



श्रीप्रेतोरिया हिन्दु सेवा समज

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“Satyameva Jayate” – Truth Alone Prevails

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ

Held at: The Boardroom, Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj
Date : Monday 25 July 2011
Time : 7:30 pm

1. WELCOME AND PRAYER

The meeting commenced at 7:30 (chaired by Pravinbhai until 7:45) with a prayer and welcome to all present. A moments silence in honour of all those members who passed away since the last meeting was also held.

2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

Apology – Rakeshbhai Ravjee, Vinaybhai Chagan (on leave)

In Attendance: Rekhabhen Chhagan, Pranaybhai Devchand, Prakashbhai Hira, Rameshbhai Chhagan, Kishorbhai Naran, Pravinbhai Daya, Nareshbhai Kallan, Harshilabhen Kooverjie, Bhadrakanbhai Chiba, Navnitbhai Bhima, Maheshbhai Jina, and Vineetbhai Rama. Mineeshabhen Chetty attended in her capacity as administrator.

The meeting was declared duly constituted by the Secretary-General as the requisite quorum as required by clause 12 of the constitution had been met by the members present.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June was approved, without amendments, on the motion of Navnitbhai Bhima and seconded by Pranaybhai Devchand.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 *H, W & G Portfolio Committee Members*

Maheshbhai reported that he had finalised the membership of his portfolio which was approved by the Executive. In addition, Rameshbhai and Arvindbhai Chhagan will serve on the Welfare sub-committee.

4.2 *Employee Contracts*

Rameshbhai and Navnitbhai reported that they had concluded the contracts of Premeebhen and Mukeshbhai respectively. Pranaybhai has concluded all teacher contracts, except for those of Shardabhen Ramesh, Nalinibhen Bhagatjee and Mayuribhen Kevat. These will be concluded within the next week.

4.3 *80th & 40th Anniversary Celebrations in 2012*

Vineetbhai reported that the 80th Anniversary will be celebrated on the 21, 22 & 23 September 2012. Tentative programme included a Bhangra on 21st, a Fashion Show, Bazaar and variety concert on 22nd; bazaar, lunch and fireworks display on 23rd and a closing ceremony on Monday (public holiday). Vineetbhai agreed to distribute his programme to members for inputs, produce an action list and call up a task team meeting of Executive Committee, Trustees and other volunteers within two weeks to allocate responsibilities.

Navnitbhai reported that his committee are proposing that the 40th Anniversary celebrations be held on 11, 12 & 13 May 2012. He was in negotiation with the Indian High Commission to invite two devotional singers from India to perform over the weekend. On 12th May, a yagna will be held in the area between the Mandir and classrooms and on the 13th a bhajan samelan in the hall to which various dignitaries would be invited. Lunch will be provided.

4.4 *Welcoming of Newcomers to Samaj*

Mineeshabhen reported that as the auditorium was fully booked for all other dates, the function will have to be held on 25 September 2011. This was agreed to.

4.5 *New Samaj Directory*

Vineetbhai expressed concern that the deadline of 10 August was not going to be met because all possible advertisers had not been approached. Names of potential advertisers was read out and allocated to executive committee members to approach. Vineetbhai agreed to circulate this list to members and everyone was urged to approach and finalise the matter before 5 August. Vineetbhai also reported that adverts have been placed in the Laudium Sun, Tshwane Sun and Centurion Sun urging anyone who has not yet submitted their details for the directory to do so urgently. Prakashbhai reported that a part of the cost of these newspaper advertisements have been waived by Nazeer Bhidia in exchange for an advert in the directory

4.6 *Outstanding Financial Matters*

Bhadraakanbhai reported that:

- The PBO registration is receiving attention with the help of Nisar Dawood;
- A draft administrative & financial manual due in October has already been produced and circulated for comments. On Harshilabhen's request, it was agreed that a second draft containing more financial management guidelines to portfolio committees will be included;

- Registration of all employees with the relevant authorities for PAYE and other employee deductions have been done;
- Asset register is being maintained by financial administrator
- As authorised, an amount of R2,5 million has been transferred into a fixed deposit account;

4.7 **Medical Referees**

Rameshbhai reported that he and Bharatbhai had met with Dr Melani Louw who is the person responsible for appointing medical referees in the Tshwane area. The meeting was extremely fruitful in that she provided them with a letter to present to the crematorium personnel in which all the recommended doctors on the Samaj list were authorised to serve henceforth as referees. The new medical referees are: Drs Bhoosan Bhana, Preshan Chetty, Sujata Garach, Jitendra Kalan, Raj Kolapan, Nagin Lala, Suraya Laloo, Jasoo Naran, Nilesh Radia, Sunita Ramjee and Murthi Sooboo. All the doctors listed above have agreed to render their services free of charge. Rameshbhai undertook to send them an official letter.

