



## Meeting Minutes

December 04, 2019, 12:00 P.M

### **ATTENDANCE:**

#### Commissioners Present:

Manal Saab- Chair  
Michael Romaya Vice-Chair  
Lina Hourani-Harajli- Treasurer  
Suzanne Sukkar- Secretary  
Nadine Kalasho  
John Daoud  
Adel Mozip

Susan Dabaja  
Dave Abdullah  
Fay Beydoun  
Martin Manna  
Chief Ron Haddad  
Rihan Issa

#### Commissioners Absent:

Dr. Nabeel Obeid

Staff: Fayrouz Saad (Director of Office of Global Michigan), Ron Robinson (Assistant Attorney General), Charles Schoder (Civil Rights Specialist), Maan Abou Khzam (CMEAA Administrator).

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

Chair Saab thanked Commissioner Martin Manna for hosting us today and welcomed friend of CMEAA, Mike Zimmer. Also recognized the presence of Joe Miszczak from Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence's office.

Chair Saab further acknowledged Commissioner Sharif Hussein's resignation. He's been an effective member of CMEAA and will certainly be missed.

Our hope for today is to finish this meeting with a framework to further develop a strategic plan for CMEAA and focus in on an implementation process in 2020. We will leave this meeting today with WHAT we want – which will be the framework for HOW do we get there. Trying to change deep seated believes and behaviors is daunting. We accept the status quo because effective real change seems impossible. Still we ask can we make a difference? And my answer and yours has always been a resounding yes and it is evident by your presence here today and your commitment to the communities you serve.



Anyone of us can champion ideas that improves the world around us. Ideas that might just change the way we live and could very well inspire our world. Keep these thoughts in mind as we proceed with our meeting today.

## **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Abdullah requested to add a new line item to the agenda, the Governor's trip to Israel under New Business.

**On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the meeting agenda of December 4. *Motion carries unanimously***

## **III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the meeting minutes of September 18 as presented. *Motion carries unanimously.***

## **IV.. Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lina Hourani-Harajli presented the budget report for Full year 2020 in detail. There was some discussion with Commissioner Adel on the breakdown of the budget and on the remainder for the full year. In addition, Commissioner Adel requested more information on the Full Year expenses through FY 2019.

All clarifications were made.

**On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the Treasurer's report as presented for FY 2020.**

## **V. CMEAA Administrator Report**

Administrator Maan Abou Khzam updated the Commission on the Oct. 16 CMEAA Lunch & Learn event that was cohosted between Speaker Pro-Tempore Jason Wentworth and Representative Abdullah Hammoud at Capitol State Building in Lansing, MI.

Legislative leaders from both sides of the aisle gathered to engage in a conversation about the Middle Eastern American community. There was an estimated 75 Attendees from House of Representatives and House of Senate over present over a period of two hours.

Speaker Pro Tempore Jason Wentworth thanked Commissioner Sharif Hussein for his introduction to CMEAA and Representative Abdullah Hammoud kicked off the event speaking on the importance of cultivating inclusive communities and ensuring all Michiganders have equal opportunities for success. A commission-led presentation by Chair Saab, Commissioner Martin Manna followed the welcome. Administrator Maan shared data to highlight the Middle



Eastern American (MEA) community, their culture and contributions that advance the State of Michigan.

## **VI. LEO Update**

Executive Director Saad updated the Commission on Global Michigan and LEO. Global Michigan mandate expands beyond economic development focus, to include equity and inclusion addressing structural issues in the State of Michigan. The three ethnic commissions transferred into LEO aligned under the office of Global Michigan.

Director Saad suggested a meeting to establish communication streams between CMEAA, Global Michigan's office and the Governor's team. This will further define how we make scheduling requests for the Commission meetings or other community events or things the commission is advocating for leadership or across government. In addition to how to mitigate issues that arise internally or externally. The hope is to standardize the relationship more formally so we are aligned on what we are doing going forward in 2020/21

Saad further added that CMEAA's strategic session is happening at the right time setting policy and programmatic priorities that align with the Governor's vision and the needs of our community.

The role this Commission plays is very valuable in supporting the community and the state. We need to raise issues whether through policy or better communication and act as liaisons for our communities.

Director Saad explained that her role is largely working on integration across government. The hope is to be able to expand on these programs (MITS, Refugee services) and build new ones. There are things we are actively working on within workforce development. As a brief reminder, the 60/30 initiative is the governor's priority to achieve post-secondary attainment by the year 2030. Integrating high skilled workers, attracting individual immigrants to Michigan, retaining international students. In addition to working within communities here.

