



Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj

Established in 1932

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"Satyameva Jayate" - Truth Alone Prevails

Celebrating 81 Years of Selfless Service

30 May 2013

MINUTES OF BGM/AGM HELD AT THE SAMAJ AUDITORIUM ON SUNDAY 26 MAY 2013 AT 15:20

1. PRAYER & WELCOME

The Secretary-General, Rameshbhai Chhagan, commenced proceedings with a prayer and one minutes silence in memory of all community members who passed away since the last AGM. He welcomed all members present and declared the AGM duly constituted as the requisite quorum as required by clause 12 of the constitution had been met.

2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

According to the attendance register a total of 173 people attended. An apology for being able to attend was received from Pankajbhai Joshi who was travelling overseas.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

Copies of the minutes of the previous AGM held on 22 April 2012 were distributed to each member. These minutes were also available on the website since 2012. Whilst not reading the previous minutes, Rameshbhai mentioned that the minutes captured the reports that were presented and amendments made to the constitution. There were no matters arising from those minutes. The minutes were passed, without amendments, on the motions of Pranaybhai Devchand and Maheshbhai Jina and accepted unanimously as accurate by the members.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None

5. **SECRETARIAL REPORT**

In his report, the Secretary-General reported on the progress made against the broad objectives that the executive had set itself for the period 2012/2013. In essence, his report detailed the following:

- The entrenchment of proper governance through the development of a host of policies & procedures, contracts, leases and revamping of the Constitution.
- The highly successful celebrations of the Mandir's 40th Anniversary & the Samaj's 80th Anniversary in 2012;
- The successful management and broadening of service offerings in the Balmandir preschool and Gujarati School;
- The observance of many of the primary Hindu festivals and the broad participation of all in the religious & cultural life of the community;
- The provision of social services to the elderly and those in need;
- The sound management of the Samaj's financial affairs and the obtaining of an unqualified audit;
- The renovation of the Samaj premises, especially the building of a boundary wall, renovation of ablution facilities and the upgrading the priests and caretaker premises;
- The ongoing tertiary education support which has resulted in over 32 students from our community being helped with their studies; and finally
- The efforts being made to improve communication with all stakeholders, especially the community.

6. **PRESIDENTIAL REPORT**

The President, Prakashbhai Hira, read out his report that was circulated to all members. In his report he highlighted the following:

- The poor state of the Samaj in terms of governance when he became President in 2009 and the steps taken to reverse this situation and restore the pride and dignity of the Samaj in the eyes of the community;
- The important role played by various individuals, including Pankajbhai Joshi, Mahier Tayob, the secretariat and the finance team for helping to make this turn-around possible;
- His regret that through hasty decision-making the Samaj turned down the offer made by the Pretoria Hindu Society to donate its assets (School and land) to the Samaj. Subsequently, the Society has now sold the school for over R10million.
- An application has been made to acquire a religious site outside of Laudium to cater for the many people now living on the outskirts of Laudium. He expressed confidence that such a site would be allocated free of charge.
- In conclusion, he thanked Mansukhbhai and Pravinbhai and outgoing officials for their selfless and voluntary contribution and wished the new team all the best in helping the Samaj grow in strength.

7. CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES REPORT

Mansukhbhai Chhiba presented a report in both Gujarati and English in which he highlighted how proud he was of the achievements of the outgoing executive, the unity across all religious groups that he felt during the 80th Anniversary Celebrations, and the fact that the Samaj was on a sound financial footing. Finally, he asked members to take great care in selecting who should be in the incoming executive as their choices could lead officials to work in a more holistic manner and in proper consideration of the community.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer General, Bhadrakanbhai Chiba, presented the audited financial statements. In essence, the report was unqualified in all material aspects. Whilst an abridged version of the Financial Report was presented, he informed the house that the full version was available on the website or that alternatively any member was at liberty to inspect the full set of financial statements by making arrangements with the administrators.