In addition, Dr Louw made them aware of a new crematorium that has been privately built in Reyton situated east of Pretoria. Bharatbhai agreed to commence negotiations with the owners to explore the use of that crematorium in the event Rebecca Street Crematorium was not available..

Rameshbhai further reported that Councillor Mohamed (Faroukie) Essop contacted him before the meeting to inform him of a meeting he had arranged with Council officials to help resolve the medical referee issue. This was in response to the letter written to him requesting his assistance. He was informed of the above outcome and thanked for his efforts. Rameshbhai also placed on record his thanks to the previous Chairperson of Trustees, Dr Pankajbhai Joshi, for his initiative in helping the Samaj arrive at this conclusion.

4.8 **Decorating Boardroom Walls**

Mineeshabhen reported that the matter of obtaining photographs and framing them to place on the Boardroom walls was nearing completion.

4.9 **Minimum Dharshan Tariffs**

Navnitbhai reported that this matter is still receiving attention.

4.10 **List of Pujaris**

Mineeshabhen read out a list she had compiled of Pujaris available in the Gauteng. Pravinbhai provided a few more names. She undertook to place this list on the website.

4.11 **Outstanding Study Loans**

Rekhabhen reported that the AFSP committee had held a very successful and cordial meeting with the previous members. A set of files had been handed to them containing contact details, history and status of each loan recipient. In addition, the previous members have offered to assist the new team should their services be required. Rekhabhen reported that she had handed the files over to the treasurer general who undertook to use them to produce an updated financial record. As soon as this is received, Rekhabhen and her team undertook to follow up with past recipients to obtain commitments from them to repay all outstanding loans.

Rekhabhen also reported that members of the past committee expressed unhappiness with the President's remarks (as reported in the AGM minutes) about the need for instituting a forensic audit to determine how much study loan money was owing to the Samaj and by whom. In essence, they viewed this statement as casting

negative aspersions on them as ex-committee members. Prakashbhai stated that he failed to see how his remarks could be seen in this light as they were based on the concerns raised by Samaj auditors in their management reports, both in 2009 and 2010, in which they highlighted as a serious shortcoming the incomplete records related to student loans that were handed to them to audit. In his opinion, as President, he is duty bound to do everything in his power, including instituting a forensic audit or taking legal action, to ensure that all monies owing to the Samaj are accounted for.

Prakashbhai thanked Rekhabin and her team for their positive liaison with the previous AFSP committee, for recovering relevant Samaj records and to the previous committee for their co-operation in helping to resolve this matter.

4.12 ***Renovations***

Kishorbhai presented quotes for the repair to the ablution facilities in auditorium, and front of school area. The quotes for the amount of R79 000 for the ablution facilities and R26 000 for the classroom areas were approved.

4.13 ***Plans to Increase Enrolment at Gujarati School***

Pranaybhai asked that this matter be deferred

4.14 ***Funerals***

Mineeshabhen reported that with Mansukhbhai's help a roster has been drawn up which will be circulated. The sympathy cards are in process of being created. Rameshbhai suggested that a funeral pack containing Samaj contact details, bhajan groups, funeral policy, etc be prepared and given to the family of the bereaved. Flowers are to be delivered by courier.

4.15 ***Valuation of Samaj Assets***

Bhadraakanbhai is still in the process of having Samaj assets valued

4.16 ***Plaque***

Members were not entirely satisfied with the plaque that was designed to present to Mahier Tayob. Mineeshabhen agreed to redesign the plaque according to new wording agreed upon.

4.17 ***Tenancy Agreement for Pujari & Caretaker***

Rameshbhai has circulated a draft tenancy agreement prepared by Harshilabhen for the resident priest and caretaker. This was approved and Rameshbhai undertook to have tenancy agreements signed.

