

AUM

SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ

(Established in 1932)

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PBO Ref. No.: 930004205

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

Held at: The Boardroom, Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj
Date : 30 November 2009
Time : 7:40 pm

1. WELCOME AND PRAYER

The meeting commenced at 7:40 with a prayer and welcome to all present.

2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

2.1 Apology – Pravinbhai Daya, Harshaben Dayal

2.2 In Attendance: Prakashbhai Hira, Rameshbhai Chhagan, Anielbhai Soma, Sanjaybhai Govind, Himalbhai Ramjee, Atishbhai Mistry, Jagdishbhai Makan, Jyotiben Joshi, Kishorbhai Naran, Pravinbhai Daya, Pranaybhai Devchand, Rakeshbhai Ravjee and Tershiaben Calien.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the special meeting of the Executive Committee of 27 October 2009, were adopted, without amendments, on the motion of Anielbhai Soma and seconded by Pranaybhai Devchand.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Circular to inform community members of new officials

All committee member lists have still not yet been received. Members were reminded to send Rameshbhai the complete names and contact details of all proposed members of the various portfolio committees. It was decided that special projects would be on an *ad hoc* basis and that no names for this portfolio will be provided.

4.2 Meeting with Navyug Members

Rameshbhai and Himalbhai attended a meeting called up by the Navyug to address issues and concerns they had with respect to the new arrangements. Their major concerns revolved around decision-making powers and financial control over Navyug affairs. Rameshbhai reported that they were given the assurance that they would not only continue to enjoy these powers but will know that they have the support of the Samaj.

4.3 Establishing Samaj Office

Himalbhai Ramjee gave the assurance that the office will be completed by mid February 2010. A steel cabinet would be placed in the office for safe keeping of important documents and other possessions. Thus far, a security gate leading to the main entrance to the Samaj office has been erected, a PC acquired and loaded with the required financial packages.

4.4 Preparations for 80th Anniversary Celebrations in 2012

Whilst not a priority at this stage, Sanjaybhai agreed to work with Amarlalbhai Soma and others to put together a draft concept plan for the Samaj 80th anniversary celebrations in 2012.

4.5 Establishment of retirement village

Rameshbhai reported that no progress had been made on this issue and the matter was left in abeyance.

4.6 Modernizing Gujarati School

Atishbhai Mistry confirmed that a meeting was held with various teachers to discuss this issue. The teachers were keen to assist and a project plan will be implemented soon.

4.7 Deepening understanding of Hindu Dharma

Rameshbhai reported that he had discussed with Jagdishbhai and Pankajbhai the need to publish regular articles on Hinduism in order to make the public aware of the essentials of Hindu Dharma. Pankajbhai agreed to co-ordinate a team which would include the Education Committee. Rameshbhai undertook to persuade the Laudium Sun to publish the material produced. All members were once again reminded to ensure Rameshbhai Chhagan is informed about any dealings they have with the press.

4.8 Crematorium Issue

At a meeting attended by Pravinbhai, Kishorbhai, Sanjaybhai, Rameshbhai, Pankajbhai, Bharatbhai and Ramanbhai, it was agreed that the Samaj needed a two-pronged approach to the crematorium issue. In the short-term a delegation would meet with the mayor to request that the Rebecca Street Crematorium was re-opened without further delay. The second long-term solution was to either build our own crematorium or persuade the Council to lease the current crematorium to us to run on their behalf.

Before the meeting with the mayor was set up, Rameshbhai received an invitation from the Pretoria Tamil League to accompany them to attend a meeting with Mrs. Tessa Ernest, who is the Member of the Mayor Committee (MMC) responsible for Agriculture & Environment Management. Sanjaybhai & Bharatbhai also attended. At this meeting it was resolved that (1) the MMC would petition the Green Scorpions to agree to grant the municipality a temporary permit to continue with operations whilst air quality issues were being sorted out and (2) that the delegation would prepare and submit a business plan to lease the Crematorium facility. Sanjaybhai Govind undertook to co-ordinate this process.

