

Board Meeting of the Hindu Temple of Arizona
June 6, 2004, 2:00 pm

Present: Mohini Ahuja, Madhu Aggarwal, Vidya Bakshi, Nirmala Chhibber, Mamta Gupta, Hirisave Ramchandra, Mina Sangani, Balbir Sharma, Rohini Sharma, Surinder Sharma and Asha Thakur (Munnu Bajpai arrived at 3:20pm)

Also Present: Anu Bakshi, Hema Burns, David Dooling, Ashok Jain, Rajesh Mehta, Varinder Narang, Uma Ramchandra, Sanjay Sangani and Prem Bhardwaj

1. Open Meeting.

The President opened the meeting at 2:10pm

2. Approval of Agenda.

Motion 47: To approve the Agenda with the following amendments. I) To allow the Building plan to be discussed first II) To allow Hema Burns to present her fundraising idea second III) To allow the Anniversary Celebration team to present their plans third.

Proposed by: Vidya Bakshi

Seconded by: Balbir Sharma

Carried Unanimously

3. Building Plan.

Vijay Sethi (a life-member), and David Dooley (an architect), were invited by Mr. Vidya Bakshi to present a plan for building alterations and also long term building plan.

David Dooling has a conceptual plan to build around the Temple with the theme of a lotus flower. This plan was to start by constructing a perimeter wall that reflects the leaves of a lotus. The plan was very difficult for the Board to conceptualize and so Mr. Dooling was asked to bring a Drawing to an emergency meeting that will be called for Sunday, June 13, 2004.

A discussion ensued as to whether the wall between the Temple Hall and the dining area should be knocked down. Those for knocking down the wall reasoned that the extra space will help accommodate the growing number of devotees that are now attending the Temple Pujas, especially on Tuesdays. They also reasoned that we need to break down the wall to help ensure that we do not break the occupancy code for fire regulations.

The architectural designer, Al Alvera, arrived just as this point was being discussed and the BOD were informed that the fire code allows 1 person for every 7 square feet. This means that the presence or absence of the wall will not affect the regulations one way or the other as breaking down the wall will not alter the square footage of the Temple Building.

The Board members that were opposed to breaking down the wall argued that the BOD should first have a long range building plan in place and move toward that plan rather than demolishing walls and building facades that may or may not fit in with the big picture in the long term. They were also concerned about the fact that the proposal to knock down the wall will cost approximately \$1500 and this would only increase the physical space in the hall enough to hold 50 more people. This increase is only the # of people that could be in the in the hall, not the whole temple as overall occupancy is NOT increased by this measure.

At this point the architect interjected with the following comments: a) Knocking down the wall will not solve the occupancy level problem that we are experiencing. b) He cannot guarantee that the current plan of knocking down this wall will reflect the overall theme that he has been asked to design. c) It is very difficult from an architectural standpoint to take small pieces like this and put them into a big picture. d) It is better to have a big plan and then work towards that.

Balbir Sharma pointed out that a food inspector had visited the property and his recommendation was for the Temple to have a pantry/cool storage area for our food.

Motion 48: Postpone this decision until next week when we can see the architects drawings.

Proposed by: Hirisave Ramchandra

Seconded by: Asha Thakur

For: 5 Hirisave, Asha, Rohini, Mina, Nirmala.

Against: 6 Mohini, Madhu, Vidya, Balbir, Mamta, Surinder.

Motion not carried

Counter-Motion 49: To remove the wall

Proposed by Vidya Bakshi

Seconded by Balbir Sharma

For: 8 Vidya, Balbir, Mohini, Madhu, Mamta, Surinder, Asha, Hirisave.

Against: 3 Mina, Rohini, Nirmala

Motion Carried

Motion 50: To thank Vijay Sethi, Al Alvera, and David Dooling for attending and working hard for the Temple.

Proposed by: Vidya Bakshi

Seconded by: Mina Sangani

Carried Unanimously

4. Proposal from Hema Burns

Hema Burns is a regular devotee at the Hindu Temple. She introduced a fundraising proposal for the Board in which she will compile, edit, and publish a recipe book, which can be sold by the Temple. In order to pursue this Hema needs

the following help from the Board: 1) Regular announcements about the book at the Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday Pujas informing people about the project and requesting recipes for the book. 2) A cookbook committee should be set up- Nirmala Chhibber offered to help with this. 3) Mailing fliers about the book to non-attending members requesting recipes for the book. 4) Set June 27th as a deadline for the incoming recipes. 5) Help with translating recipes that may come in in language other than English. 6) Wording and written procedures for Bhog and Aarti. 7) Help with the issue of sales tax.

The Board agreed to help Hema in her endeavor and Thanked her for her effort in this area.

