

AUM

# ***SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ***

(Established in 1932)

264 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
P O Box 1811  
Laudium, Pretoria, 0037  
PRETORIA, 0001

*e-mail: [ramesh.chhagan@exxaro.com](mailto:ramesh.chhagan@exxaro.com)*

PBO Ref. No.: 930004205

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

Held at: The Boardroom, Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj  
Date : 17 August 2010  
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 (ill)

**2.2 In Attendance:** Prakashbhai Hira, Rameshbhai Chhagan, Jagdishbhai Makan, Kishorbhai Naran, Pranaybhai Devchand, Jyotibhen Joshi and Rakeshbhai Ravjee.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of 19 July 2010, were adopted, with amendments, on the motion of Kishorbhai Naran seconded by Pranaybhai Devchand.

#### **Amendments**

**3.1** Remove Harshabhen Dayal as an attendee as she was inadvertently reflected as being present.

**3.2** Item 7.1 should read as follows: "Himalbhai was asked to assume the position of Acting Chief Financial officer until the next meeting. After some discussion, it was finally decided that Prakashbhai will assist Himalbhai by doing the work of the Chief Financial officer and that they would meet within a week to decide on sharing of responsibilities."

4.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

It was agreed that in view of recent pressing developments, only urgent issues as identified by Portfolio heads would be discussed. The following matters were raised:

##### **4.1 *Diabetes Day Programme***

Jyotibhen reported that plans to celebrate this day on 19 September were at an advanced stage and that sponsors for most of the items required have been procured. Kishorbhai agreed to arrange for additional security for the day.

##### **4.2 *Air conditioner & Vacuum Cleaner***

Approval was granted to Kishorbhai to purchase an air conditioner and vacuum cleaner for the mandir but suggested that he get additional brand name quotes such as Samsung and LG.

##### **4.3 *Renovation of Samaj Premises***

Kishorbhai undertook to have a plan for the renovation of the Samaj premises submitted by end September. This plan must include the upgrading of the classrooms as per the requirements of the Gujarati school and Bal Mandir (taking previous work of the Education committee into account), the Auditorium, painting of the mandir and a new boundary wall. An architect should be approached to assist in this regard.

##### **4.4 *Navyug Governance***

Rakeshbhai raised an issue around governance that he was experiencing at Navyug meetings. He was advised on how to proceed and could call upon the Secretary General to assist should this be necessary.

##### **4.5 *Samaj Directory***

Rakeshbhai informed the committee that his team was now tackling the issue of producing a new directory. Rameshbhai informed him that he has an electronic version of the current (old) directory and that his team could use this as a basis for their drive. This was agreed to.

##### **4.6 *Supporting an Orphanage***

Rakeshbhai informed members that his team was embarking on a drive on 28 August to help feed thousands of orphans, including Aids orphans, in conjunction with the

Sisters of Mother Teresa Home. He required the assistance of the youth to join this campaign. Members of the community were asked to please bring their donations of baby milk formula, blankets, clothes, toys, money, etc to the Seva Samaj on Thursday 26 August between 7pm and 9pm.

#### 4.7 **Soccer Tournament**

Rakeshbhai reported that the Navyug Mandal will be hosting a soccer tournament on Saturday 26 September. Various Navyug groups from other towns will be invited to participate. This initiative was supported by members.

#### 4.8 **Shravan Programme**

Jagdishbhai reported that his team has prepared a full program for Shravan month which will be distributed via email and in the local media.

#### 4.9 **Meeting with Gujarati School Teachers**

Pranaybhai, Jagdishbhai and Prakashbhai had met with the Gujarati and Bal Mandir school teachers on Monday 16 August to discuss Raksha Bandan and Krishna Jayanti celebration plans as well as school governance matters. They reported that the teachers were positive about the challenges being faced and expressed confidence about the way forward. Prakashbhai undertook to address their concerns around remuneration and contracts within the next two weeks.

#### 4.10 **Website**

Rameshbhai reported that Terishiabhen had undertaken to drive the development of a Samaj website. She had agreed to report back to him by Friday 13 August on progress being made with Vinay Chibba. Rameshbhai gave an undertaking that should this matter not progress satisfactorily, he will make alternate arrangements. Rakeshbhai gave him the contact details of an alternate service provider.

