

Greater Savannah International Alliance

Minutes of the Wednesday, November 14, 2018 Meeting

Savannah Entrepreneurial Center, 801 E. Gwinnett Street

Present: Leigh Ryan, Pete Hodges, Mehmet Ergul, Colleen Cunningham, Francis X. Hayes, James Hall, Lynn Pitts, Mindy Shea, Denis Blackburne

Not Present: Jim Anderson, Emmanuel Naniuzeyi, Nalanda Roy, Molly Swagler, Mark Linsky, Manny Dominguez, Ed Eckstrand, Alfonso Ribot

Welcome: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM by Leigh Ryan, Chair. She welcomed attendees and guests.

Review of September 19, 2018 Minutes: Pete Hodges moved that the minutes be approved and Francis X. Hayes seconded the motion, and all approved the minutes.

October Luncheon Update: Pete Hodges commented that he thought the annual luncheon was an excellent affair, offering the many international groups an opportunity to interface in a social setting. He also praised the presentation by Joe Marinelli and Mindy Shea, which was well received by all attendees.

Guest Speakers: Dr. Catherine Gayle, Chair of the Social Work Department at SSU; and Ms Dmetri Nevels, Teacher at Johnson High School

Dr. Gayle and Ms Nevels gave a comprehensive briefing on their recent 31-day trip to Ghana under the auspices of a Fulbright gift. Fourteen personnel traveled throughout the entire country of Ghana, starting with the capitol of Accra. Many pictures depicted the austere environment that exists there. There are five primary languages, and both Christian and Muslim religious sects coexist peacefully throughout Ghana. Key sites visited were the W.E.B. DuBois Memorial Center for Pan African Culture, the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center, and several of the Coastal Slave Castles that housed the country's slaves prior to departing on ships overseas.

Committee Reports:

Leigh Ryan reported that final approval had been granted for the release of a generic PR piece for public release through several media.

On behalf of Nalanda Roy, Leigh mentioned that Nalanda's Asia Group committee had completed updating their organizational information, and that Nalanda was focusing new efforts on India and the Republic of Vietnam.

City Update: Leigh disclosed to the members that she and Pete Hodges had met earlier with Bill Durrence of the City Council in our ongoing efforts to refine the GSIA board selection process in conjunction with the City Council and their staff. Bill was successful in extending the application cutoff date for our current GSIA nominees, which is this Friday, 16 November. Additionally, we are having the

tenure periods of board members run on a calendar year basis, versus a random month throughout the calendar year.

Appointments: Leigh made a motion that Pete Hodges be approved to assume the Chair position for calendar year 2019, and those present concurred. As a result of the personnel turbulence on our board and on the advisory committee, it was opined that at the first meeting on 16 January 2019, we will seek executive appointments for key jobs: Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. As they say in the US Army, we are looking for our board members to “seek and take responsibility” and take on the challenge of a rewarding job that serves our community.

Comments for the Good of the Order:

Leigh wished all a safe and happy Thanksgiving. Pete Hodges praised the following members of our board whose terms expire this year: Leigh Ryan, Emmanuel Naniuzeyi, and Ed Eckstrand. Leigh’s six year stint, the last serving as Chair, has resulted in outstanding accomplishments by this entity and she will be sorely missed. Pete also reminded everyone that there is no meeting in December, and that our next meeting will be on Wednesday, 16 January 2019.

Meeting dates for CY2019 are as follow (please mark your calendars):

16 January; 20 February; 20 March; 17 April; 15 May; 18 September; 16 October; and 20 November.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.