**Minutes of the San Diego Refugee Forum Meeting**

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2020

Location: Zoom meeting

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

Attendees:

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| Abdi Abdillahi, County of San Diego Refugee Coordinator  Alexis Burnstan  Amanda Urena  Angelica Esparza  Ann Vilmenay, COSD-HHSA-BHS-AOA  Awichu Akwanya, UW East Africa  Bob Walsh, SDRF Vice Chair  Brittney Ochira  Carol Crisp, Public Consulting Group  Carol Lewis, El Cajon Collaborative  Cyrus Weigand  Diane Landino  Elizabeth Jackson, A Better Life Together  Giselle Barajas  Graciela Mendoza  Hassan A., Somali Family Service  Hector Peralta | Jane Hoey  Jessica Hernandez, East Region Adult Education  Kim Forrester  Kim Roser-Kedward  Lauren Kocher  Lilian  Lucia Gonzalez, SAY San Diego  Lucy Jasso  Luz Padilla  Martina G.  Melissa Casanova  Mohammed Tuama, SDRF Chair  Monica Melgoza, COSD-HHSA Office Refugee Coord.  Neda Rivera, County of San Diego  Ross Fackrell, IRC, SDRF Treasurer  Shlyn Guarian  Veronica Perez |

**1.** **Welcome and Introductions**: Bob Walsh, Vice Chair

**2.** **Task Force Updates**

No members of the task forces were present and no updates were given. It was asked if the domestic violence task force was still active – response: it is still active. Main contact is Dilkhwaz Ahmed at License to Freedom.

**3.** **Membership and Financials**: Ross Fackrell, Treasurer

- October financial report – SDRF in strong position with over $8000 in the bank.  
- Membership numbers are lower in 2020 but we encourage everyone to consider 2021 membership.

- Dues for 2020 must be paid in order for members to vote in the November election. 2020 membership dues are good through 12/31/2020.

**4.** **Resettlement Update**: Abdi Abdillahi, County Refugee Coordinator

Jewish Family Services:

2 Iraqi refugee arrivals in October

IRC:

1 Iraqi refugee arrival in October

0 expected in November

Alliance for African Assistance:

0 refugee arrivals in October

2 Iraqi refugee arrivals in November

US overall FY 2020:

18,000 refugees authorized. 11,814 arrived. Also 9,720 SIVs arrived.

San Diego arrivals:

For FFY 19-20 as of August 30, 2020, San Diego resettled a total of 707:

* Refugees 136
* Secondary Immigration 1
* Asylees 19
* Cuban/Haitian 290
* Trafficking Victims 7
* SIVs 254

For FFY 2019-2020 California resettled 1,194 refugees, 3,625 SIV. A breakdown by region/county:

* Bay Area 88 refugees and 400 SIVs
* Los Angles 206 refugees and 206 SIVs
* Sacramento 644 refugees and 2,419 SIVs
* San Diego 167 refugees and 295 SIVs
* Stanislaus 89 refugees and 305 SIVs.

\*This data was compiled from data available via the Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing Center. Please note that the number of SIVs represented in the numbers above are only those SIVs who arrived and received Reception and Placement assistance via a Resettlement Agency. The numbers do not represent the total number of SIV arrivals.

FY 2021

15,000 refugees have been authorized, but there are restrictions on Muslims and Africans. The COVID situation will also be a factor in admissions. If the president doesn’t sign the declaration, no refugees would enter.

**5.** **Main presentation**: Explanation of SDRF election process: Bob Walsh, Vice Chair

An election will be held to fill three officer positions: Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. These are two-year positions. Bob Walsh has one more year of service and will fill the Secretary position next year.

The election will not be held in person as in previous years due to the COVID situation. Ballots will be mailed out to eligible voters and returned by Nov. 16. The results of the election will be announced at the next Forum meeting, November 17.

Candidates run for office in general, not for a specific office. Generally, the candidate receiving the most votes takes the Chair position, the candidate with the second-most votes takes the Vice-Chair position, and the candidate with the third-most votes takes the remaining position. However, if the top vote-getter does not want to be the Chair, the three elected candidates can decide among themselves who will take which position. Officers hold their positions for two years.

The officer team is organizing the election. Nominating Committee is helping. It consists of three volunteers: Monica Melgoza, Carol Lewis, and Carol Crisp. Committee duties:

- Receive nomination forms and compile information on candidates

- Prepare the election ballot using the preliminary ballot provided by the Executive Team

- Email ballots to members, as identified by the Executive Team

- Receive the completed ballots and tally the votes

- Announce the election results at the general meeting

Requirements:

- Anyone may nominate a candidate for SDRF office. Does not need to be a member.

- Candidate: must either be a current member or pay 2020 membership by Oct. 30

- Officer: must be a paid member

- Voting: only paid members can vote

Nominations are made on a SDRF Nomination Form. It should include a bio and statement from the candidate. Deadline for nominations is Friday, October 30.

Voting is open only to paid 2020 members. There are currently 23 paid members. Deadline for new members to pay and be able to vote is November 6.

Ballots will be emailed on November 9.

Deadline for return of ballots is November 16.

Election results will be announced at Forum meeting on November 17.

Contact SDRF Treasurer Ross Fackrell at [Ross.Fackrell@rescue.org](mailto:Ross.Fackrell@rescue.org) regarding membership.

**6. Community announcements**

- Kim Forrester from County HHS announced the flu vaccine clinics at Public Health Centers around the county.

- Jessica Hernandez, East Region Adult Education: Career and Education Fair (Virtual), Oct. 21

- Mohammed Tuama shared that he has created a Community Facebook page for the Middle East community on which useful and timely information is shared. The site attracts thousands of viewers.

**7. Minutes of Sep 2020 Meeting**: Bob Walsh, Vice Chair

**Adjournment**: Bob Walsh, Vice Chair 12:05

**Next Meeting**: Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020