

UPPER EAST COMMUNITY OF GHANA - USA (UPEC)
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
JUNE 25TH, 2023 VIA ZOOM.

Opening: The meeting opened at 8:30pm with Vice President Francis Abanga chairing. Mrs. Juliet Angme said the opening prayer.

Welcome Address: Francis gave the welcome address on behalf of the President. He said President Amoah was engaged in other important business and couldn't make it to the meeting. He thanked members for attending and entreated all to participate and contribute their ideas for the betterment of UPEC.

A roll call was conducted and new attendees who had submitted registration forms, in the persons of Messrs. Collins Danquah and Sulemana Samare introduced themselves.

Reading of Previous Minutes: Joe read minutes of the meeting held on June 4h, 2023.

Corrections: 1) "*Kunkoan*" to be spelled "*Kunkua*". 2) "*Irene Bugri*" to be corrected to "*Irene Abugri*". 3) "*Diana Fangadje*" to be corrected to "*Diana Fangaje*", 4) The statement, "*Raymond argued that there were already non-members on the platform and some do contribute to our programs as though, to say that, we should not be concerned about who joins the platform*" to be corrected to "*Raymond argued that there were already non-members on the platform and some do contribute to our programs*".

In the absence of any further corrections, Ms. Diana Fangajei moved to accept the minutes as the true record of the previous meeting and was seconded by Mr. Raymond Agerimah.

Matters Arising Out of the Minutes:

Financial Status Announcement: On the president's promise at the last meeting to post the financial statement of UPEC, Mr. Sam Naab, Financial Secretary said he had posted the dues payment list and urged members who had any issues to let him know. He also announced that UPEC had \$31,636.13 in the bank and \$360 cash-in-hand, altogether making a total of \$31,996.13. He was advised to make this information available to the president to be posted on WhatsApp.

Mr. Francis Abanga said he looked at the list and found that some members owed as much as \$870 and suggested if members of such standing could be let go. He advised that names of people who had bluntly told us they do not want to be

members or are deceased should be struck off the list next time. Mr. Francis Yakubu commented that the issue of non-payment of dues was a serious problem, and that something should be done about it. Sister Mariam Ayambire also decried the non-payment of dues by some members and wondered how fair it was for the association to use other people's money to organize parties for everyone to come and enjoy. She suggested that the phone-calling that was introduced some time ago be revisited to push people to pay. Mr. Baba Ayambire wanted the Due Drive that was initiated last year and was largely successful to be revisited. There were other contributions on this topic from Rukaya, Raymond, Juliet, Diana, and Joe, all concluding on the need to revisit the dues drive which is also a constitutional provision. Francis said he will talk to the president about it.

Summer Event: Prof. Clement Alo briefed the house about a venue he found for the party, but the EC met and concluded that it was too small for the type of event being planned. Therefore, that venue, which was Africa House was abandoned. It was explained that the EC/WC are still looking for a suitable venue for an evening party that will hold up to 150 people. Members were asked to join in the search. It was also announced that the President was going to check on some venues in the Bronx and let the EC/WC know the outcome.

Elections: Francis announced that there was the need to organize elections to replace the current executives since remote meetings have become the new normal and no in-person meeting was likely soon to hold in-person elections. He said the topic was not meant for thorough discussion today but just a teaser for people to start thinking, for future discussions. Joe added that these current executives have held office for nearly a decade now and it was time to make changes to bring in fresh ideas from a set of new thinkers. Mr. David Mbang urged the ladies of UPEC to prepare to be part of any new executives since a mix of women would auger well for the association.

Mr. Baba Ayambire suggested quarterly general meetings instead of the monthly ones. He said pressing issues that needed immediate attention could be addressed on our WhatsApp platform prior to the quarterly meeting.

Mrs. Irene Abugri suggested to post updated dues payment list on WhatsApp on a regular basis to help members know their indebtedness and pay up.

AOB: Mr. Babs Sillim thanked UPEC for the welfare committee's visit to their residence to greet and console them on the loss of their father and father-in-law. Ms. Christie Sillim also added her voice, thanking the association for standing with them in this difficult time. Mr. Ayelah and Francis announced that the WC sent drinks as usual, to greet the bereaved family. The family will plan a funeral gathering here in

the US but was still waiting to hear from home. Members of the visit team included: Messrs. Abanga, Bambil, Ayelah and Ms. Fangajei.

On Audit Committee matters, Boutrose asked for more time to be able to go through all the records. He lamented that the audit was for a stretch of 4 years with many new members and contributions, demanding a lot of time. Aduko advised that the audit should be focused on inventory or income and not verification of new members. On this note, the committee was advised to proceed with the audit and anyone who had ideas to help them to contact them.

Aduko asked to know from the EC how the Kunkua Ladies appeal for funds which he said was a UPEC-qualifying event should have been routed or announced to attract UPEC's consideration. Boutrose said the question was not appropriate as it would pit one against the other because the soccer event, though laudable, was not a crisis event such as a natural disaster or some unplanned event. Francis explained to Aduko that, it would normally have been brought to UPEC EC meeting and upon passing, would be brought to the general meeting, voted on, and adopted as a project. Anything other than that would be problematic in future. Rukaya added that at the last meeting, the President said it would be put on the platform for voluntary contributions and that's what is happening now so the donations should be allowed to work their way through. Mr. David Mbang added that since people are paid bi-weekly or bi-monthly, and the announcement was only made this month, with time, people will donate.

Mr. Ayelah announced an update of donations and said so far \$950 was raised from the UPEC platform. He said the cut-off date for accepting donations was 7/10/23.

Closing: In the absence of any other business, Mr. Emmanuel Ayimbila moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by sister Felicia Mbabila. The closing prayer was said at 10:51pm by Raymond.

Present: Joe Atanga (Mr./Mrs.), Mary Johnson, Ayinibisah Ayelah, Francis Yakubu, Francis Abanga, Clement Alo (Mr./Mrs.), Aduko Anasine, Diana Fangajei, Rukaya Bukari, Douglas Ayombisa, Baba Ayambire (Mr./Mrs.), Juliet Angme, Raymond Agerimah, Boutrose Agana, Margaret Abiiri, Babs Sillim (Mr./Mrs.), Scholastica Adagaam, Anaba Kumasseh, David Mbang (Mr./Mrs.), Irene Bugri, Emmanuel Ayimbire, Paul Bambil, Samuel Kwadan-Naab (Mr./Mrs.), Felicia Mbabila, Sulemana Samare, Collins Danquah, 516-406-2592, 929-240-6917

Minutes Recorded By:

Joe Atanga

Secretary