4.9 Renovation of the Samaj premises

Concern was expressed that the Samaj premises are in urgent need of repairs and renovation. Kishorbhai Naran was requested to present a full renovation plan to the Executive at the next meeting for approval

4.10 Management of Samaj Marabastad Centre

A report was provided by Anielbhai Soma in respect of the arrear rentals which have been recovered to date as well as rentals which are currently in arrears. A signed acknowledgement of debt has been received from BM Hawkers Centre CC together with a surety thereto.

There are new leases to be signed and same will be presented at the next meeting. Anielbhai Soma is to provide a recoverable list at the next meeting.

4.11 1860 Legacy Foundation

Rameshbhai Chhagan is currently serving on a task team made up of various Pretoria community organisations that are planning to commemorate the 150 year arrival of Indians to South Africa. A presentation giving details of the plans was e-mailed to all members. An inaugural meeting that would include elections will be held on Monday 7 December 2009 at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Centre. Representatives from the SPHSS shall be Jyotiben Joshi, Rameshbhai Chhagan, Amaralalbai Soma; however and any one else who would like to attend are welcome to do so.

4.12 Social Support for Community

Members felt that there are community members who are experiencing hardships as a result of the poor economic situation and that the Samaj needs a plan to address this. Jyotiben mentioned that some charitable work with the assistance of social workers is being done, but this was not under the banner of the Samaj, and was limited to providing hampers only on an ad hoc basis. It was agreed that a Jyotiben and Pranaybhai would host a workshop that would produce a Social Support plan.

4.13 Widening Bursary Support

Pranaybhai reported that the Bursary Committee has sufficient funds to meet the demand for bursaries (loans), thus it will not be necessary to look at ways of increasing bursary support.

4.14 Participation in Vishwa Gujarati Samaj

Rameshbhai reported that he had given a letter to Jivanbhai Kalyan stating that he would be representing the Samaj at the Vishwa Gujarati Samaj taking place in Ahmedabad in India from the 22 to 24 January 2010. Jivanbhai will present a report on his return.

4.15 Fraudulent Funds Report

Anielbhai and Himalbhai reported that they had received a letter from ABSA's attorneys acknowledging the validity of the claims made by the Samaj. They have indicated that they will refund the capital amount, together with penalties and interests charged, subject to two conditions, namely that the Samaj lays a criminal charge of fraud against Naresh Mistry and that we indemnify ABSA against any further claims. Anielbhai and Himalbhai were given the mandate to enter into an agreement with ABSA to bring the matter to a conclusion.

The only remaining aspect was that of receiving a completed forensic audit report. It was agreed that Tayfin Auditors complete the interview process with the previous officials and trustees in order to obtain a full picture of what went wrong. Rameshbhai was tasked with arranging this discussion meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

In:

- 5.1 A letter received from Morris Pokroy Attorneys requesting payment for work done for the previous executive committee. Payment was approved.
- 5.2 On the motion of Anielbhai Soma and seconded by Jagdishbhai Makan, it was agreed that the statement of account from the attorneys who represented the concerned group will be paid by the SPHSS.

5.3 A letter from Vinaybhai Chagan was received in which he expressed his concern about unresolved issues raised with the previous management. The President mentioned that he has already drafted a reply in which he has given Vinaybhai the assurance that the new committee will vigorously address community issues and concerns.

5.4 A letter was received from Hasmukhbhai Nichha requesting R500 for expenses incurred in assisting with Navratri and New Year celebrations. Rameshbhai reported that he had written to Hasmukhbhai to submit a detailed claim to Jagdishbhai who would then process it. To date, he has not done so.

5.5 An email received from Vijaybhai Khatri wherein he suggested that the annual President's Award should only be awarded if there are persons in the community who are deserving of it. He further suggested that the traditional format for hosting the New Year celebrations be changed. Jagdishbhai undertook to look into the matter.

5.6 A letter was received from Ajay Chagan of Vally Chagan Attorneys informing the committee that Samaj documents in his client's possession would be handed over. It was noted that to date none of the documents referred to in his letter has been received.

Out:

5.8 A letter was written to the MMC requesting information on the progress made in getting a temporary permit to use the Crematorium.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

Anielbhai reported that all the old Samaj tins have been collected and counted. A total of R20 000.00 has been deposited. Sanjaybhai indicated that a list with amounts collected will be circulated next week.

Anielbhai reported that a meeting was held with the forensic auditors PWC and they have agreed to render their services at a reduced price. All documentation from the finance committee shall be handed over to PWC in due course.

