

AFRP Convention Minutes

49th Annual Convention

June 28 - 30, 2007 Houston, Texas

Meeting Adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Saturday - June 30, 2007

Opening:

Meeting came to order at 9:30 a.m.

Constitutional Committee Report:

Committee Chairman Anis Ajluni reviewed each amendment and made recommendations.

Amendment One: The Houston Community should be considered a medium, not large community.

Amendment Two: The Federation Board of Directors will be changed to a nine member Board of Trustees where each member delegates the other members.

Amendment Three: The creation of an Executive Director Position.

Amendment Four: The Investment Committee should have one member from each area, including the West Coast.

The committee recommended that none of the amendments be approved. However, after a lengthy discussion and much debate, it was decided that none of the amendments would be voted on, since there were all written vaguely and were not sent out for review by the board members. The committee recommended tabling the issues until the 2008 Detroit convention. It was noted that the bigger issue is to overhaul the entire constitution over a two-year process, which most agreed was necessary.

A fifth amendment was proposed by Emeel Ajluni to change the Federation dues from \$30 to \$40, with \$10 being rebated to the local club to be used for projects they deem fit. The committee recommended rejecting the amendment as is, and suggested changing the increase amount. Mr. Ajluni tabled the issue to be discussed at the Mid-Year meeting, and also made a suggestion to create a uniform process for writing and submitting amendments, which was well received. All amendment and constitutional issues will be further reviewed at the next convention.

Scholarship Committee Secretary's Report-

Terry Ahwal Morris:

The scholarship committee met and approved ten new scholarships, six from the United States and four from Ramallah. They also increased the scholarship budget to \$85,000, and approved the request to donate \$5,000 to help a doctor from Nablus for training in the United States.

Local Club Reports:

Jacksonville: Ramsey Salameh reported on behalf of the president that the club has 350 members; they had 523 people at their mid-year party; the renovation of their club is underway; they have many active younger members and have planned many events including a fashion show and golf tournaments.

New York: Nick Zaybak reported that they have an active club with 67 paid members and participation by young people. They co-hosted a fundraiser with the New Jersey club and raised \$20,000 for Palestinian relief. He invited everyone to attend the 2008 Mid-Year in Long Island, New York.

Cleveland: Harb Harb reported that their new clubhouse is under renovation. He thanked the Federation for its grant, and invited everyone to the new club.

Chicago: Rayyan O. Rayyan and Ibrahim Ghanayem reported that the club has over 100 members, and has the usual activities. They are facing growing pains and may have to move to the suburbs in the next few years. Also, they would like to host the 2010 convention, if Ramallah is not feasible.

San Jose: David Saah reported on behalf of the president Jeff Ajlouny that the club is committed to local politics and is working with the local mayor to obtain a clubhouse, which is very expensive to so in their area. They encourage participation in the family tree and thanked the Houston club for hosting the convention.

Washington D.C.: Nader Taweel reported on behalf of president Jiries Odeh that they have an active community, but their club is struggling to remain viable and is floundering.

Detroit: Nadia Mashni reported that the Detroit club is very active and is trying to increase membership and activities. The club is open every Thursday night for the adults and has started opening on Wednesday for young adults with a game room and other activities. The convention planning is underway. There is a new website, www.ramallahclubdetroit.com that is advancing everyday with news about the convention. She invited everyone to come.

San Francisco: Charlie Shamieh reported that they have an active club and the usual events like Christmas and New Year's parties. Their biggest event is their annual Palestine Day, which has taken place the last 30 years, and has had participation from 1,500 to 3,000 people. In the past year, their club has hosted the Bishop Suheil Moghannam, and Mayor of Ramallah, Janet Michael. Also, their golf tournament raised over \$90,000 for charities in Ramallah. They are asking for the convention in 2009, with dates set at June 24-28, since the hotel cannot accommodate the first week in July.

San Diego: Simon Michael reported that the Midyear meeting was successful and that membership has increased, which kick started the motivation of members. They have lost their non-profit status, and have submitted paperwork to have it reinstated.

W. Palm Beach: John Joubran reported that all of the activities of the club are concentrated in January, February and March, since most of their members live in colder areas in the summer. They have about two functions per month. He thanked the Houston community for a great convention.

Guest Speaker-Sam Rasoul:

Mr. Rasoul a 26 -year -old Congressional candidate from Roanoke, Virginia, a district that serves about 650,000 constituents spoke about igniting involvement in Arab Americans, especially the younger generation. His campaign platform is the "dawning of a new generation." His main goals include campaign finance reform and bringing to light the America's huge monetary support of Israel. His website is Sam2008.com.

Recognition-Gina Shatara:

The Board recognized Gina Shatara, the granddaughter of the Federation's first president, Farid Shatara. She thanked everyone for the opportunity to attend and hopes to become more involved in the Federation.

2008 Detroit Convention:

Convention chairman Paul Salamy reported that the goal of the convention is to recognize the past and look to the future. The community wants to include all age groups, and will be creating a DVD to acknowledge all of the past presidents. More participation is needed for this to work, and preparation of the DVD takes time, so all past presidents are encouraged to send their information right away. The hotel can be booked starting now and any bookings between now and January will be beneficial to the negotiating price of the banquet. Anyone attending is encouraged to bring a passport, and to visit the website at www.ramallahclubdetroit.com.

Website:

The site is experiencing major growth. Some areas will be secure, visible only with an ID and password, and others will visible

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