

OIUSA

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING JUNE 23, 2019

Meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Eric Welle, at 7:25pm ET

1. **OPENING PRAYER:** By Ven. Collins Asonye

a. ROLL CALL/ATTENDEES: Mr. Eric Welle, Mrs. Patience Igwe, Mr. Patrick Anyawoke, Mrs. Josephine Court, Dr. Jonathan Asuru, Ven. Collins Asonye, Dr. Chuck Nsiegbu, Mr. Chidi Eze, Mrs. Patience Osiah.

b. ABSENCES: Mr. King Okpobiri

2. **INTRODUCTION**

Following the agenda, the President called for self-introduction of members since this is our inaugural meeting after the 2019 Dallas convention election. The introduction started with the President himself.

- **Mr. Eric Welle**, as the newly President elect, said he is a longtime member of OIUSA, and served as the immediate past Public Relations Officer of OIUSA. He said he lives in New York with his family and from Port Harcourt Local Government Area. He feels honored to serve Ogbakor, he said.
- **MRS. JOSEPHINE COURT.** She introduced herself as a longtime member of OIUSA, lives in California with family and from Emuoha Local Government Area. This is her first time to serve as an EC member and said she is delighted to serve Ogbakor as the newly elected Health Administrator.
- **MR. PATRICK ANYAWOKE.** Mr. Anyawoke introduced himself as the newly elected Vice President of OIUSA. He said he has been a longtime member of OIUSA and has served in previous administrations as the Assistant Secretary and Secretary General of the organization. He lives in California with his family, from Emuoha Local Government Area and dedicated to serve Ogbakor.
- **DR. JONATHAN ASURU.** Dr. Asuru said he lives in Alabama with family and from Emuoha Local Government Area. He served in the immediate past administration as the Financial Secretary. He said he is glad to be re-elected as the Financial Secretary and happy to continue his service to Ogbakor.
- **MRS. PATIENCE IGWE.** She introduced herself as a longtime member of OIUSA. She said she has served in previous administrations as the Treasurer, Assistant Secretary and now as the Secretary General of OIUSA. She said it is an honor to serve Ogbakor. She lives in Ohio with her family and from Port Harcourt Local Government Area.

- **VEN. COLLINS ASONYE.** He said he is a longtime member of OIUSA, lives in Virginia with his family and from Ikwerre Local Government Area. He said he served in the immediate past administration as the Treasurer and happy to be re-elected as the Treasurer in the present administration. He is honored and happy to serve Ogbakor.
- **DR. CHUCK NSIEGBE.** Dr. Nsiegbe said he has been a veteran member of OIUSA, lives in Georgia with his family and from Port Harcourt Local Government Area. He served as the Economic Development Administrator in a previous administration. He is happy and feels honored to serve for the success of our people, he said.
- **MR. CHIDI EZE.** Mr. Chidi Eze said he has been a veteran member of OIUSA, lives in New York with his family and from Ikwerre Local Government Area. He served as the Legal Adviser to the last administration and is committed to continue his service as the Legal Adviser to the present administration.
- **MRS. PATIENCE OSIAH.** Mrs. Osiah (Dada) said she has been a veteran member of OIUSA, lives in Michigan with her family and from Ikwerre Local Government. She has served in different capacities in past administrations as the Treasurer, Vice President, Children/Youth Administrator and re-elected as the Children/Youth Administrator in this present administrator. She feels honored and committed to the service of Ogbakor, she expressed.

3. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ADDRESS

The President welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of OIUSA Executive Council (EC) and happy for each person's election victory during the Dallas Convention. The President asserted that, as elected EC members, he sees each of us as privileged to serve Ogbakor and ready to take Ogbakor to the next level. He wants us, as Ikwerre sons and daughters, and especially as members of OIUSA EC, to think introspectively by being a leading voice to represent the core values of OIUSA which includes advocating for the underprivileged among us back home.

“**Ikwerre First**”, is what OIUSA represents and this means we have to re-engage with our people back home, especially as it relates to the leadership vacuum back home. We have to work towards re-uniting our people back home to make the slogan, “*Ikwerre bu otu*” meaningful. We will have to show demonstrative efforts at uniting our two brothers: **Governor Nyesom Wike and Hon. Minister Rotimi Amaechi**. For a long time, these two Ikwerre sons have engaged in a toxic relationship that is causing divisions among Ikwerre People. Let us do what we can to help settle these people, even though others have tried without success.

