

MULTIPLES OF AMERICA
PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #6
DISCUSSION FORUM ZOOM CALL SUMMARY –JUNE 10, 2021 9:00PM
AND ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS RECEIVED ON THIS PROPOSAL

This summary contains questions/answers from the Zoom Forum and additional questions received on this bylaw amendment proposal. These have been compiled into one document for your reference.

PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT #6

Currently reads:

- Article III. Membership, Section I. Club Membership
b. Dues 4) Annual dues within the U.S.A. shall be \$10.00 per capita

Propose change in wording – strike out \$10.00 and insert \$15.00 per capita

If amended will read:

- Article III. Membership, Section I. Club Membership
b. Dues 4) Annual dues within the U.S.A. shall be \$15.00 per capita

Q: WHAT CAN I GIVE MEMBERS FOR THEIR \$5.00 IN ADDITIONAL DUES? WHAT CAN THEY GET IN THEIR HANDS? WHY SHOULD WE BELONG TO MULTIPLES OF AMERICA?

ANSWER: The additional dues amount is necessary for the organization to stay in business. There have been increases in fixed costs, substantive reductions in all available areas by many Boards of Directors, and no additional funding sources have been realized despite ongoing efforts in this regard (e.g., grant applications, corporate sponsorships, fundraising, etc.). The last dues increase was in 2008 when the dues went from \$9.00 to \$10.00. More information about expenses, costs, trends, etc., was shared during the budget presentation and in the Election Mailing. Detailed reasons to belong are outlined in the *Benefits of Membership in Multiples of America* document ([Benefits-of-Membership-in-Multiples-of-America-final-5-2021-002.pdf \(multiplesofamerica.org\)](#)). The Board of Directors has provided a true indication of the dues amount needed to adequately fund the organization. The proposed budget accurately reports membership projections, costs, and deficits for the coming term.

There are many tangible benefits as a member. Our electronic magazine, *Multiple Connections*, private Facebook access (including our Members Only, Leadership Shareshop, and special support pages), online programming and webinars, educational tools and TIP sheets, membership and parliamentary supports, and our updated booklet on school placement are just a few tools available. We offer clubs coverage under our group exemption umbrella, a professional presence and connection with those inside or outside the organization and ensure all business requirements are fulfilled.

Despite continual cost-cutting measures by Boards of Directors to reduce our annual budgetary expenses by 60% over the last 13 years, the fixed costs of the organization have and will continue to increase. We now face a shortfall in our budget that cannot be overcome through the reduction of expenses. Consequently, without an increase in income, we face the very real possibility of being unable to sustain the basic operations and functions of the organization past 2022, let alone increase and expand in the ways we and our members hope and deserve.

With a dues increase, our goal is to remove the shortfall and look at areas for possible expansion. The focus will be in marketing and technology to directly impact member services. We need increased bandwidth for some of our

objectives and this requires additional funding. We have continued to provide member services despite increases in fixed expenses across the board, fewer volunteers, and less funding.

As a member, you are part of a **NATIONAL** 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families of multiple birth children through education, research, and networking for over 60 years! Most importantly, through our membership, we demonstrate our commitment to the mission of Multiples of America and are a part of something greater than ourselves. We ensure every parent of multiple birth children will always know they are not alone. Rather, they are uniquely connected through membership in the premiere organization for parents of twins, triplets, quads, and more. As a dues-based organization, we must now rely on our members to rally and financially support our beloved organization.

Q: IS THIS A CLUB OR BOARD OF DIRECTOR RECOMMENDATION?

ANSWER: This is a recommendation of the Board of Directors.

Q: CAN THE AMOUNT OF THE DUES INCREASE AND/OR EFFECTIVE DATE BE AMENDED?

ANSWER: Yes.

Q: IF THE INCREASE PASSES, WILL WE BE ABLE TO REVIEW AN UPDATED BUDGET WITH THE NEW DUES AMOUNT? THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL SHOWS A HUGE DEFICIT ON THE CURRENT DUES. AS A COMPARISON, CAN A BUDGET BE PRESENTED SHOWING WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE WITH A DUES INCREASE?

ANSWER: Yes, we plan to have two proposed budgets (one with the current \$10.00 dues and one with the \$15.00 proposed increase) for review at the Virtual Summit.

Q: IF THIS DOES NOT PASS, DO WE HAVE A PLAN?

ANSWER: The incoming Board of Directors will need to thoroughly examine the organization's sustainability, financial obligations, etc., and make decisions based on the voting outcomes at the Virtual Summit.

Q: CAN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MARKET THE DUES INCREASE DIFFERENTLY SO IT DOES NOT FEEL LIKE AN ULTIMATUM? HOW HAVE/ARE WE REACHING OUT TO CLUBS TO SHARE THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP? IS THERE A TARGETED PLAN TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR THE DUES INCREASE? HOW CAN WE SHOW THE VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP?

ANSWER: The Board of Directors has diligently worked to give members clear and concise facts about Multiples of America's current financial situation. Our efforts focused on being as transparent as possible, including not over inflating membership numbers to simply present a balanced budget. We want to work in collaboration with our members to find the solutions to our funding needs. Therefore, we have shared the hard and honest facts with our members, allowing you the opportunity to examine all the financial pieces to make an informed decision.

