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Kadhamiyah district council celebrates hall opening

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BAGHDAD – The Kadhamiyah District Advisory Council in northwest Baghdad has something to rejoice about.

With the help of the Embedded Provisional Reconstruction Team, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, and the U.S. State Department, the Kadhamiyah DAC celebrated the grand opening of its new meeting hall Jan. 24.

The addition, which cost nearly \$129,000 through a U.S. Department of State grant, took approximately four months to complete. The new facility provides a more convenient venue for the 30 council members.

“The table in their older room only sat 26. The new one has 37 spaces and the chairman, the deputy chairman and the administrative person who take the minutes sit at the head table,” said Col. Louis Fazekas, a native of Harrisburg, Pa., governance leader, ePRT, 2nd HBCT. “A lot of times, they invite guests so more than 30 show up to the

meetings. There is also room at the head table, which is where they like to seat guests of honor.”

Fazekas, along with Dr. Sharif Fadhil, civil engineer, ePRT, 2nd HBCT, took charge of the project to ensure it was built according to U.S. standards.

“Dr. Fadhil actually reviewed all the design plans with the contractor and then he approved the design with a few adjustments and specifications to ensure it met the code requirements,” said Fazekas. “We were there at least once or twice a week doing inspections.”

The team thoroughly inspected the foundation and sent core concrete tests to the American Concrete Institute for approval.

Among the numerous editions to the facility included the installation of microphones for each table and speaker boxes, which were designed to ensure the meetings are audible for those attending the events. Air conditioners were installed to keep the facility cool in the summer as well as new heaters for the cool winter months.

“In the old room, unless you were sitting by the two small, coiled heaters, you didn’t feel much heat,” said Fazekas. “During the summer months it got awfully hot in there because the two air conditioners they had did not work very well.”

Perhaps the most appreciated update, however, is the additional space.

“Many times it was difficult to sit everyone and many had to stand,” said Muslim Saleh, the Kadhamiyah DAC chairman. “We are very grateful for this new place to hold meetings.”

Prior to the modifications, numerous committee meetings were cancelled or postponed due to the lack of spacing at the facility, which could only accommodate one

meeting at a time, whereas it can now accommodate two meetings running simultaneously. The facility is used by the council's 17 committees, which include essential services, strategic planning, legal, ethics, health, education and social services.

In addition to providing support with the building structure, the ePRT helped the DAC create its bylaws for conducting its business.

“Often times, they turn to us for support or assistance in how they run their meetings,” Fazekas said. “One of the things we did was we provided them with a copy of policy manuals that Dr. Fadhil and I worked on; it goes through all 17 committees and provides more detail on the existing bylaws.”

Eventually, said Fazekas, the Kadhamiyah DAC will conduct its meetings without the assistance of Coalition Forces support.

“Kadhamiyah has professional citizens, and the education level for the DAC members is high,” he said. “I am hopeful that when the time comes for them to stand on their own, they will efficiently continue to take care of the citizens.”



1st Meeting.

BAGHDAD – Members of the Kadhamiyah District Advisory Council conduct their first meeting at the new DAC hall in the Kadhamiyah district of northwest Baghdad Jan. 24. DAC members, along with leaders from the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, joined together to conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the improvements before getting down to business.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



Address.

BAGHDAD – Col. Joseph Martin, a native of Dearborn, Mich., commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, address members of the Khadamiya District Advisory Council during the first meeting at the new DAC hall in the Kadhamiyah district of northwest Baghdad Jan. 24. DAC members, along with their MND-B partners, joined together to conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the improvements before getting down to business.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



Head Table.

BAGHDAD – Kadhamiyah District Advisory Council leaders brief their fellow members during the first meeting at the new DAC hall in the Kadhamiyah district of northwest Baghdad Jan. 24. DAC members, along with leaders from the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, joined together to conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the improvements before getting down to business.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



New Room.

BAGHDAD – Kadhamiyah District Advisory Council members conduct the first meeting at the new meeting room at the DAC hall in the Kadhamiyah district of northwest Baghdad Jan. 24. DAC members, along with leaders from the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, joined together to conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the improvements before getting down to business.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



Progress.

BAGHDAD – Col. Joseph Martin (right), a native of Dearborn, Mich., commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, admires photos that illustrate the progression of constructing the new Kadhamiyah District Advisory Council meeting hall at the DAC building in northwest Baghdad Jan. 24. DAC members, along with leaders from the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, joined together to conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the improvements before getting down to business.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)