

# ALGERIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER WASHINGTON

## Board Meeting Minutes

Date of the Meeting: November 23, 2008

In attendance: Bessaha, Abdelrani  
Smail, Farid  
Stambouli, Abdel-Allah  
Boumaza, Karim  
Bounoua, Lahouari

Absents (excused) Bessaha, Dalila  
Aissi, Youcef

Observers: Dr. Malti Ahmed  
Dr. Stambouli Azzedine

### Agenda:

1. Assessment of the Aid-El-Adha Event Preparation
2. Mounib Fund
3. Miscellaneous

### I. ASSESSMENT OF AID-EL-FITR ADHA PREPRATION

#### 1. In discussing preparations for the December 14<sup>th</sup> Aid-El-Adha Event, the Board made the following decisions:

- **Food:** There are two options: cater from Casablanca Restaurant or from a private contractor. The cost of the food should not exceed \$400. Smail/Abdel-Allah/Lahouari are tasked with contacting both caterers and recommending a final solution by November 30, 2008. The meal will be served at 4 pm on the day of the event and the flier should emphasize this piece of information.
- **Information:** A flier is under preparation by Yacine Belkhodja. The flier should make it explicit that the meal will be served at 4 pm sharp. By Monday, December 1, the flier should be finalized and sent for publication on the website of AAAGW. From December 1-8, the flier should be sent to members through snail mail (Smail) and through e-mail to (i) members with an e-mail address; and (ii) the community at large using the AAAGW network (aaagw-discussions group). As usual, special invitations will be sent by e-mail to our congressman and the Ambassador (Rani).

- **Clown/magician:** will be hired. Rani/Dalila will take charge of that.
- **Supplies:** We project about 150 guests. Abdel-Allah will run a quick inventory of supplies available. Based on this, he will purchase whatever is needed to serve the projected number of guests (150).
- **Gift cards:** Lahouari and Smail are tasked with contacted various donors for gift cards, including Dahmane Benarbane, Couscous Café, Abdellah Batou, Smail, Cocorico Restaurant, and Fresh Med. Lahouari has already pledged a gift card for a value of \$50.
- The tasks during the event itself will be discussed by the Board and attributed before the event to ensure an efficient coverage.

## II. MOUNIB FUND

2. **The Board continued the discussion on the Mounib Fund which was open during the previous Board meeting dated October 26, 2008.**

3. **The background of the case is as follows:**

- AAAGW has been part of a worldwide effort to collect funds to help an Algerian kid called Mounib (2 years and a half) who suffers from a terrible disease called Spina Bifida to be transported to Mayo Clinic for medical care. Mayo Clinic accepted to treat the kid on a charity basis. The proceeds of this fund raising effort were lodged in a special sub -account called Mounib Fund. After paying for the medical evacuation, there is an outstanding amount of US\$32,332.51. Mounib is now an outpatient and is still faced with a lot of care ahead. AAAGW is committed to use these remaining funds to the benefit of any legal guardian of Mounib, the mother who accompanied him to the US, and the kid himself (i) in line with existing US banking and tax laws and regulations; (ii) consistent with the desire of the contributors to ensure the funds are used for the sole care of Mounib; and (iii) preserving the credibility of AAAGW.
- AAAGW contacted IRS which indicated that AAAGW is a 501 (C) (3) public charity under the Internal Revenue Code which requires that it complies with *federal* tax law to maintain tax-exempt status and avoid severe penalties. As part of this compliance, AAAGW is prohibited from allowing an insubstantial accrual of private benefit to any individual or organizations. This is more so for a charity whose gross receipts are below \$25,000. In other words, no transfer but the resources can be used to pay for expenses related to the object of the resources. Proper documentation needs to be provided upon expenditures. Any violation of this rule will cause the immediate removal of its federal tax exempt status, penalties for the association and the leadership, and payment of any applicable employment taxes, excise taxes, and certain state and local taxes. The charity must also record all expenditures and

revenue. Special revenue should be kept in separate sub-account. Absence of records could also bring the termination of the tax-exempt status and penalties. All records can be requested by the IRS for inspection.