5.

### **NEW MATTERS**

#### 5.1 **Report of Trustees - Investigation**

Prakashbhai presented the report of the trustees into the investigation they had conducted on governance and leadership matters in the Executive. Their report highlighted several findings which are currently being acted upon.

## 5.2 **Financial Matters**

Prakashbhai read out a letter from Dharmeshbhai Ramjee who had been assisting the finance committee in the writing of the books. His report indicated that the Samaj financial records are completed up to 31 December but that no further work was done in updating it monthly as was required. Prakashbhai undertook that he will personally ensure that the records are completed and that internal control systems are in place by end October 2010. These books will be audited by end February 2011.

## 5.3 **Letter of withdrawal of Future Participation**

A copy of a letter of withdrawal of future participation sent by Sanjaybhai Govind, Tershiabhen Calian and Himalbhai Ramjee on 9 August was distributed to each member. Members expressed their dissatisfaction at the manner in which this was done and felt particularly hurt at the various unsubstantiated allegations that were made against fellow executive members. Prakashbhai read out a draft response he had prepared to which members added further comments. Rameshbhai was asked to ensure that in his reply he records the firm commitment of the remaining executive members to continue with their work in accordance with the pledge they had made to the community upon assuming office after the elections.

## 5.4 **Meeting with Education Committee Members**

After the Executive had taken a decision to appoint Pranaybhai Devchand as acting head of the Education Portfolio, a letter was received from the Education Committee members informing the Executive that they had resigned. In response, Prakashbhai asked for an urgent meeting to clarify their position as no prior communication had ever been received from the committee. The Education Committee responded that they were willing to meet at a later date than proposed by him but that they had already made up their minds that their resignation stood and that any further discussion would merely be to discuss the contents of their letter. Nonetheless, members felt that a delegation made up of Rameshbhai and Pranaybhai should meet with them on Thursday 19 August as proposed by them.

### **5.5 Request for a meeting by a delegation of Community Members**

On the afternoon of the scheduled meeting date (17 August) an email was received from Jivanbhai Kalyan requesting a meeting with the Trustees and some members of the Executive to discuss the current difficulties being experienced by the Executive. Members expressed surprise and concern that the delegation wished to discuss issues that were not yet in the public domain, were still receiving attention and were therefore sensitive. After some discussion, it was agreed that Prakashbhai would respond to their letter and arrange for a meeting on a date convenient to the officials.

### **5.6 Volunteers for Raksha Bandan**

Pranaybhai reported that Dhiroobhai Kalan who for many years had coordinated the Raksha Bandan drive had informed him that he was no longer able to do so. All Exec members were asked to contact their team members and others for possible volunteers. These are to meet at the Seva Samaj on Saturday 21st August at 14.00 to assist the teachers and pupils.

### **5.7 Advert for Full-Time Administrator**

Members expressed support for the idea that a full-time paid administrator be appointed to assist with the various administrative responsibilities that all portfolios needed. It was agreed that outputs would be sent to Rameshbhai who would use it as a basis for compiling and advertising such a position.

### **5.8 Academic Financial Support Programme (AFSP)**

5.8.1 Pranaybhai requested more clarity on the definition of a “member” as described in the Samaj constitution as applied to the academic financial support programme (AFSP). Rameshbhai suggested that for the purposes of this policy document, persons born of parents of whom at least one is a Gujarati should also qualify. It was agreed that this clarification should be captured in the proposed AFSP policy document.

5.8.2 Pranaybhai informed members that he had been approached by an individual who wanted the Samaj to manage and administer a sponsored bursary (i.e. non-repayable) on his behalf. He requested clarity on the members feeling around such a scheme. It was decided that he should present a detailed plan on how the AFSP would manage this as well as clarify what the role of the donor would be at the next Exco meeting to take this matter further.

6.

**GENERAL**

6.1

Kishorbhai requested that Rameshbhai writes a letter of thanks to Quality Spice for their generous donation of rakhi's for Raksha Bandan

7.

**NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on Monday 30 August 2010

8.

**PRAYER AND CLOSURE**

The meeting ended with a prayer at 10:30pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rameshbhai Chhagan', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**RAMESHBHAI CHHAGAN**

**SECRETARY GENERAL: SPHSS**