It was reported by Anielbhai that the fixed deposit in the FNB account would need to be transferred and that financial report covering the last five months will be written up.

The high bank charges associated with operating a cheque account was raised. It was felt that the latest innovation in internet banking that has built in safeguards around multiple approvals for transferring of funds was the most economical yet safe option. However, the constitution specifically states that a cheque account must be used. It was decided that Rameshbhai will canvass permission from the community via email and should this be approved by a majority of persons than we will make the switch and have the change formally approved at the next BGM meeting.

7. PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE REPORTS

Prakashbhai Hira requested that as from the next meeting all portfolio committees, including finance, should submit their reports in writing. This report should not exceed one page. Rameshbhai undertook to devise a reporting template and circulate it for finalization.

Jyotiben requested permission for her committee to host a senior citizen luncheon on 18 April 2010 at an approximate cost of R50 000.00 for 600 people. Jyotiben was informed that the executive supports her plan and that the Samaj will contribute towards the event on a rand for rand basis.

Jagdishbhai Makan raised the issue of the hall hire fees charged to non-profit organisations. He felt that the current arrangement of giving a 50% discount to non-profit organisations was not suitable as it resulted in them still paying R1000 which he regarded as being excessive. A spirited debate followed with various alternative options being proposed. In the end, it was agreed by common

consensus that the arrangement of giving a 50% discount to non-profit organizations would remain.

7. **NEW MATTERS**

7.1 ***Funeral Policy***

The need for a funeral policy in the community was discussed. It was agreed that there was a need for this and that Anielbhai will present a proposal at the next meeting.

7.2 ***Marabastad Properties***

Sanjaybhai reported that two of the plots allocated to the Samaj by the City Council are not adjacent to the others. His suggestion that he be empowered to negotiate a swap with other owners was approved. The finance committee agreed to assist Sanjaybhai.

7.3 ***Community Meeting***

Rameshbhai reported that he had received a verbal invitation from Nampies Dawood to attend a community meeting called by the Council at the Bowling Green Clubhouse on Wednesday 2 December. This meeting would discuss accessing funds from the Council for cultural and sporting events. Sanjaybhai agreed to attend.

7.2 ***Rates & Taxes Account***

Prakashbhai expressed concern about an unpaid rates & taxes account sent to the Samaj on which Sodha/Jogee conducts business. Sanjaybhai was asked investigate and resolve this matter.

7.3 ***Senior Citizens Trip to Mauritius***

Jyotiben reported that 40 members of the senior citizens will be visiting Mauritius at their own expense. All moneys have been paid to Family Travel.

7.4 ***SMS Notification Database***

Sanjaybhai requested that the database for SMS notification system be cleaned up as there were many wrong numbers. Rameshbhai and Tershiaben agreed to attend to this matter.

7.5 ***Updated Contact List***

Sanjaybhai has indicated that he has updated the contact list of all Gujarati residents in Pretoria. The lists are ideal for generating wedding invitations, creating directories, etc. This list will be made available to the community at a nominal fee.

7.6 ***New Samaj Directory***

Rakeshbhai undertook to drive the process of producing an updated Samaj directory.

7.7 ***Laudium Sun Article***

The Laudium Sun ran an article that an anonymous person is questioning the legality of the elections as an advert was not placed in the local media, thereby denying anyone who recently arrived in Pretoria and who is not on the Samaj's email or SMS list, an opportunity to attend. Members felt that no further response other than the one already given by Rameshbhai was necessary. They emphasized that any aggrieved person is welcome to raise any issues they may have directly with the Samaj and that this would be dealt with properly as catered for in the Samaj constitution.

7.8 ***Contract with Mukeshbhai***

As required by the constitution, Jagdishbhai undertook to commence the process of renegotiating a proper contract with Mukeshbhai that would outline the terms and conditions of his service to the community.

8 NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next and first meeting of 2010 shall be held on 25 January 2010. All subsequent meetings will be held on the third Monday of every month.

9 PRAYER AND CLOSURE

The meeting ended with a prayer at 23:20.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rameshbhai Chhagan'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a long, sweeping tail.

**RAMESHBHAI CHHAGAN
SECRETARY GENERAL: SPHSS**