

SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ

Minutes of the meeting of the Interim Executive Committee of the Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj held on Tuesday 4 August 2009 in the Seva Samaj Boardroom.

1. PRAYER & WELCOME

The meeting opened at 7:30 with a prayer. The president, Prakashbhai Hira extended a warm welcome to the new executive and thanked them for accepting the responsibility of managing the affairs of the Samaj for this interim period.

2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

See attendance register. Apologies received from Pravinbhai Daya (ill) and Jagdishbhai Makan (overseas).

3. MATTERS DISCUSSED

3.1 *Clarification of Mandate*

Prakashbhai summarized the mandate of the interim body as follows: “we have been entrusted by the community to deal effectively with the affairs of the Samaj and to ensure a proper AGM can be held as soon as possible”.

In this context, the following was agreed upon:

- 3.1.1 A copy of the constitution will be made available to new executive members;
- 3.1.2 The date for the AGM is dependent upon the Finance Committee being able to present a credible financial report that accurately reflects the financial affairs of the Samaj. It was hoped that this could be achieved by October this year.
- 3.1.3 Copies of the minutes of this meeting and all subsequent meetings will be circulated by e-mail to all community members to ensure that everyone is updated on the progress being made. Those members without an e-mail address and who wish to get a copy can pick up a copy from Premie Singh (012 374 1997) at the Samaj. This arrangement will be communicated to the community by SMS since at least one member of every family has a cell phone.
- 3.1.4 A hand-over meeting will be held with the previous executive committee on Thursday 6 August in the Boardroom. Prakashbhai expressed his gratitude to members of the previous committee for their cooperation in ensuring a smooth transition.
- 3.1.5 The Vice-Presidents of the various portfolios (Education, Social & Welfare, Finance, Religion & Culture and Maintenance) are to obtain all documents from previous committee members and ensure proper acknowledgement thereof;
- 3.1.6 The Vice-Presidents are to prepare a portfolio report by 17 August that covers the following:
 - Current status of their portfolio (what the job entails and what has been done);
 - Areas of concern (gaps in the records, unresolved issues, etc);
 - Proposed plan of action for the year for approval by Executive

3.2 Revision of Constitution

Members expressed concern that the current constitution is weak on details and procedure. It was agreed that Prakashbhai & Rameshbhai will drive the process to revamp the constitution. Upon approval by the Executive, this would be distributed to the community for comments and amendments.

3.3 Code of Conduct

The members felt that a proper code of conduct be agreed upon to ensure that the new executive functioned effectively. The following was agreed upon:

- 3.3.1 All members were to be allowed the space to express their views openly but in an orderly fashion;
- 3.3.2 All members are bound by decisions taken. By the nature of meetings, disagreements will arise. However, once a decision has been taken, all members are honour bound to respect it and not sow division in the committee & community by undermining it.
- 3.3.3 No unauthorized communication to the press will be tolerated. It was agreed that Rameshbhai Chhagan will serve as the Samaj's official spokesperson.
- 3.3.4 The confidentiality of member viewpoints must be respected. The minutes should be written in such a manner that only the issues and decisions taken are recorded.
- 3.3.5 The community is to be informed that all concerns and grievances are to be addressed to the secretary, Rameshbhai Chhagan at ramesh.chhagan@exxaro.com or a letter to be delivered to his home at 319 Mink Street, Laudium.

3.4 Press Release

It was agreed that a press statement informing the public on the outcome of the general meeting held on Thursday 30 July should be released in time for the Friday 7 August edition of the Laudium Sun.

3.5 Meeting Notices to Community

The matter of how to communicate effectively with the public was discussed. It was agreed that the traditional way of delivering mail to every house was not practical. The following solution was agreed upon:

- All relevant documentation with respect to a general meeting (notice of meeting, meeting minutes, reports) would be made available at the Seva Samaj Mandir or at the flat of Premie Singh;
- Those for whom the Samaj has e-mail addresses will receive their documents electronically
- An SMS be sent to all households informing them that a meeting will be held. The SMS would also indicate that those who do not have e-mail addresses should collect their documents from the Samaj

4. GENERAL

4.1 Renovation of Toilets

The previous committee had entered into a contract with a supplier to renovate the toilets and have already paid a deposit. On Monday 3 August work had commenced. Kishorbhai sought advice on whether the work should be allowed to proceed. It was agreed that it was not in the Samaj's interest to stop any ongoing contractual as the result of the change over.

4.2 **Crematorium**

It was brought to the committee's attention that all 4 furnaces at the Rebecca Street crematorium are currently out of order. This means that should a death in our community occur while this sorry state of affairs prevails, we would not be able to have a cremation. It was agreed that Kishorbhai, together with Bharatbhai Kooverjee, should urgently do the following:

- meet with Council to establish when crematorium will be operational again;
- arrange for a viable alternative arrangement in the interim;
- discuss with Council the need to expand the current facilities

4.3 **Rakshabandan**

Members were informed that the traditional visits to homes during Rakshabandan might not take place as a result of the confusion around responsibilities. It was agreed that Sanjaybhai would contact Dhiroobhai Kalan to arrange that the visits take place this coming week-end.

4.5 **Krishna Jayanti Celebrations**

Harshaben undertook to ensure that the Krishna Jayanti celebrations, due to be celebrated in a few weeks, continue as planned.

4.6 **Bank Accounts**

It was agreed that the Finance committee would open new bank accounts at FNB that reflect the current accounts the Samaj has with ABSA and arrange for the speedy transfer of all funds into this account.

4.7 **SMS Messaging**

It was agreed that Sanjaybhai would coordinate the SMS process.

4.8 **Senior Citizens Function**

Prakashbhai and Kishorbhai attended the Senior Citizens function that took place on Saturday 1 August. Jyotiben thanked them for attending and expressed her gratitude for the words of encouragement that Prakashbhai expressed.

4.9 **Havan Ceremony**

Prakashbhai informed members that our priest, Mukeshbhai, has suggested to him that the new committee hosts a havan function in order to unite and rebuild the community's confidence. There was no in-principle objection and it was agreed that Prakashbhai would raise this with Jagdishbhai Makan when he returns for a decision.

5. **NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next executive meeting will be held on Monday 17 August 2009.

6. **CONCLUSION**

The meeting ended at 21:30 (9:30 p.m.) with a shantipath prayer.

Rameshbhai Chhagan & Sanjaybhai Govind
Joint Honorary Secretaries