To help accomplish that, this administration will continue with where the previous President, Mr. Chile Chuku started. He said he is proposing to set up a sub-committee to re-unite these two sons. The sub-committee will be headed by the Vice President, Mr. Patrick Anyawoke, to work with the main committee chaired by Dr. Darlington Didia. Mr. Patrick Anyawoke is very

passionate about re-uniting these two brothers and it is important that we give the opportunity our best efforts, the President pleaded.

The President mentioned that another central focus of this administration is on seriously engaging our youths to become integral members of OIUSA. We have to engage our youths to be interested and participate during conventions and so, we need to help develop their leadership skills for the sake of posterity. This administration also needs to make all efforts to redeem past pledges made to this organization. We must pursue all previous efforts made towards acquiring land for the Skills Acquisition Center initiated by the former OIUSA President, Dr. Fortune Wolugbon, as promised by Governor Nyeson Wike.

On the constitution review committee, he pointed out that the work started by the previous committee must be completed so that OIUSA will formally adopt a working constitution during 2020 convention in Dallas. The constitution is a guide to doing things in organized and civilized ways. It is, therefore, imperative that OIUSA must have an acceptable constitution, the President urged members.

HOUSE KEEPING TALKING POINTS. The President also said that it is good to have daily reminders on the operations of our duties. In this regard, he informed members that the proposed house protocols submitted by Mrs. Patience Igwe will help serve and guide us in our meetings and operations so that we all operate from the same level of understanding. This way, we work well together, he explained. The President also added here that Ven Collins Asonye will be assigned the role of the **Spiritual Leader** of the EC. Ven. Asonye was pleased to be accorded such recognition.

RESPONSES TO THE PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

- **The Vice President**, Mr. Patrick Anyawoke, thanked the President for what he described as “an aggressive agenda” and remarked that he believes that we can accomplish whatever we set our minds on, even in the midst of challenges.
- **Mr. Chidi Eze.** He expressed concern to the possibility of achieving a positive outcome for the proposed peace negotiations between Governor Wike and Hon. Minister Amaechi. He said so many prominent people, including traditional and church leaders have tried this peace settlement without success. The President and VP explained that we should not give up on the issue. The VP explained that the crises in Ikwerre Land is hinged on the conflict between these two people. Let us try to “see things from a different perspective and keep open mind”, the VP pleaded. This administration will do its best and see what happens, President and VP explained.

4. **HAND OVER NOTES.** Discussion on the handover note from former President Chile Chuku was cancelled by members on the ground that the handover information is between the outgoing and in-coming Presidents and does not merit any discussions on the floor. The President, Mr. Eric Welle replied that it was for members’ information and records only.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROPOSED COMMITTEES

GOVERNANCE BY COMMITTEES. The President said he is very enthusiastic about administration by committees. The rationale is that it gets most members engaged, reduces the amount of time spent by EC deliberating on issues, facilitates programs implementations, and makes us more productive, he argues. As a result, he pleads with this EC to support this leadership style. Among such proposed committees include: Leadership, Health/Medical Mission, Constitution Review, Fund Raising, Convention Planning/Advertisement, Youths, Land/Skills Acquisition Center, Women Leader Team, among others.

President said that these administrative committees will comprise of members from each of the four Ikwerre Local Government Areas. Some members objected to choosing members of committees based on Local Government Areas (LGAs) representations. They argued that nominations should be based on persons who are *interested* and *qualified* to serve in respective positions. So, EC resolved that representations based on LGAs should not serve as criteria and that each committee leader should be allowed the opportunity to choose persons best suited to serve. The President said that memberships, assignments/responsibilities for these committees will be presented as we go along.

As a follow up on committees approved by the General Assembly, the President informed members that the Financial Review and OBEF Research Committees will have to be implemented. The House appointed Mr. Charles Wopara, Mr. Felix Ngari, Mr. Ikegwuru Wonodi, Mr. Dike Echendu, and Mr. Ndamati Timothy as members of the Financial Review Committee. The President said it will be necessary to include Mr. Clifford Chuku, the Auditor, to the committee since he will be required to present an audit report. For the OBEF Research Committee, the President also explained that Dr. Chisa Echendu, and Professor Chris Ogbondah were appointed by the Assembly to support Dr. Obiri come up with the logistics for the new proposed research project. In addition, the Assembly also appointed Mr. Emeka Obi Wali as a family member of late Dr. Obi Wali, to join the Board of Directors of the fund. EC approved that formal letters should go out to these committee members as stipulated by the Assembly so that they can begin their assignments. They should be allowed to work as independent as possible because they are professionals, members maintained.