This term, our Membership Department has reached out to every member club. Even with a limited number of volunteers, we committed to providing individual outreach to all clubs for an open discussion. Three phone call attempts were made and if a connection was not secured, an email follow-up was sent. During the conversation we ask how their club was doing, what is working, what is not working, if they have any questions for us, and if they think of something else — we encourage them to contact us anytime. This has been our practice for the past

couple of years to help grow and build ongoing collaboration with our clubs. In addition, we have had Zoom calls with clubs that wanted a more extensive conversation.

To continue the person-to-person connections, we encourage any of our members, National Workers, Past Presidents, and all in favor of this proposal, to join the Board of Directors and share their reasoning and positive support with other members. Thank you to those who are reaching out to review the benefits of membership and encouraging an affirmative vote on this proposal.

Q: THE PROPOSED BUDGET ESTIMATES 9100 MEMBERS. DOES THAT NUMBER INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO BELONG TO MULTIPLE CLUBS?

ANSWER: Yes, every member of every club must pay dues. This is required based on our structure and non-profit provisions in our bylaws. Those belonging to more than one club will pay dues to each of their member clubs and they are included in the budgeted membership total.

Q: WHY PRESENT THE BUDGET FIRST AND THEN THE BYLAWS AFTERWARD?

ANSWER: The detailed schedule for the Virtual Summit is in progress. We must present the budget with \$10.00 dues per member, as per our current bylaws. After the Zoom Forums are completed, the agenda details will be finalized. The President will create the agenda to provide a fair and efficient process to conduct our business.

Q: DID WE APPLY FOR AND/OR RECEIVE A SECOND PPP LOAN?

ANSWER: No, the funds were already depleted. Additional funds may be available in the future. However, if we had to dissolve the organization, or lose significant funding, we could be liable for repayment of the loan, which could be problematic.

Q: WHAT AMOUNT IS TRULY NEEDED TO KEEP THE ORGANIZATION IN BUSINESS? CAN'T WE WAIT A YEAR FOR A DUES INCREASE TO TAKE EFFECT?

The increase of \$5.00 is the amount needed to sustain our organization. It is not an inflated amount hoping members will approve less. In the past, our delegates have reduced the proposed amount of the recommended dues increase and therefore, we have not kept up with inflation, escalating fixed costs, and this has significantly impacted our ability to offer new member services. If the dues amount is reduced and/or or if the implementation is deferred for any period, this will only serve to exacerbate the financial challenges facing the organization. It has been 13 years since any increase. Some have asked for a lower amount now and return next year and request an additional increase. This rationale was also stated back in 2008 and unfortunately all the dues increase proposals over multiple years have not been approved (including a proposal last year). Therefore, we recommend doing what is long overdue by approving the \$5.00 dues increase now.

Q: HAVE WE CONSIDERED NOT HAVING AN IN-PERSON CONVENTION IN THE FUTURE AS A COST SAVINGS MEASURE?

ANSWER: The Board of Directors acts within the current bylaws when making decisions. Due to the pandemic, and the adoption of the amendment last year allowing the Board of Directors to determine the format of convention, we can meet for our Virtual Summit this summer. Going forward, decisions related to convention will be determined by the Board of Directors following our current bylaws.

However, any member/club may submit a proposal for a bylaw amendment to modify the type of convention or any other organizational changes they want considered. The Parliamentarian can assist members in drafting their proposals. Any proposed bylaw or standing rules amendments are due to the Parliamentarian by December 15th and may be submitted to: parliamentarian@multiplesofamerica.org.

WHAT ARE THREE THINGS I COULD TELL MY CLUB TO VALIDATE/JUSTIFY THE DUES INCREASE?

ANSWER: 1) Disbanding is possible. 2) We could amp up our current member services, social media presence, etc. 3) Technology costs – webinars, Zoom, Hootsuite, Dropbox – all have increased their fees within the last 30 days and we need to cover these increases.

Q: SOME GROUPS HAVE CHOSEN A SOCIAL MEDIA MEMBERSHIP ONLY AND THAT HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. CAN YOU HAVE A LOCAL CLUB AND NOT BE A MEMBER OF NATIONAL?

ANSWER: Yes.

Q: WILL WE RECEIVE THE AGENDA PRIOR TO THE VIRTUAL SUMMIT?

ANSWER: Yes. The goal is to send information to all registered attendees the week of the Virtual Summit.

Q: THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR THE VIRTUAL SUMMIT IS TODAY FOR THE \$30. THE LATE FEE IS \$20. WHAT IS THE REASON FOR A LATE FEE FOR A VIRTUAL SUMMIT?

ANSWER: We have just signed the contract for electronic voting and there are costs associated with this service. There are also backend preparations that must be made to ensure we have verified emails and system checks have been made. These deadlines allow us to ensure we have a quorum to conduct business and mirror those used previously.

Special note: Following this Zoom Forum, the Board of Directors approved an extension of the \$30.00 registration fee and delayed imposition of the \$20.00 late fee until after June 21, 2021.

The full content of all proposals, including rationale, can be found in the Election Mailing. Additional Questions may be submitted to the Board of Directors via email at: info@multiplesofamerica.org.