4.18 ***Heaters for Mandir***

Mineeshabhen reported that heaters have been acquired but there was no gas available to purchase. Prakashbhai undertook to obtain gas. Mineeshabhen reported that she had also arranged for the settings of the aircon in the Mandir to be adjusted to "heat" as well.

4.19 ***Youth Programme***

In abeyance due to Rakeshbhai's absence

4.20 ***Building Stronger Relationships with Indian Consulate***

Prakashbhai agreed to meet with consulate officials and discuss plans for fostering mutually beneficial relationship

4.21 ***Potential List of Lawyers***

Rameshbhai had circulated a potential list of lawyers that Harshilabhen had compiled to executive members. This list was approved and Mineeshabhen was requested to file.

4.22 **Updating of Samaj Website**

Mineeshabhen reported that she and Rameshbhai had met to discuss improvements to the website. She will arrange a meeting with the service provider.

4.23 **SMS System Training**

Harshilabhen undertook to set a date when Bharatbhai could visit Rameshbhai to be trained on SMS system.

4.24 **Monthly Report Format**

Rameshbhai presented a draft format for monthly reports that were approved.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

5.1 **IN:**

5.1.1 Received a letter from **Brits Yuvak Mandal** requesting permission to use Samaj property for the Joint Hanuman Chalisa that will be hosted by them this year. Rameshbhai had circulated this request and as there were no objections he had written a letter granting approval.

5.1.2 Email received from **Mansukhbhai**, chairperson of Board of Trustees, informing the Executive Committee on the progress made by the Trustees in recovering Samaj documents. In his email he reported the following:

- * Tapidasbhai has assured him that he no longer had any Samaj documents and that he had handed over a “red briefcase” of documents to Sanjaybhai Govind although he could not remember what was in them. When Mansukhbhai approached Sanjaybhai for the documents he was told by Sanjaybhai that he needed to be clearer on what documents he wanted before Sanjaybhai could assist him;
- * Jivanbhai informed him that both he and Narotambhai had no documents in their possession;
- * Chandrasenbhai had spoken to Anilbhai Soma who claimed that he had issues with the Samaj and was therefore not willing to hand over documents he had in his possession.

After some discussion, it was agreed that despite all the previous and the latest failed attempt, Harshilabhen will send a formal letter to Anilbhai and Sanjaybhai requesting that they return Samaj property. In the interim, Prakashbhai will approach Trusharbhai Kalan for a breakdown of what documents were in the “red briefcase”.

5.2 **OUT:**

5.2.1 Letter to Brits Yuvak Mandal granting permission to use Samaj property for Hanuman Chalisa.

5.2.2 Letter to M. Essop requesting his assistance with medical referee issue.

6. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Bhadrakanbhai presented a full financial report for the period 1 January to 30 June 2011. His report highlighted that the Samaj financial records are completed from January to June. Prakashbhai thanked the finance team for doing an extraordinarily sterling job in managing Samaj’s financial affairs and stated that he believes that this is the first time in the history of the existence of the Samaj that financial records are prepared and up to date on a month by month basis.

Bhadrakanbhai raised the matter of the fact that one of the stands on which the Samaj Marabastad Centre is built (stand 660) does not legally belong to the Samaj

as it is still registered on the name of Sodha Jogee. An added concern was that an amount of R100 000 in rates and taxes was owed on this stand and clarity was needed on who was responsible to pay for this. Prakashbhai estimated that the backlog in rates and taxes went back as far as 10 years and supported the need for this matter to be resolved. He requested Bhadrakanbhai together with a trustee to approach Gunvantbhai Sodha with the view to bring closure to this matter.

7. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

7.1 ***Academic Financial Support Portfolio***

Rekhabhen reported that her committee were busy revising their policy document with the view to addressing ambiguity. Now that the past records have been obtained, she undertook to liaise with all past recipients to finalise repayments.

7.2 ***Health, Welfare & Gender Portfolio***

Maheshbhai reported that meetings of the Senior Citizen Club had taken place and health tests conducted. He presented a financial break-down of the European Tour but asked guidance on how funds should be managed in future. Harshilabhen & Bhadrakanbhai agreed to assist Maheshbhai with a financial management plan for the Club. He had incurred some expenses for which he requested approval be given. This was formally approved. Local excursions have also been planned for the coming weeks. He was asked to present a more long-term planning schedule as well.