9. MATTERS ARISING FROM REPORTS PRESENTED

Members were given an opportunity to submit any questions or queries they might have on the reports. The following matters were raised:

- 9.1 Jagdishbhai Makan felt that it was an error for the Secretary not to have singled out Jivanbhai Kallan in his report on the activities of the Health, Welfare & Gender committee. Rameshbhai responded that he was not made aware of what specific role Jivanbhai had played but was quite willing to alter his report accordingly. Jivanbhai, however, intervened to state that he does not believe it was necessary for his name to be mentioned.
- 9.2 Sanjaybhai Govind raised three issues: (1) Why was an abridged financial report circulated; (2) The Samaj experienced a loss as a result of the 80th Anniversary Celebrations. What plans are in place to raise funds, if any?; (3) Because of its sources of income, the Samaj should consider registering for VAT. In his response, Bhadrakanbhai stated that the full version was available on the website and for those who are interested hard copies could be obtained from the office; the Samaj has a healthy income so no plans are in place to raise funds but this will be considered should a need be felt; and finally the auditors will be consulted to determine whether being registered for VAT was in the Samaj's interest or not.
- 9.3 Harshadbhai Keshav raised a string of issues he felt the financials were silent on. After some discussion it was agreed that Harshadbhai will meet with Bhadrakanbhai to agree on how his concerns will be addressed going forward.

10. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

The following amendments were proposed and unanimously accepted by the members:

Amendment 1

Amendment to Clause 7.7.3 to read as follows:

7.7.3 To ensure that the “Samaj” obtains and maintains its status of a Non Profit Organisation (NPO) with the Dept of Social Welfare as well as that of a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) with the South African Revenue Service (Section 18A).

Rationale

The current wording is factually incorrect. An organisation is registered with the Dept of Social Services as a NPO and with SARS as a PBO and not the other way round.

Amendment 2

Insert new Clause (8.6) to read as follows:

8.6 All payments, whenever possible, must be made by means of an electronic fund transfer (EFT). The financial administrator will be required to input the request for the payment on the system; after satisfying themselves on the legitimacy of the claim, any two authorised officials as per clause 7.7.5 may release the payment.

Rationale

Currently, all payments are made by the financial administrator on cheques reflecting the signature of two authorised officials. In practice, because of the large amount of cheques that need to be issued every month, and the difficulty of getting officials to be present when cheques need to be signed, blank cheques are sometimes being signed by both signatories. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement as it opens the way for fraud. An EFT system, requiring the finance administrator to put in a request for payment which is then released by two authorised officials who agree that the payment is legitimate, is a far safer method.

Amendment 3

Amend clause 13.1 that states that AGM/BGM can be called up on 14 days notice. The clause should read 21 days.

Rationale

Clause 10.3.1 states that nominations for electoral positions are open 3 weeks before elections. This is not possible if notice of AGM can be given on 14 days.

Amendment 4

Add a new clause, clause 8.7 to read as follows:

Clause 8.7 “All cash donations must, as far as is possible and practical, follow the procedure as illustrated in the Administration & Finance Manual.”

Suggested procedure to be captured in the manual:

- Receipts must be issued for all cash donations received;
- When issuing of receipts is not practical or possible, a container that has a lock should be used to receive cash donations e.g. in Mandir.
- The container must be kept locked at all times, especially during functions when donations are made;
- Members of the public must be encouraged to place all donations in the locked container;
- The container must be opened in the presence of two persons of which one must be the finance administrator whilst the other is a member of the RCC or an executive committee member;
- After counting, the finance administrator must issue a receipt for the amount collected;
- The finance administrator must deposit the money into the Samaj account as per provisions stipulated in the Finance & Administration Manual

Rationale

At present there are insufficient safeguards in place to ensure that all cash donations received e.g. in the Mandir or during other functions are safe. The Samaj auditor has stated that the non-issue of receipts that verify the collection of cash donations is a concern and leads to a qualified report. The new clause and suggested procedure goes some way to addressing this concern.

Amendment 5

Amend Clause 8.2 to read as follows:

8.2 The audited financial statements shall be made electronically available to members of the community either by email or by placing them on the Samaj website three (3) weeks prior to the AGM. Copies are also to be made available in the Samaj office

Rationale

It is important that members are given the opportunity to peruse the financial statements of the Samaj well before the meeting so as to be able to raise any issues or concerns they might have.