5. Celebration Update.

Rajesh Mehta is currently at the stage of finalizing all of the performances. Sanjay Sangani acknowledged that three people have done the lions share of the work for the celebration and they are Prem Bhardwaj, Vivek Gupta and Rajesh Mehta. As Vivek has had to go out of town, he has requested Sanjay to take care of the overall coordination and organization, including final program scheduling, program booklet, and fundraising. Fliers copied by Hirisave Ramchandra will be mailed out by Sanjay/Mina. Sanjay has provided a listing of members and also a listing of Gujaratis in the Valley to the Pujari so that he can start a campaign to personally invite people by phone. By Wednesday of this week, a schedule will be finalized and a program booklet will be made. Help is needed to find sponsors to help pay for production of this booklet. Dr. Sharma and Mamta Gupta were requested to help with this but all BOD should also try to help.

6. Secretaries Report.

- I. The Secretary had invited Simant Misra to the meeting in order to ask about his expenditures and claims in relation to Lord Jagganath. Mr. Mishra was unable to attend but did leave a note for the Board. The executive committee will look at the note under advisement.
- II. The third issue of the Newsletter is now ready for publication.
Motion 51: To buy a photocopier for \$500-700
Proposed by Mina Sangani
Seconded by Vidya Bakshi
Carried Unanimously

Motion 52: To mail the Newsletter with the anniversary fliers
Proposed by: Mina Sangani
Seconded by: Nirmala Chhibber
Carried Unanimously

- III. The secretary brought two fundraising ideas to the table. 1) The Board decided to allow Ankur Bansal to look at the SCRIPP program and then decide on it at the next meeting. 2) The Temple should look into having a

golf tournament to raise funds. Balbir Sharma volunteered, as a Golfer, to organize this.

- IV. The Board advised the Executive Committee to look at the outstanding action items list.

7. Treasurers Report.

- I. Mina Sangani requested to make ribbons for everyone to wear at the Celebration
- II. The phone bill is showing a lot of numbers dialed to Intertel(?) Hirisave Ramchandra will investigate what this is and try to stop its usage/discuss with Balbir Sharma as it cost the Temple \$85.00 last month.
- III. The money from the Youth Festival is now all collected.
- IV. Munnu Bajpai has given the Temple a \$10,000 interest free loan. Thank you Munnubhai!
- V. The loan from Mr. Bajpai will allow us to pay \$10,000 to the anonymous donor plus the Temple can pay off another \$5,000. This brings our total outstanding loan to approximately \$75,000.
- VI. Anyone making a purchase of \$100.00 or above must carry a non-profit Organization letter with them and not pay the TAX. If this is not done, the treasurer will not reimburse the purchase.
- VII. Constitution and the ByLaws are in the Temple and in the office. Please read them and familiarize yourself with them.
- VIII. Any devotee that wants to put cash in the Hundi and claim it towards their membership must put the money in an envelop (under Hundi), write their name, address & Tel # on it and also the amount enclosed.
- IX. The Board needs to start planning for the upcoming elections and also plan some large fundraisers. Please let Mina know when you will be out of town.
- X. Anniversary Celebrations 1) We need to organize safety procedures. Varinder Narang will work as a volunteer to put some procedures in place for the Temple. Thank you Varinderji! 2) Mohini Ahuja will manage the membership booth at the celebrations. 3) Madhu Aggarwal had a proposal for the Board that we collect names/addresses/phone #s and birthdates/anniversary dates and implement an automated call system to let members know they have temple blessings on their special days. The Board approved the idea but will check with Ankur to ensure we are not breaching any privacy laws or information laws. 4) The Board approved \$75.00 expenditure by Hirisave Ramchandra to purchase 1000 embossed seals for use on certificates etc.
- XI. The Pujari has requested this months salary of \$1,150 to be advanced to him so that his wife can travel to Canada.
Motion 53: The Board approves this advance with the understanding that in future, 1 months notice will be required for advances and that only three such opportunities will be available in a twelve month period.

Proposed by: Vidya Bakshi

Seconded by: Madhu Aggarwal

Carried unanimously

8. Ratha Yatra Celebration Proposal

Board members discussed an e-mailed written Proposal sent on May 17th by three members, Debashis Panda, Debendra Mallik, and Bibhuti Panda purportedly on behalf of devotees of Jagannath to hold a Jaggannath Rath Yatra during the month of July. These individuals were invited to the meeting by Vidya Bakshi, but were not present at the meeting.

The Board expressed a concern that such an event typically requires few months of advance planning to undertake successfully and not the few weeks that are left prior to the proposed event date of July 11th. The Board generally accepted the Proposal, with the exception of specific details and expenses, which will be coordinated with these individuals by the Puja Committee Chair, Balbir Sharma. Further, the Board decided that the Temple Priest will perform all ceremonies, and will not authorize expenses for other Priests to fly in from other places.

Motion 54: Appoint Balbir Sharma to Chair and coordinate the Jaggannath Ratha Yatra Festival. Appoint Vidya Bakshi to communicate decision to Debashis Panda, who had sent him the e-mail Proposal.

Proposed by: Mina Sangani

Seconded by: Vidya Bakshi

Carried Unanimously

9. Closed Session

The Board went into a closed session that was previously approved unanimously by the members to discuss various organizational issues that had come up. No decisions were made at this session.

10. Meeting Closed

The closed the meeting at 7:30pm