## **VII. Election of Officers**

Chair Saab relinquished the Chair to Assistant Attorney General Ron Robinson to lead the voting process of the new Executive Council for CMEAA for the upcoming two years in accordance with CMEAA Bylaws. Voting ensued and the officers for calendar years 2020/2021 are:

Vice Chair- Michael J. Romaya

Second Vice Chair- John D. Daoud

Treasurer- Lina Hourani-Harajli

Secretary- Suzanne Sukkar

Trustee At Large- Dr. Nabeel Obeid



Details on the number of votes can be found in Appendix A.

## **VII. Strategic Session**

Chair Saab and Administrator Abou Khzam led the Commissioners into a 90-minute strategic session workshop. The objective of this workshop was to frame a strategic document that prioritizes challenges, recommending goals, focus areas and critical success factors for CMEAA.

The workshop was based on previous work that was completed individually by all Commissioners and Administrator About Khzam.

Results for the strategic framework session are attached in Appendix B.

## **VIII. Old Business**

Chair Saab carried a motion for the pay out of the last grant for National Arab Orchestra (NAO) for USD 25,000. Motion moved by Commissioner Sukkar and seconded by Commissioner Mozip for discussion on expenses.

Commissioner Mozip posed further questions on the budget spent on grants in 2019. Treasurer Hourani- Hourajli broke down the budget for FY2020 and discussed it referencing all expenses for grants that were made in 2019 and clarified the split of expenses to Commissioner Mozip.

Chair Saab suggested a revision to CMEAA ByLaws on Page 5, sect 7.4 to replace the role of CMEAA Coordinator by the role of Administrator which reflects more accurately the supporting role of this position in CMEAA today. Commissioners were asked to consider amending the Bylaws to reflect the role change at March meeting.

**On Motion duly made and supported, the Commission approved the NAO payment of USD 25,000** *Motion carries unanimously*

## **IX. New Business**

Commissioner Abdullah voiced his concern about the Governor not making CMEAA aware of her trip to Israel. Such trips to the Middle East if CMEAA became aware of could have enhanced and advanced other issues and concerns affecting Michiganders on economic and foreign policy.

Commissioner Beydoun speaks on behalf of the chamber and states the Governor's visit was a routine visit and gave the example of previous visits by Governor Snyder that has done the same. Instead, the question we should be asking, is how to encourage our Governor to visit other Middle Eastern Countries of Arab and Chaldean roots.

Chair Saab agreed with Commissioner Beydoun and reminded everyone that as a commission our focus is within our state and stay clear of foreign policy. She, however, encourages members



of the Commission to be proactive in coordinating and encouraging the Governor to visit Middle Eastern countries.

Commissioner Mozip expressed his dismay by the visit, however condemned attacking the Governor in the press.

Commissioner Dabaja added, in addition to advising the Governor on matters pertaining to the MEA community, we also have to focus on branding ourselves and exposing what the MEA community has to offer, making our presence known and felt. So, like other groups have done, we should be advocating and advising for our Governor to take trips to the Middle East to include countries other than the country she recently visited. Additionally, we should work to improve our relationships and create a machine as effective, if not more effective, as those that are advocating and lobbying for their interests.

Commissioner Sukkar suggested to get feedback on the outcomes of the Governor's meeting with Palestinians.

#### **X. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. by Chair Saab.**



## APPENDIX A

12/04/2019 @ 12:40 p.m.

### CMEAA Officers Election Results

#### First Vice Chairperson:

(1) **Michael Romaya-10 votes**

Commissioner Fay Beydoun abstaining to vote

#### Second Vice Chairperson:

(1) **John Daoud- 6 votes**

(3) Lina Hourani-Hirajli-5 votes

Commissioner Fay Beydoun abstaining to vote

#### Secretary:

(1) **Suzanne Sukkar-10 votes**

Commissioner Fay Beydoun abstaining to vote

#### Treasurer:

(1) **Lina Hourani-Hirajli-10 votes**

Commissioner Fay Beydoun abstaining to vote

#### Trustee:

(1) **Dr. Nabeel Obeid-6 votes**

(2) Susan Dabaja- 4 votes

Commissioner Fay Beydoun abstaining to vote

## APPENDIX B

### Outline

Outline CMEAA Strategy Framework Workshop-  
December 4, 2019 - December 4, 2019

#### Divide Commissioners into 3 assigned groups:

Group 1: Dave A., Suzanne SK, John, Michael R., Charles S., Joe M.

Group 2: Martin M., Lina H., Nadine K., Susan D, Ron R

Group 3: Fay B., Rihan I., Adel M, Ronald H., Mike Z.