Amendment 6

To include a new clause 7.1.20 under Power & Duties of Trustees to read as follows:

7.1.20 “To conduct at least one internal audit every year to ensure that all provisions as captured in the Constitution and the Financial & Administration Manual are being strictly adhered to and to issue a report of shortcomings to the Executive Committee to action.”

Rationale

Although the “Manual” makes provision for an internal audit to be conducted by trustees annually, the constitution is silent on this matter. A cardinal and central role of the Trustees, is to ensure that the officials are managing Samaj affairs in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Administration & Financial Manual.

Amendment 7

Clause 10.3.4 to read as follows:

10.3.4 An individual may only accept nomination for one position

Rationale

An individual standing for elections should make it clear in which position they wish to serve. Standing for several positions could be viewed as simply “hedging ones bets” to get elected rather than having a clear vision of service.

11. GENERAL

None

12. APPOINTMENT OF AN AUDITOR

On the recommendation of Bhadrakanbhai Chiba the house unanimously agreed to retain the services of Silversonne Inc.

13. IPAD LUCKY DRAW

The lucky draw for an iPad mini was won by Monalibhen P. Gandhi

14. APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL OFFICER

Rameshbhai informed members that the executive had formally requested Tayfin Forensics to serve as Independent Electoral Officers to oversee the elections. This was approved by universal acclaim.

15. ELECTION RESULTS

The results of the elections as verified by Mahier Tayob, of Tayfin Forensics, in his capacity as an independent electoral officer, were as follows:

Trustees			
Chairperson	Pravin Daya	ppdaya@gmail.com	(082) 923 9157
Member	Naresh Kallan	naresh.kallan@siemans.com	(082)775 0773
Member	Bharat Kooverjee	flamingo@icon.co.za	(082) 490 3646
Member	Chandrasen Bhana	chintzbhana@worldonline.co.za	(082) 877 8142
Member	Madu Modi	shayanmodi@gmail.com	(072) 379 9568
Executive Committee			
President	Ramesh Chhagan	ramesh.chhagan@exxaro.com	(083) 609 1446
Deputy President	Kishor Naran	ldmfriendly@mweb.co.za	(082) 573 0132
Secretary General	Bhaavic Chhana	bhaavic_108@hotmail.com	(072) 265 2966
Assistant Secretary	Sheetal Ranchod	sheetal_r101@hotmail.com	(082) 979 3233
Chief Financial Officer	Harshila Kooverjee	harshila@law.co.za	(082) 496 3105
Treasurer General	Bhadrakan Chiba	chiba@webafrica.org.za	(083) 325 5650
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Executive Committee: Portfolio Heads			
Education			
Religion & Culture	Mukesh Joshi	mjoshi2288@gmail.com	(076) 501 8204
Youth (Navyug Mandal)	Dhruv Sodha	dhruvsodha@hotmail.com	(076) 076 7240
Facilities & Funeral	Vineet Rama	vineetr225@gmail.com	(083) 719 9924
Bursary Fund	Pranay Devchand	pranay.devchand@gauteng.gov.za	(083) 422 8981
Health, Welfare & Gender	Jyoti Joshi	jyoti@mmjoshi.com	(072) 114 4410
Special Projects	Harshad Pema	simplygates@hotmail.com	(082) 897 0366

These new trustees and officials were officially sworn in by Mr. Tayob.

16. VOTE OF THANKS

On behalf of the new officials and trustees, Pranaybhai Devchand thanked all those who helped to make the AGM a success. A special word of thanks was extended to Maheshbhai Jina who has consistently assisted the Samaj in recording its events.

17. CONCLUDING REMARKS, PRAYER & REFRESHMENTS

The newly elected President, Rameshbhai Chhagan also expressed his thanks to Mahierbhai and his team for voluntarily offering their services and thanked the

community for the confidence they had shown in him to lead the Samaj. The meeting ended with a prayer by the resident Priest, Mukeshbhai Joshi at 6:30pm

SECRETARIAT: SPHSS