

Teleconference Meeting Minutes

DATE AND TIME: August 13, 2016 (Saturday); Conference Call started at 8:30 pm

INVITEES: EC & EB members as well as others from Virginia and DC

ATTENDEES:

Ziad Sabra, President

Mohamad Jamal, Vice President

Emad Yasin, Treasurer

Rabih Najib, Chair, IT Committee

Eissa Haj-Hamad, Chair, Membership Committee

Mohamad (Mike) Shahine, Chair By-Laws Committee and Chair for Election Committee

Jamileh Mogin, Member and also serving on the Scholarship Committee

Mohammad Ayyoubi, Member, VA

AGENDA:

- Bylaws Amendment Ballot
- Election of EC & EB for 2017: update by next weekend for committee members and will send announcement.
- Gala Preparation
- Gala Program
- Gala Keynote Speaker
- Gala MC
- Gala Entertainment
- Next Teleconference Call

A summary of the discussion is summarized as follows:

BYLAWS AMENDMENT BALLOT: Ziad informed the group that the Ballot and Amended By-Laws will be e-mailed to all members on Monday, August 15, 2016. The dead line for voting on the Amended By-Laws is August 31, 2016.

Action Item: **Ziad** will arrange the Constant Contact e-mail and will send out on Monday, August 15th. Weekly reminders will be sent out accordingly.

ELECTION OF EC & EB FOR 2017: Ziad asked Mike to set up his committee members, preferable no more than 3-4 members, to start the process to promote the election for 2017. Ziad will send out the announcement to members with information about the election process after Mike has selected his committee members.

Action Item: Mike will provide feedback to Ziad by next weekend (August 21st).

GALA PREPARATION: Ziad asked that we start planning the Gala and need help from all members to take a part of the Gala logistics. Ziad has already coordinated with the Hotel, signed the contract and made two payments. The third and last payment will be on the day of the event.

Action Item: Ziad will meet with the Hotel Management in early September to discuss last year's issues/concerns and emphasize that none of those issues should happen again.

GALA PROGRAM: A draft of the program needs to be finalized by early September even if we still don't have confirmation from the Keynote Speaker(s). We will need to have the program ready so that we could send it out to Sponsors. We will use "Invited" next to the Keynote Speaker's name if we haven't heard from their offices by then.

Asked about the Gala tickets, Eissa said that Rabih has ordered the tickets on line, about 400 tickets for approx. \$80. We could use the same arrangement as last year or do them locally.

Action Item: Ziad will follow up with Haitham to see if he has any thoughts on who from the Prince George's County Government may open up with the Welcoming Remarks.

GALA KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Maryland Governor Hogan and Virginia Senator Mark Warner have been invited. Ziad sent out the letters last week. Other potential Keynote Speakers may include Maryland MTA Administrator, Paul Comfort to discuss the Purple Line Mega Project which is very appealing to the A/E industry and many firms and land developers in MD-DC-VA.)

Action Item: Ziad will follow up with Hogan's office. Jamileh will follow up with Sen. Warner's office. Ziad will also contact Suhair AlKhatib at MTA to let him know of our thoughts and see what he thinks.

GALA MC: Ziad asked the group if they have any suggestions on who may be the MC for the event. Ziad asked Rabih if he would be interested. Rabih will think about it. We discussed the possibility of having Amer Zahr be the MC but that may not be feasible since we will not invite Amer this year to be the designated Comedian. We do have some options for this item, but the thought was that with Rabih being a former President for the local chapter, and also the past National President, it may be advantageous to show case him for exposure and added credibility to our chapter. Subsequent to our teleconference call, Jamileh e-mailed me and expressed a desire to be the MC if Rabih thinks that someone else should do it. I think that would be an excellent option as well.

Action Item: Rabih will get back to us and let us know if he will be the MC for the event.

GALA ENTERTAINMENT: Mohammad Ayyoubi (MAyyoubi@pwcgov.org) agreed to lead the Entertainment Venue (Comedy and DJ). Mohammad will be assisted by others who also volunteered to help including Emad Yasin, MJ and possibly Sae'd, Nazha and Asma Abuhassan. I have discussed with Nader Abuhassan about Asma also helping in the entertainment committee and he will check with her upon her return from overseas. I will reach out to Saed as well.

Comedy: The group agreed that we don't necessarily have to have an Arab American person for the Comedy. It could be anyone as long as they are **very** funny—not just funny. Also, we need to stay away from stereotyping any group of people and also respectful of the audience and the range of ages including minors. Various members indicated names of comedians such as Mike Ismail, Saeed Dara, Dean Obeidallah (I just checked him out and he is very funny). In the past we paid up to \$2500 inclusive of travel and hotel.

Singing and Dancing: The group agreed that instead of the "Group Entertainers" that we have had in the past that played various musical instruments and also sang this year we will focus on having a DJ only who can play a variety of American and Arabic.

Action Item: **Mohamad Ayyoubi** will coordinate with the volunteers and will come up with a list of potential comedians and DJs. Anyone else who can also identify prospect entertainers should e-mail Mohamad directly with eth information. Mohamad and his committee will vet the prospects and then arrange either a meeting or a teleconference call to discuss. **Ziad** will confirm availability of Saed and Asma to help Mohammad.

Other items discussed include:

STATUS OF SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS/RESPONSES: MJ asked Jamileh if her committee has had any response to the announcement. Jamileh informed us that they have not received any applications yet but that she has reached out to an agency/group that promotes scholarship outreach. She will coordinate with them to see if they can help spread the word out.

SPONSORSHIP: Mohammad asked Ziad how we reach out to sponsors in Virginia, folks that he works with. Ziad indicated that he will handle the sponsorship this year again and he will send out the Sponsorship forms as long as he has the contact information (company names, address, telephone number and e-mail address).

Meeting Minutes: Eissa asked that we update the website Meeting Minutes for all of our EC and EB meetings in 2016.

NEXT TELECONFERENCE CALL: All agreed to teleconference again on August 23rd at 8:00 pm. We will focus our discussion on the Gala Preparation and

Teleconference was adjourned at 9:15 pm

Prepared by: Ziad Sabra on 08/13/2016