

June 17, 2007

IPAI Caretaker Committee (CC) Meeting.

The meeting was called to order around 1:26 PM Pacific Time by the Chairman, Ugwa Ogbureke. The Secretary, Peter Imaa said the opening prayer.

Roll Call

The following members were present at the onset of the meeting:

1. Peter Imaa
2. Mike Awa
3. Elijah Kalu
4. Chukwu Oko
5. Esse Esse
6. Ugwa Ogbureke
7. Udemgba Igu
8. Barry Kalu
9. Okorie Ezieme

10. Leon Ibeka joined the meeting around 1:41 PM Pacific Time.

Committee membership/absences

The Chairman, Ugwa Ogbureke informed members that Dr. Kalu Ogbureke was in Nigeria and will not participate in the meeting. He also noted that they were 13 original members of the Committee, but Leon Ibeka, Juliet Erinma Mbonu, and Orji Igwe were absent. Esse pointed out to Ugwa that the Caretaker Committee (CC) consisted only of 12 members as at that time because Orji Igwe formerly resigned from the Committee.

Anonymous participant in the meeting

During the initial discussion, a beep sounded, signaling the arrival of someone to the meeting. The Secretary, Peter Imaa interrupted the Chairman's speech in order to find out who joined the meeting such that the committee will recognize the person. No new person announced his or her presence. Another roll call was taken and 9 members were still present at that time. For sure the beep that sounded earlier indicated the presence of someone in the meeting who probably chose to be anonymous. The CC decided to proceed with the meeting regardless, since the discussions were public record. That was approximately the time Leon Ibeka joined the meeting. The beep signaling the arrival of Leon followed shortly after the anonymous beep.

Convention issues

The Chairman, Ugwa Ogbureke spoke for some time setting the tone or the groundwork for the meeting. He explained the reason for the emergency meeting. He also updated the members regarding the correspondences from him to the President of IPA California. He spoke comprehensively regarding issues related to the 2007 Igbere Convention planning processes. He explained the efforts he made to contact IPA California to formerly find out the status of the convention planning. He asked for an update or a brief summary of how far California has gone with the arrangements such that the two bodies (California

and Caretaker Committee) could come together to plan for a successful convention. Joining hands as a team in the planning process would ensure that mistakes made during the 2005 Igbere Convention in Houston, Texas may not be repeated. The Chairman, specifically alluded to the two emails he sent to Emmanuel Ollawa, the President of IPA California. Emmanuel Ollawa ignored all the two emails. He never responded to either email, rather he (Emmanuel Ollawa) sent out mass emails to the Igbere people and omitted the names of Ugwa Ogbureke and that of Udemgba Igu. The Chairman followed the emails up with phone conversation with Emma Ollawa. Ugwa stated the importance and the urgency of the emails and the need for Emma to respond to the request of the CC such that the two bodies can work as a team in the convention planning process. The consequences of not responding to the requests of the CC were clearly stated to Emmanuel Ollawa in the second Ugwa's email (June 8, 2007). Copies of the emails from Ugwa to IPA California were also sent to the committee members before the meeting in order to inform them of the efforts the Chairman made.

The Chairman wanted two issues to be resolved before the committee could move forward with the meeting. He pointed out that the legitimacy of the CC has been called into question. Secondly, it has been said that the CC was functioning beyond the scope of its mandate.

At this time Udemgba Igu made it clear to the CC that he is not a member of IPA California and has not been IPA California member for sometime. His none membership has been as far back as the time of the 2005 Convention in Houston due to some local issues. However, he (Udemgba) is an Igbesian and will always work for the benefit of Igbere despite not being a member of IPA California.

Legitimacy and mandate of CC

The passionate debate regarding the legitimacy of CC and CC operating beyond the scope of its mandate ensued. Esse, Mike, Elijah spoke passionately regarding the legitimacy and the mandate of CC. Mike cited many instances and places to bolster his argument, which supported the legitimacy of CC. Moreover, CC has not overstepped anything, but functioning within the scope of its mandate according to Mike. Barry Kalu wanted to know how the question of CC's legitimacy came about. Ugwa mentioned talks behind the scenes in Texas and in California, which called into question the legitimacy and the scope of CC's mandate. Barry concluded that the Igbere people properly set up CC, and that CC has not overstepped its bounds. Okorie Ezieme concurred with what Barry said regarding the legitimacy and the mandate of CC. Okorie Ezieme went further to say that he has not heard anyone in California doubting the legitimacy of CC or saying that CC has gone beyond its mandate. Peter Imaa pointed out that Emma Ollawa, the President of IPA California had at several instances openly challenged the legitimacy of CC with respect to the scope of work of CC. He (Emma) stated that CC was simply a constitution writing committee, according to Peter Imaa.

Chukwu Oko concurred with Mike's position regarding the mandate and legitimacy of CC. He suggested that CC should send a strongly worded letter to California regarding

the role of CC during the convention. He stated that it should be clear to California that CC will be in charge of the Town Hall Meeting during the convention.

At this time Ugwa spoke of the discussion he had with Dr. Eme Onyeuku regarding the telephone call he (Eme) received from Orji Igwe. In the phone discussion, Orji Igwe said that CC's job was only to write the constitution period. Dr. Onyeuku reminded Orji that it was he (Dr Onyeuku) who suggested the creation of a "Temporary Executive" during the Texas Convention, and spelled out the mandate of the Temporary Executive. As such, CC was doing exactly what it was constituted and mandated to do.