- 6. FILLING OF VACANT POSITIONS.** The President informed members that Mrs. Grace Oyekan, resigned her position as the Women Leader of OIUSA. She was elected during the Dallas convention, but turned in her resignation later (copy of resignation sent out to members previously) due to personal reasons. The President informed members that the Women Leader and Assistant Secretary positions need to be filled immediately due to their unique responsibilities. Other vacant EC positions are the Historian, Economic Development Administrator, among others. The President called for nominations and also informed members that he has received some nominations already. Members resolved that since this is the first time of hearing the news, they will prefer that he waits till next meeting during which he can submit names of nominees for approval.

7. FINANCIAL UPDATES. Financial updates were presented by the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary (copies of their reports distributed to members prior to this meeting). According to the Treasurer, Ven. Asonye, the financial report is ongoing especially as the redemption of pledges to the Obi Wali Endowment Fund, contributions to the Ngbaru and payment of some bills are still outstanding. So, the highlights of the report of the **CONVENTION** transactions are as follows:

- **Total Expenses: \$38,349.04; Total Income: - \$5,164.04** (to be updated)
- **OBEF:** Needs time to collect and reconcile all pledges and payments. Copies of donations made during the meeting on May 26, 2019 sent to you by Mrs. Patience Igwe.
- **SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENT:** Has been waiting for the receipt of all signatures to the home bank account to effect payment, which is now completed. The Treasurer promised that he plans to effect payment by Monday, June 24, 2019.
- **CURRENT BALANCE IN BANK OF AMERICA:** Approximately \$18 – 20,000.
- **TAX EXEMPT STATUS:** State of Texas has approved OIUSA Tax Exempt Status and the Chairman of the defunct NCPC, Mr. Maxwell Oparaodu, will follow up for possible refund of the state taxes charged to Ogbakor by Marriott Hotel North.
- **REFUNDS TO HOST CITY: Advertisement \$1,117** (which constitutes 50% share after expenses) and *Gala Night* share of **\$586** (which constitutes 10% share out of \$5820. Collection of \$500.00 pledged is still pending). EC authorized payments.
- **2019 CHARITBLE GIVING:** Reverse Hunger of Dallas \$500.00 (paid at convention), American Red Cross \$500.00 and 6STONES \$500.00, EC approved payments.
- **REFUNDS TO MR. IK WONODI:** \$327.92 (copying of election materials, \$18.00 (filing of Ngbaru). EC approved payments.
- **OBEF FIXED DEPOSIT:** Requests authorization to roll over OBEF fixed deposit into an investment account that will yield more interest. EC approved authorization to roll over the fixed deposit amount of N1.5M into a more interest yielding investment account.
- **LIAISON OFFICER'S 2018 PAYMENT OF N288,000.** The Treasurer reported that 2018 payment to Mrs. Lizzy Ohochuku, the Liaison Officer, has not been made. He also expressed concern for the amount being paid versus her responsibilities. He argued that the amount is unsustainable and that we need to look for alternative solutions.

After much discussions, EC resolved that Mrs. Ohochuku will be paid for 2018 services and that her services will be suspended with immediate effect while restructuring her duties and consolidating alternative plans. The President informed members that two of our members: Dr. Cefort Ige and Ms. Amaka Owzor, who are resident at home are willing to voluntarily fill in for the responsibilities of the Liaison Officer, considering that her responsibilities are more of seasonal duties. In addition, he proposed that we can involve some of our scholarship beneficiaries from the different local government areas to work with Dr. Ige and Ms Owzor. Details of this new proposal is ongoing.

8. **EC MEETING SCHEDULE:** Members resolved that EC will meet second Sunday of every month. Next meeting will be on Sunday, July 14, 2019. Details will follow.
9. **ADJOURNMENT.** Meeting was adjourned at 10:22pm by a motion moved by Mrs. Patience Osiah and seconded by Dr. Chuck Nsiegbe. Closing prayer was said by Mrs. Patience Osiah.

Submitted by:

Mrs. Patience Igwe
(Secretary)
July 8, 2019