

**Meeting starts at 14:11, September 16, 2017**

**Attendees: Ali Rasekh, Ali Bolourchi, Darioush Alipour, Farzin, Hossein Akhavan, Houman Bedayat, Mehrdad Sarafraz, Shayan Ghotbi, Sepehr Akhavan, Siamak Aram, Soheyla Kamal**

**Introduction:**

**Farzin: chapter coordinator, Australia, 1365, electronic department, SUTA board a few times**

**Siamak: Washington chapter, 84, computer, Washington and SUTA**

**Ali, B.SC. 80/84, Southern California chapter/ president akhavan**

**Mehrdad, 51 physic, chapter dc , 3 times, reunion**

**Dariush, Sweden, 76 metallurgy 2 times in Sweden**

**Houman Bedayat, Seattle: 81, 86 Bsc and MSc, was in Louisiana**

**Hossein Akhavan, 53 Mechanic, since 1980 in France, BOD member and trying to make a chapter in France**

**Sepehr Akhavan, head of southern California, 2014 started, president of new board of southern California**

**Summary of discussions:**

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**Board member: Telegram group for chapters, we need volunteers**

**Reunion: no response or volunteers for reunion, many people know SUTA because of reunion, chapters are hands of the group, networking,**

**Make SUTA more attractive, SUTA is a BRAND, make it more distinguished,**

**Chapter member discussed the DC Reunion expenses.**

**The final figure was \$9000 negative, which was obtained through donations.**

**Physical presence in the reunion has been reducing (in the US) since new generation doesn't like to travel.**

**Not all 7 people are active in each board hence the conference amounted to a full time work for one year for the Washington board and 2 members from the BOD.**

**Divide the reunion between a few chapters, each has ~3 hours of presentation.**

**It is easier to book free room for 30 people vs. free room vs. 200.**

**This helps each chapter to become stronger.**

**Chapter member: in DC reunion even the older grads were not interested anymore and they didn't travel to DC. Initially planned for 400 participants but actually 200+ participants while 400 was breakeven number. 5-6 people of a chapter will have a**

hard time doing all the organization. Previous SUTA central didn't help much with DC event. In Europe, there is a possibility of a reunion like older times, while in the US it's more difficult.

Chapter Member: It is an interesting idea, however:

- 1) 25000 for location, 5000 for sound, etc. Shorter than 3 days, in university then the cost reduces from 30,000 to 2000
- 2) Students don't participate: travel from Louisiana to DC was expensive. Expenses are prohibitive. But 3 days on Internet or local is not attractive.

Board Member : Even the older grads thought it was not worth it to go to the DC reunion. The US delayed the visas and people came to US after the reunion. SUTA is actually acting like a Visa agency, which is not our purpose.

On the other hand, the number of Iran members increase and hence they take over SUTA. Meaning that they elect members from Iran to BOD. While SUTA is American organization, hence the president and treasurer should be in the US.

Chapter Member: We studied DC hotels and found the best price for the quality. We also considered the commuting expenses.

Maybe in another city you can have the event at the university for free. That's why we asked for reunion proposals from chapters so that we see the complete picture. An example is the case of Reunion in Turkey where we didn't have enough volunteers and hence the management and operations turned out to be difficult.

Chapter Member: we shouldn't focus on details but the main roadmap. In southern California, networking is the most important goal for SUTA. Younger people don't show interest if they don't benefit. We want to unite SUTA family so that everyone benefit. Siamak suggestion is great. Should we have a presenter inside Iran as well?

Chapter Member: What do we want in a reunion? In Seattle SUTA members mostly work for Amazon or Microsoft: they invited Hadi Partovi and used Microsoft room and 150 people participated. On the other hand tomorrow we have camping in Seattle area and 15 people showed interest as shown on Facebook page so it's not what people expect as a SUTA event.

Graduates residing in Iran are already very active and they don't need SUTA.

Chapter Member :Don't refund the people who visited US after reunion.

Chapter Member: During SUTA Netherlands reunion, it was easy to get visa from Netherlands embassy. This while SUTA was spending time and money.

Board Member: In the past election, the elected members from Iran wanted to influence it and we wasted energy until the challenge was resolved. The bylaw should change so that board members be residing outside Iran.

Networking is the most important part of SUTA, like other alumni programs.

**Emphasize on long-term goals.**

**Board Member: In Paris, it is very difficult to bring SUTA together. I left a message in LinkedIn but didn't receive much attention.**

**Chapter Member: We are active in Sweden. 56 people don't pay memberships, as they are not confident SUTA membership benefits them. He likes Siamak proposal. We should inform members that we are changing plans. Distinction between SUTA and Iran grads society should be emphasized.**

**Board Member: We cannot use the money we receive in Iran which is another negative point of collaborating with members in Iran. We should find a balanced approach to safeguard SUTA.**

**Chapter Member: Career day in DC, which was successful, and it's a networking event. Members should benefit from the \$50 they pay for membership. We shouldn't focus on picnic but it's also a networking event.**