**4. Based on information provided by IRS, the lawyer contacted by the Board, and the advice of a colleague who is an IRS auditor, the Board has decided to send a letter to Mounib's mother in response to her own mail dated October 24, 2008. The key components of the letter will be as follows:**

- The letter will open with a reminder about the current statute of AAAGW, being a 501 (C) (3) public charity which forbids donations to private or public entities.
- The readiness of AAAGW to use the funds available to cover medical and living expenses of Mounib and his mother up to the amount in the AAAGW sub-account.
- Each expense will have to be recorded and backed by appropriate documentation.
- For some types of expenses, cash advances could be made, and later justified by adequate documentation. If no justification is provided, the next cash advance will not be made.
- For food, a cash advance of about \$500 will be made on a monthly basis. Dr. Stambouli could check with social services in Minnesota in general and the Rochester area in particular to determine a standardized amount.
- For the rent, a lease agreement will need to be provided at one point by the mother as proof of expense.
- For medical expenses and medicines, the Board favors making pre-payments to specialized designated accounts open at medical and pharmaceutical facilities.
- The letter will also indicate that return tickets will be made available upon request.
- Lastly, AAAGW will no longer collect funds on behalf of Mounib and any subsequent donation for Mounib made to AAAGW will be redirected to Mounib's mother.

5. A request will be made to the lawyer who gave us advice on how to handle the funds to send us if possible at no charge a written version of the advice given by phone.

### III. MISCELLANEOUS

#### AMBASSADOR FAREWELL PARTY

6. Ambassador Kherbi organized a farewell party on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The Board decided to offer a book and a certificate of appreciation for his involvement with the community. Smail donated the book and Rani covered the cost of the certificate.

#### SUPPORT FOR A MEMBER

7. During the October 26 Board meeting, Dr Malti asked the Board for support to secure a letter of non-objection from the Algerian authorities for his spouse. The Board has agreed to help intermediate with the embassy officials. The Board has contacted the embassy officials on this issue. Subsequently, some additional information were provided by Dr. Malti to the embassy. Dr, Malti inquired about the status of his request. The Board agreed to raise the issue again with the new Ambassador.

#### COST OF MEAL OFFERED TO MINISTER OF HEALTH

8. Minister of Health Tou visited Washington on June 12, 2008. Smail, Abdel-Illah, Dr. Azzedine, and Rani met with Algerian Minister of Health Amar Tou to discuss the prospects of sending US and Algerian expatriate doctors to Algeria to conduct surgery on kids affected by the spina bifida disease.<sup>1</sup> A meal was offered to the Minister and his aide. The Board has approved the reimbursement of the cost of the meal to Smail who paid for it at that time.

#### PLANE TICKETS MADE AVAILABLE TO AAAGW TO PARTICIPATE TO THE EMIGRATION SEMINAR IN ALGIERS IN JUNE 2008

9. The Board has decided to send a message to the Honorable Mohamed Gahche to confirm that (i) AAAGW has not used the plane tickets made available by the Algerian Authorities to the President and Vice-President of AAAGW to travel to Algeria to attend the Algiers Emigration Conference of June 1-2, 2008; and (ii) AAAGW has no plans to use these tickets in the future.

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<sup>1</sup>After a presentation of our association and the purposes of our initiative, AAAGW handed to Minister Tou a file containing a cover note outlining the broad lines of our project, a letter of intention by the US and Algerian doctors who are willing to visit Algeria, their resume, a the list of equipments needed to ensure the success of the operation, the list of 10 urgent cases of kids who need without delay surgery, and other supporting material. From the outset, Minister Tou gave his agreement to go forward with this project; then we proceeded to have a large overview discussion on the health and population issues in Algeria and the ways the Algerian community in Washington could help and be involved in some of the challenges facing our country. To implement this project, Dr Azzedine and Smail were designated task managers. On the Ministry of Health's side, the interlocutor will be the Minister's Chief of Staff.

**PLAN TO ORGANIZE A RECEPTION BY THE EMBASSY TO YOUNG ALGERIAN GRADUATES**

10. A plan was initiated by a Board member to explore the possibility for the embassy to organize a reception for the young Algerian graduates of 2008. This plan could not be put together because of conflicting timetables. This idea should be explored again at the time of the next graduation.

**MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR AND THE PRESIDENTS OF ALGERIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS IN THE USA.**

11. This meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2008 and Smail will join the President in attending this meeting.

With the agenda covered, the meeting adjourned at 1 pm.

Dalila Bessaha

Secretary