Maheshbhai presented a report on a single parent family his team had visited who were in urgent need of assistance. He recommended a three-pronged approach: food vouchers for 4 months to the value of R400 to provide short-term relief; an approach be made to the landlord to reduce rental in order to increase the family's liquidity position; an appeal to the business community to help the sole bread-winner obtain a better paying job. His proposal was approved with Prakashbhai undertaking to approach the landlord and Rameshbhai agreeing to send out an employment appeal.

7.3 ***Religion & Culture Portfolio***

Navnitbhai requested that a quote for R18 000 which was the best of three quotes received be approved for repairing the sound system in the Mandir. This was approved. His committee has invited a swami from Durban who has agreed to render talks on 8, 9 & 10 August during Shravan month. The swami will be accommodated in a member's home. Navnitbhai agreed to send a write-up to Rameshbhai for circulation. He reported on the planned Bhajan Mela that would also take place during Shravan and for which various groups have been invited. His committee was thanked for this initiative but he was asked to include more local bhajan groups in the programme.

7.4 ***Youth (Navyug Mandal) Portfolio***

None

7.5 ***Special Projects Portfolio***

None

7.6 ***Facilities Management & Funerals Portfolio***

The work on the auditorium toilets and the area in front of the classrooms has commenced. A concern expressed was that the builder was sometimes interrupted in his work when the caretaker and the priest "hijacked" him for other work. He was asked to inform them that such behaviour was not acceptable.

7.7 ***Education Portfolio***

Pranaybhai presented a detailed report on the activities of the Balmandir and Gujarati school. Some highlights:

- The need to convert a room into a library cum computer centre and the requisite training of teachers
- He had held meetings with the teachers and discussed the following: PAYE and UIF deductions would henceforth take place; more clarity on roles and responsibilities were given; a 6 month programme for both institutions have been introduced; rotation of teachers to improve competencies; administrators to maintain attendance registers for teachers
- Mandela celebrations were undertaken by Balmandir learners
- Krishna Jayanti to be held jointly with Religious & Culture committee.
- A tentative Rakshabandan programme presented - all committee members agreed to help.

8. GENERAL

- 8.1 Harshilabhen handed over to Bhadrakanbhai copies of Samaj title deeds she had applied for and received. These are to be kept in Samaj office.
- 8.2 Prakashbhai asked Harshilabhen to investigate how changes to the Companies Act impacted on the Samaj and to recommend changes to our constitution accordingly. Rameshbhai requested that the scope be broadened to include all matters that will remove ambiguity from and help streamline the current constitution. This was agreed to.
- 8.3 Prakashbhai requested that Bhadrakanbhai enquire whether the insurance the Samaj currently has is the best on the market and to make recommendations accordingly. He requested that the Nedbank insurance package also be evaluated.
- 8.4 Prakashbhai requested that Bhadrakanbhai investigate the possibility of introducing a funeral policy for the community.
- 8.5 Prakashbhai asked Mineeshabhen to submit to him a list of all committee members with birth dates to him.
- 8.6 Navnitbhai agreed to place an article in the Laudium Sun on significance of Shravan
- 8.7 Pravinbhai presented a copy of a table book published by the Natal Rajput Association to the Samaj for placement in the proposed library.
- 8.8 With the establishment of the office and in order to streamline the activities of the Samaj, Prakashbhai proposed the following reporting arrangements with immediate effect: Caretaker (Premeebhen) to report to Finance administrator (Vinaybhai); Vinaybhai to report to Treasurer-General (Bhadrakanbhai); Mineeshabhen to report to Secretary-General (Rameshbhai); and Mukeshbhai to report to Navnitbhai (religion & culture). This arrangement was agreed to by all and will be captured in the proposed Financial & Administrative Manual.
- 8.9 Rameshbhai had circulated a Samaj Premises Hire Policy which was tabled for acceptance. This was accepted unanimously.
- 8.10 The revised Health, Welfare & Gender policy was also adopted unanimously.

9. CONCLUSION

The meeting ended with a prayer at 11:35pm

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 29 August 2011 at 7:30pm



RAMESHBHAI CHHAGAN & NARESHBHAI KALLAN
SECRETARIAT: SPHSS