab American National Museum for their efforts in hosting the exhibit. and would like to see the exhibit housed in Dearborn permanently.

VII. LARA/MONA DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Director Edgerton thanked the Commission for hosting the Patriots & Peacemakers Exhibit as it highlighted the many contributions of Middle Eastern Americans. She reiterated mentioned her commitment to CMEAA and the willingness of her staff to

attend our meetings as necessary and to report on relative issues. ~~if the Commission would like any other staff present at the meetings, that she would be happy facilitate it.~~

Reworded this paragraph:

Director Goei updated the commission on the work of the Joint Legislative Committee and their ongoing review of the various Legislative bills by working closely with Frank Waters (OPLA). This includes our support of HB 4110. Furthermore, he echoed Chair Saab's request and his commitment to increasing ethnic representation at both local and state government; which will only enrich our communities and the function of state government.

Cabinet Director Zimmer clarifies the process of appointments and mentions the public seats available on several commissions. ~~stresses the importance of Arab and Chaldean communities' representation in the work force. He~~

Deputy Director Phillippi updated the commission on the refugee strategy task force ~~speaking to the efforts. There has been an effort to bridge the gap between the Michigan State Police and the refugee community. In the coming weeks, several initiatives will aim to provide education and understanding between MSP and the refugee resettlement agencies.~~

VIII. RFP & FUNDING PRESENTATION

LARA Finance Director LeAnn Droste provided the Commission with a brief presentation on the RFP process and funding protocol within LARA.

IX. NEW AMERICANS APPRECIATION GALA

Chair Saab informed the commission of the Governor's request to highlight the contributions of the various ethnic communities and new Americans in our state focusing on the Michigan's economic development. Recognizing business leaders and promoting awareness to help correct the false ideologies and perceptions that immigrants are stealing jobs when in fact they are creating them. ~~Middle Eastern American communities, and to clarify the false notion that ethnic communities take away jobs. As a result of several months of work, New Americans Appreciation Gala had been created which aims to highlight the different job creators. The Gala will be held on October 13th 2017 at the Marriott in Ypsilanti. Each commissioner is charged with soliciting attendance and sponsors in addition to nominating business leaders for the Governor's Business Leadership Award that will be presented at the Gala. at least 2 sponsors for the event. Nominations for the Governor's business leaders' award are due to Commissioners are also requested to provide Coordinator Raya Fares by May 30th, 2017. with nominations for award recipients.~~

A total of six business leaders will be spotlighted and honored by the Governor at the New Americans Appreciation Gala on October 12th. Each commission – CMEAA,

MAAPAC and LA????, will nominate two business leaders from their respective communities. CMEAA is seeking one Chaldean and one Arabic business leader.

X. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Saab reiterated the commission's congratulations to Commissioner Bazzi on her most recent appointment.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m. by Chair Saab.

The Honorable Mariam Bazzi, Secretary Pro Tem

The Honorable Manal B. Saab, Chair