



TRANSLATTER!

Newsletter of the Ghana Transportation Professionals Forum of North America (GTPF-NA)

Minutes of Annual Meeting held on January 10, 2017

Venue: Marriot Marquis during 2017 TRB Annual Meeting

Time: 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Meeting kicked off at 6:30pm with introductions of those present (*Attendance sheet attached*).

Discussions:

Acceptance of 2016 Minutes: The minutes were circulated in a recent newsletter. Senanu summarized the notes, Sam Ababio moved to accept the minutes with a second from Mary Kissi.

Recap of 2016 Activities: Senanu Ashiabor mentioned that the Executive Board didn't send out as many newsletters as we would have liked but the website was updated and a membership drive was launched. We made progress contacting the Ghana Institute of Engineers (GhIE) to develop the Ghana Infrastructure Conference. Our biggest accomplishment for the year is mail chimp for automated newsletter distribution. Emails should be more frequent going forward.

Professional Development Program: Margaret Akofio-Sowah presented the idea of the membership database and professional development program and encouraged people to sign up. The link will be sent out again in the email with this meeting's minutes.

Dues and Budget: Margaret presented the budget and expenses for 2016 and the budget for 2017. Approval of the 2017 budget was held until after discussion of the Ghana Infrastructure Conference. Members were encouraged to pay their dues in cash or with check payment at the meeting or on the website (using PayPal) after the meeting.

There was a question on honorary members who may not be Ghanaian but would be interested in supporting the organization. Dr. Sam Labi indicated that you don't have to be a Ghanaian to be a member. People who are interested are welcome to join at any time if they are interested in advancing our mission.

Mid-Year Event: Senanu explained that the executive board would like to host a mid-year event. Feedback from members was mixed. A member suggested having webinars in partnership with engineering schools in Ghana to facilitate knowledge sharing. The executive board will consider this for 2017. While the webinars will address professional development, it was suggested that a face-to-face event will encourage networking. A point was raised about people's ability to come to an event outside of TRB due to concerns about funding that trip. The final suggestion was to start with webinars and work towards a mid-year event as interest grows.

Ghana Infrastructure Conference: Magnus Quarshie explained progress made on the Ghana side of things towards the conference. The Act of Parliament 877 set up a Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund. VAT increased by 2.5% to go into the fund targeting strategic infrastructure development. One goal for the conference is to make an input into prioritization of infrastructure projects. Sam Ababio has been working with GhIE to plan for the conference. GhIE is working on a report card to help us define the state of infrastructure in Ghana. Organizing this conference will help drive infrastructure development in light of all these things. The target date is August 2017. GhIE has a conference committee working on this and will collaborate with GTPF. Sam Ababio was in Ghana late last year working on this. Dr. Ababio added that the current government manifesto is filled with infrastructure development but we need to include long-term infrastructure maintenance. Additional information on



TRANSLATTER!

Newsletter of the Ghana Transportation Professionals Forum of North America (GTPF-NA)

the fund can be found at giif.gov.gh. The report card is expected to be published in June because data collection has not been easy. Cornelius suggested that the conference will be more useful if there is a good picture of the state of the infrastructure through the report card which can be the foundation to start a dialog at the conference on what can be done. Senanu explained that we are hoping to raise \$20,000 in corporate sponsorship so that the conference budget does not come out of dues. Senanu and Dr. Ababio have had meetings to move the conference forward. Dr. Okine suggested we set the standard high for the conference.

WhatsApp Group: The executive board suggested having a WhatsApp group to be able to have easier communication with members. There will be rules to avoid distractions and excess messaging. Kwabena Bempong made the point that it is good to come together and have a solid network. We will need to look at long-term benefits of having the group. We voted, and no one was opposed to the initiative.

GTPF Brochure: Senanu presented the brochure that was developed for Dr. Ababio's trip to Ghana. Need members to fill the database to collect information on expertise and interest areas for a more complete brochure. Suggestion for the guests from Ghana is to get a high up person to instruct embassies to have people gather information together.

Meeting took a five-minute break at 7:30pm and reconvened at 7:45pm

Annual Student Award: Sent out a message for student presenters and only got about 4 or 5 responses. The award was presented to Kwaku Boakye for having 4 presentations at the 2017 TRB meeting. He received a plaque and \$100 gift card.

Elections for Executive Board: There was a proposal to remove elections from the agenda and to modify the constitution to have the executive board retained for two years. The motion to retain the current executive board was seconded and approved.

Open Discussion: Senanu explained that the Executive Board will work on the activities mentioned for the year but membership participation will be critical to achieve success. We would like members to sign up to participate in three committees: Ghana Infrastructure Conference, Transportation Manual, and Professional Development.

Open floor for comments from the group:

- Emphasized member database and the use of having and knowing people's experience
- Importance of keeping people in touch beyond annual meeting
- Conflict with the meeting on Tuesday. Would like to recommend moving the meeting day to Monday. We will poll members for day of next annual meeting.
- Dan Seedah will take responsibility for quarterly webinar

Transportation in Ghana Presentation: We had a delegation of four from Ghana: Magnus Quarshie, Kwabena Bempong (GhIE), Collins Donkor, and James Amoo-Gottfried (Ministry of Roads & Highways). Magnus began with a presentation which was a follow-up to the 2014 presentation on SADA. He presented an update on the work that the Singaporean company has done. They intend to link Akosombo and Tema by rail, and develop Buipe as a port terminal/hub. There are huge Chinese firms chasing the developments already. There is a need to have better coordination to have opportunities for people who go home to Ghana looking for work.



TRANSLATTER!

Newsletter of the Ghana Transportation Professionals Forum of North America (GTPF-NA)

Kwabena Bempong presented on the GhIE and membership. He shared some resources which are also online. This included membership application forms. Several GTPF members have been paying members of GhIE in the past and are interested in how to reactivate their membership. A board was inaugurated in 2014 to monitor member registrations. They plan on making all international engineers coming in to practice conform to registration requirements before practicing as professional engineers. Even short-term practice will need a temporary license.

Featured Presentation from Sam Owusu-Ababio: Dr. Ababio is leading the development of a Transportation Infrastructure Development Manual for Ghana. He has collected sample documents developed over the years and wants to create expertise or technical focus groups for each part of the manual and then create a common medium for the focus groups to interact. He presented the initial charge for focus groups with a suggested outline for the manual chapters as an example. It was mentioned that ideally, this type of activity should go through the Ghana Standards Authority but there are some challenges so they will be notified just to get them aware. The goal is to adopt practices from other standards, e.g. AASHTO. Suggestion to also have an electronic library/repository of resources.

Budget Approval: Motion to approve the budget from Magnus, second from Dan Seedah. The budget was approved.

Adjournment at 9:15pm for pictures and socialization.

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2017

Name	Amount	Method	Date
Adjo Amekudzi	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Check	1/10/2017
Collins Donkor	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Dan Seedah	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Emmanuel Martey	\$ 20.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Ernest Tufuor	\$ 20.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Grace Ashley	\$ 20.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
James Amoo-Gottfried	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
John Riverson	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Check	1/10/2017
Kwabena Bempong	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Kweku Brown	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Magnus Quarshie	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Cash	1/10/2017
Margaret-Avis Akofio-Sowah	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Check	1/10/2017
Sam Owusu-Ababio	\$ 100.00	Jan Mtg Check	1/10/2017
Senanu Ashiabor	\$ 100.00	Bank Deposit	1/27/2017
Abdul Rashid Mussah	\$ 20.00	Paypal	2/3/2017
TOTAL DUES (2/8/17)	\$ 1,180.00		