#### Question 1 (20 min)

Name three challenges/Issues facing the Middle Eastern American Community in Michigan

#### Question 2 (30 min)

Provide 3 to 5 high level recommendations towards the development of CMEAA's strategy

#### Question 3 (30 min)

Define Short Term Goal (1 year)

Long Term (3-5) year

#### Question 4 (20 min)

Prioritize the top three Charges to the Commission by the Governor

#### Question 5 (20 min)

What are the critical success factors to enable our strategy

You can reference to the Charges of the Commission on Page 9

## CMEAA Strategy Framework Workshop- Findings

### Group 1, 2, 3 consolidated results

#### Challenges/Issues

- Mental Health, Opioid Epidemic, Domestic Violence: Lack of awareness
- Geographic Awareness- Racism/Unify communities
- Level of Representation- Public Service, Boards, Government
- Lack of Collaboration, Education, Understanding internally and externally
- Immigration Policies and Support
- Identify challenges to election participation

#### High Level Recommendations

- Align Objectives with strategic plan and Governor
- Improve relations among Arab Americans and Chaldean Community (Find Goals between established organizations)
- Education (Diversity and Inclusion ) at Corporate level
- Provide leadership opportunities/training/identification of potential candidates
- Lead Interfaith dialogues and community educational forums
- Collaborate with other communities/allies/legislative leaders to create a common advocacy goal
- Facilitate and elevate economic opportunities in the community
- Identify programs in state that are currently successful Ways to address and find solutions on national best practices

## **CMEAA Strategy Framework Workshop- Findings**

### **Group 1, 2, 3 consolidated results**

#### **Goal Setting**

- Short Term Goal 1: Commission Branding. Visibility on Public Policy
- Long Term Goal 1: Improve Perception of MEA Community
- Short Term Goal 2: Collect and share educational material on the history, culture, contributions of MEA
- Long Term Goal 2: CMEAA to be the lead voice on issues relevant to MEA communities to and from government
- Short Term Goal 3: Monitor/keep track of bills/policies affecting MEA community and be proactive in combating them
- Long Term Goal 3: Better representation in government and building channels of communication with stakeholders where all voices can be heard and addressed

#### **Areas of Focus:**

- A, B, C, D, F

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- State Resources
- Communities People/Funding
- Finalize and Implement a strategic plan
- Create subcommittees that will focus time and effort specific to areas of priority /strategic plan
- Funding
- Collaboration and communication





### Treasurer's Report- CMEAA Budget FY '20 updated to actual November '19

FY20 Spend Plan November													
										Projections Based On:			
										Completed	12 Mth	13 Mth	Based on PR
										Remaining	11.0	12.0	Completed
										Remaining	11.0	12.0	Remaining
Categories	FY 19	FY20 Plan			FY20 Actual Expenditures				Projections Based On:				
	ACT	Financial	Adj.	Adjusted	Current	Expenditures thru 11/30/2019			Remaining	Anticipated	Anticipated	Percent	
TOTALS	TOTALS	Plan		Financial	Month	Expenses	Encumb.	Total	Expend.	Full Year	Balance	Of Plan	
Authorized Approp	\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000		\$ 125,000									
Available Approp													
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>													
Salaries & Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%	
Longevity & Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%	
Retirement & FICA	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%	
Terminal Leave	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%	
Travel (In & Out of State)	\$ -	\$ 3,288	\$ -	\$ 3,288				\$ -	\$ 3,288	\$ 3,288	\$ -	0%	
Communications	\$ 597	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ 47		\$ 47	\$ 553	\$ 600	\$ -	8%	
Contractual Services	\$ 30,999	\$ 64,908	\$ -	\$ 64,908	\$ 3,364	\$ 3,364	\$ 25,636	\$ 29,000	\$ 35,908	\$ 64,908	\$ -	45%	
Supplies & Materials	\$ 25,660	\$ 4,004	\$ -	\$ 4,004				\$ -	\$ 4,004	\$ 4,004	\$ -	0%	
Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%	
Grants	\$ 60,000	\$ 45,000	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 45,000	\$ -	56%	
LEO Cost Allocation	\$ 6,944	\$ 7,100	\$ -	\$ 7,100				\$ -	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,100	\$ -	0%	
Information Technology	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 100				\$ -	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ -	0%	
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 124,301</b>	<b>\$ 125,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 125,000</b>	<b>\$ 28,364</b>	<b>\$ 28,411</b>	<b>\$ 25,636</b>	<b>\$ 54,047</b>	<b>\$ 70,953</b>	<b>\$ 125,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43%</b>	
Remaining Approp.	\$ 699	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -									
<b>SUMMARY BY FUNDING SOURCE</b>													
GF/GP	1000	Appropriated	Adj.	Rev. Appr.	YTD Exp	YTD Enc.			Expenditures	Lapse			
		125,000	-	125,000	-	-			-	-			