



General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
International Rescue Committee (IRC) – 5348 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105

Present: Adrian U., Andrea Frost, Angel C., Ann V., Anne Hoiberg, Arwazakir Kakavand, Awichu Akwanya, Bridget de la Garza, Dan Nyamangah, Elizabeth Castro, Elizabeth Lou, Fred Miller, Heather S., Holly Arnold, Ilena Gurdino, Jason Berrovitch, Jennifer Norala, Jessica Mia, Juan Estrada, Juan McClendon, Julie Herbst, Kate Morrissey, Luis Lechuga, Madeline Kristoff, Madelyne Wagner, Monica Knight, Paola Guzman, Rahwa Weldeselase, Rebecca Miranda, Rebecca Paida, Rita Shannon, Rodolfo Pallares, Roxana Popescu, Sarah Pinto, Shyln Guarian, Vernita Gutierrez

1. Opening.

- a) Call to order at 10:38 am.
- b) Rebecca Paida (Chair) opened the Forum meeting and welcomed attendees.
- c) Refugee Forum Officers: Rebecca Paida (Chair) and Bridget de la Garza (Secretary) were present.
- d) Forum participants introduced themselves.

2. Membership and Financials.

Rebecca gave the following report on behalf of Oren Robinson (Treasurer)

- a) Current membership is 43.
- b) The San Diego Refugee Forum is offering an opportunity drawing to members of the forum to win one of three free tickets to attend the Refugee Summit in San Diego, August 30-31, 2017. A link with the entry form will be emailed to the forum listserv and to those who signed up during the meeting. Any number of submissions may be made for an organizational member, but there will be no more than one ticket issued per member organization. Deadline to enter is Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.

3. San Diego Refugee Forum Task Force Updates.

- a) Advocacy Task Force: Rebecca Miranda reported that the Advocacy Task force met August 8th and is pleased to have many new members. The task force is creating a toolkit of educational material that can be used to increase awareness of refugees and refugee-related issues at community events. The task force welcomes contribution of material for the action toolkit. Information on the next meeting of the Employment Task Force will be sent out on the San Diego Refugee Forum listserv.
- b) Asylee/Asylum Seeker Task Force: No updates.
- c) Domestic Violence Task Force: No updates.

- d) Employment Task Force: Mohammed Tuama reported that the Employment Task Force last met on August 8, 2017. The task force discussed supporting existing employment efforts of SDRF member organizations such as the Job & Resources Expo that is being organized by the Newcomers Support and Development on October 26, 2017 in El Cajon. Information on the next meeting of the Employment Task Force will be sent out on the San Diego Refugee Forum listserv.
- e) Health Task Force. Madelyne Wagner reported that the Health Task Force last met on August 8, 2017. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2017 at 1:00 p.m., and will include a presentation by the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT).
- f) World Refugee Day Task Force: No updates.

4. Reception and Placement (Resettlement Agencies Arrival Data and Updates)

- a) Alliance for African Assistance: No report.
- b) Catholic Charities: No report.
- c) International Rescue Committee: There were twelve (12) arrivals in June 2017. A few cases are scheduled for the month of August.
- d) Jewish Family Services: Recent cases have been SIV.

5. County of San Diego. Bridget de la Garza reported on the behalf of Abdi Abdillahi.

- a) Total number of arrivals in the County of San Diego for the month of July 2017 was 104. This includes 104 individuals eligible for CalWORKs including children and 19 singles or couples without children under the age of 18, similar to the previous month's total number of 138.
- b) Arrivals to date in Federal Fiscal Year 2017 have been: 34% from Iraq, 25% from Afghanistan; 12% from Syria, and 29% from other countries.
- c) Monthly refugee arrival data is posted on the forum website under "Resources" tab.

6. State Advisory Council (SAC)

- a) Mohammed Tuama reported that the SAC recently elected two individuals to fill the public seats: Kathi Anderson, Survivors of Torture International, and an individual from Sacramento.
- b) The next State Advisory Council meeting will be an in-person meeting that is open to the public. No need to RSVP. This meeting will be Wednesday, August 30, 2017, 8:00-9:00 a.m. at the Wyndham San Diego Bayside, 1355 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego 92101.

7. Refugee Health.

Christine Murto reported that there 89 individuals screened in July. Seventy-two (72) from Afghanistan and the others from Iran, Iraq, Kenya, and Somalia.

8. Focus Presentation. Overview of CalWORKS Housing support Program.

Presenter: Rudy Pallares, Program Specialist II, Housing Support Programs, County of San Diego

The Housing Support Program provides assistance to CalWORKS families experiencing barriers to self-sufficiency due to homelessness or housing instability. The goal for the Housing Support Program is rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention. It involved intensive case management and subsequent wrap-around services to foster housing retention. This presentation included: Eligibility criteria; service delivery models, referral process, program design, services and benefits, challenges, and questions and answers.

9. Spotlight Presentation. Overview of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

Presenter: Mejgan Afshan, Public Affairs and Policy Coordinator, CAIR San Diego. Hotline: 858-278-4546.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), grassroots civil rights and advocacy group. The San Diego Chapter was established as a full time office in 2006 to serve the needs American Muslims in San Diego County. The mission of CAIR is to enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding. The presentation included an overview of the programs offered related to civil rights, civic engagement, community outreach, youth empowerment, and education, and ways to get involved. CAIR San Diego offers services of a Pro Bono lawyer who has helped cases of individual from various backgrounds.

10. Community Announcements

- a) Rebecca Paidá, Chair, acknowledged representatives from the offices of Congresswoman Susan Davis, Representative Scott Peters, and Representative Juan Vargas who are in attendance at today's meeting.
- b) Sarah Pinto announced that the San Diego County Public Health has a program to address prevention of Zika virus infection and can provide training to organizations that work with pregnant women.
- c) Mohammed Tuama announced that the NSD is organizing the 1st Annual Skilled & Foreign Credentialed Newcomers Job & Resources Expo on October 26, 2017. Mohammed will send information on this event to the San Diego Refugee Forum listserv.
- d) Dan Nygamangh announced that the Crawford Community Collaborative meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. The purpose is to connect students, families, and community. The meeting on August 18, 2017 will be at Crawford High School.
- e) Behavioral Health Services is hosting a community input forum (in-person) forum on August 29, 2017 at the Jacobs Center.
- f) The County of San Diego Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program offers assistance to families with children under the age of 6. Refugee families are

disproportionally affected by lead poisoning. For more information, contact www.sdlead.org, (619) 692-8487.

- g) Kate Morrissey, San Diego Union Tribune, is interested in talking with individuals regarding today's news regarding unaccompanied minors from Central America.
- h) Bridget de la Garza reminded everyone that up for the San Diego Refugee Forum listserv to share and receive community announcement. The link to join is located on the main page of the www.sdfugeeforum.org.

11. Approval of Minutes from June 2017. This item was tabled until the September 2017 meeting.

12. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 p.m.

Next Meeting: September 19, 2017 from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm at the International Rescue Committee, 5348 University Ave., Suite 205.

.