Motion and committee's first vote

Ugwa made a motion regarding the legitimacy of CC. He wanted the committee to vote on that motion. Okorie Ezieme said that the Chairman could not make a motion to be voted on. However, Awa inherited the motion made by Ugwa, which was seconded by Udemgba. The motion to be voted on was as follows: "Is the CC legitimate, and is CC functioning within the scope of its mandate?"

All nine (9) members present at that time voted yes for the motion. Elijah Kalu was absent during the voting. The votes affirmed that CC was legitimate and also that CC was still acting within the scope of its mandate.

After the voting, Ugwa talked to the Committee regarding the good work Chukwu Oko and Okorie Ezieme did for IPAI. Chukwu helped to procure the 501c3 (tax exempt) status for the international organization (IPAI). Also, Chukwu helped to incorporate IPAI in Texas. Okorie Ezieme loaned IPAI \$350 for the incorporation process. Ugwa thanked both of them on behalf of CC.

Email correspondences

The Chairman, Ugwa Ogbureke at this time discussed the contents of his email correspondences to Emma Ollawa regarding the convention. The emails made it clear that CC will be responsible for the Town Hall Meeting and conduct the election for the new IPAI Executive Committee. Of course that would not be in isolation, but with full collaboration and full participation of California. Further, California will be in charge of the 2nd day convention events. The emails begged for a reply and none was forthcoming. It became obvious that California was not willing to cooperate or work with the CC regarding the convention. Instead Emma Ollawa sent out mass emails to the sons and daughters of Igbere and omitted the names of Ugwa and Udemgba. That led Udemgba to ask a pointed question. He specifically asked "is the convention in California being organized for Igbere people or is it for something else?"

It was then left for the CC to decide what to do regarding the intransigent posture of the IPA California President. Whatever the Committee decided, Ugwa as the Chairman will implement.

More motions and voting

Mike Awa made a motion, which specifically stated that the convention should be moved out of California in order to avoid going to California for “a shouting match.” Mike made it clear that ignoring the several correspondences from the CC’s Chairman by IPA California spoke volumes. It will not be wise to go to California without knowing what Igbere people will go there to encounter, that the convention should be moved to a new venue. Esse supported the motion made by Mike regarding moving the convention venue from California to a different location.

Barry Kalu countered by saying that CC should not be in a haste to change the venue for the convention. He wanted to know the outcome of the local executive meeting in California regarding resolving the differences among its members in order to plan and host the convention. Barry thought that CC could not make its decision based on the action of one person (the President of Cal IPA). Ugwa was of the opinion that the actions of California Chapter President reflected the policy and the uncompromising posture of California with respect to working with CC to have a successful convention.

Okorie narrated his version of what he thought happened during the California local meeting. The meeting was supposed to settle differences between the IPA Cal President et al and Peter Imaa (the Ex-Chairman of Cal Convention Committee). Barry spoke again suggesting that California be given extra one week to respond to the requests of CC regarding the role of CC during the convention in California. Ugwa remarked that the committee should not be having the debate if the leadership of California had acted in good faith by responding to the legitimate requests made by the CC.

The failure of California to respond to the requests made by CC presented a major dilemma to the committee as to how it will fulfill its obligations mandated by the Igbere people. The remaining part of the meeting was dedicated to finding the next line of action of the committee to deal with the convention issue. More lively debate followed, which centered on the apparent disregard and disrespect shown by California towards CC. It was apparent that holding the convention in California has the potential of causing problems among the delegates at the convention. It was incumbent upon the CC to do everything possible to ensure a peaceful and successful convention for the Igbere people. Two important motions dealing with ways to resolve the convention issue emerged from the debate. The committee finally voted on the two motions.

The **first** motion (motion #1), which was made by Mike Awa and seconded by Esse Esse was as follows:

“The convention venue should be moved from Los Angeles, California to a different location to be determined later.” The first motion was also referred to as (Plan B).

The **second** motion (motion #2), made by Barry Kalu and supported by Leon Ibeka was as follows:

“California will be given an extra one week to respond to the requests of CC. If after one week California did not respond to the CC’s request, the venue of the convention automatically will be moved from California to a different location.”

The committee voted on the two motions. The vote tally was as follows:

Peter Imaa, Okorie Ezieme, Barry Kalu and Leon Ibeka, all four (4) voted **No** for 1 (the first motion) and **Yes** for 2 (the second motion).

Mike Awa, Esse Esse, Chukwu Oko, and Udemgba Igu, all four (4) voted **Yes** for 1 (the first motion) and **No** for 2 (the second motion).

The voting process resulted in a tie because Elijah Kalu was absent at that time, and did not vote. However, the Chairman, Ugwa Ogbureke broke the tie by casting his **No** vote for the first motion, and a **Yes** vote for the second motion.

The **second motion** (motion #2) won, and was adopted by the Caretaker Committee.

Decision of the CC

The decision of the Caretaker Committee was to give California chapter one more week to respond to a fresh request to be articulated by the Chairman of the Caretaker Committee on the subjects of the committee’s concerns indicated above. If after one week there was no response from California, then the venue of the convention automatically will be moved to a different location.

Additionally, the committee agreed to keep Igbere people informed in a timely manner, the decisions of the Caretaker Committee and the outcome of the renewed request, regarding the convention, to be sent to California. Ugwa agreed to write the letter(s) and copy Okorie Ezieme and also the IPA California Secretary including members of CC.

Barry and Udemgba thanked Ugwa for his leadership and for guiding CC to make tough decisions on behalf of IPAI. Udemgba also thanked the committee members present in the meeting for their patience during the deliberations, even though the meeting coincided with the “Father’s Day” celebration in USA.

At this time Okorie Ezieme moved for the adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Barry Kalu. The meeting finally adjourned around 5:34 PM Pacific Time.