

Minutes of BOD meeting held on 11/12/06

Present: Kamal Kharbanda, Varinder Narang, Snigdha Sharma, Jagdish Sharma, Ravinder Aggarwal, Prem Bhardwaja, Mohini Ahuja, Ashwani Bakshi

On phone: Vasu Atluri, Sonia Rajvanshi

Absent: Mamta Gupta, Vijay Sethi, Uma Ramchandra (visiting India)

Meeting started at 2:30 PM.

Agenda item # 1—Devotees grievances review

Varinder informed the board that a letter was given by Chandana Misra to Pandit Ji for delivery to Varinder Narang wherein Hara Misra had expressed some concerns. The letter from Hara Misra had stated that copy of the letter was being sent to all members of the BOD of HTA. During the meeting all board members present confirmed that no such letter had been received by any of the board members.

Varinder confirmed that a letter was sent by certified mail to Hara Misra by Varinder on 10/14/06 in which Hara Misra was advised to attend the board meeting to be held on 11/12/06 so all issues could be discussed face to face. This provided almost a month's notice to Hara Misra to attend the board meeting for face to face discussions with members of the board.

Hara Misra did not attend the meeting on 11/12/06 and no communication was received from him about his ability or inability to attend the meeting. Since Hara Misra did not attend the meeting and did not send any communication to the board, it was decided that the board considered this matter closed. A certified letter would be sent to Hara Misra informing him about the decision of the board.

It was also suggested that a copy of the letter should also be posted on the notice board in the temple. After much discussion and exchange of views it was agreed not to post the letter on the notice board but to send it by certified mail only.

Agenda item # 2—Approval of minutes of meeting held on 10/8/06.

Some members expressed the concern that they had not recd copy of the minutes of meeting held on 10/8/06. It was decided that a copy of the minutes will be sent by Ravinder Aggarwal to all the board members and the same will be presented for approval in the next meeting.

Agenda item # 3—Status of second priest hiring and contract approval.

Varinder Narang provided an update on the status of interviews held with different candidates. He informed that Mr Bhat was contacted on phone and during the interview Mr Bhat stated that though he had done Havans at people's homes, and had taught several devotees about the religion etc he had absolutely no experience of working in a temple. Based on this he was not considered suitable for filling this position.

VARinder and Ravinder Aggarwal tried to reach the candidate in Delhi several times but he was not available and could not be contacted.

Shri Jai Gopal was interviewed on the phone by several members of the priest selection committee on 10/12/06 and the session lasted about 1.5 hours. Kamal Kharbanda, Uma Ramchandra, Prem Bhardwaja, Ravinder Aggarwal and Varinder Narang (all members of either the priest selection committee or puja committee) were on the phone on behalf of the HTA. Ashwani Bakshi was also present during this phone interview. All members who spoke with Sh Jai Gopal ji were satisfied with the interview and were of the opinion that Sh Jai Gopal Ji would be a suitable candidate for the position of the second pujai for Hindu Temple of Arizona.

A question was raised in the board meeting that why were we looking for a priest from India. An answer was provided by Varinder Narang and Prem Bhardwaja who stated that any worthwhile candidate from USA was demanding salary in the range of \$ 4,000 per month and the temple could not afford that.

Following motion was proposed by Prem Bhardwaja:

Puja committee recommends hiring shri Jai Gopal Ji as a second priest for the HTA. The priest would be offered a three year contract which will be renewed every year based on the performance of the second priest.

The motion was seconded by Kamal Kharbanda and Varinder Narang.

Snigdha Sharma voted against the motion and Sonia Rajvanshi stated that she could not make a decision at the time of the voting. All others voted in favor of the motion. The motion was passed with a 7-1 (7 in favor and 1 against and 1 abstaining) majority vote.

It was also stated that if the priest has to go back to India after one year because of poor performance then he would have to pay for his own fare for going back to India. In case of departure for any other reasons the temple would cover his travel expenses back to India.

Another motion was proposed by Prem Bhardwaja and seconded by Varinder Narang and Kamal Kharbanda.

The motion stated that Sh Jai Gopal ji would be paid a stipend of \$ 1,100 per month and an additional amount of upto \$ 400 per month to cover expenses related to medical expenses. It was also proposed that he should arrange for his own medical insurance and some members of the board could help him find the best possible coverage for a good premium.

All voted in favor of the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

Snigdha Sharma volunteered to check the rates with various insurance companies with a goal to find the best coverage for him.

It was also discussed that initially Sh Jai Gopal Ji would be coming alone and would be provided free accommodation at the temple premises. Temple can provide accommodation at the temple premises for the priest and his spouse only. In case the priest decides to bring his children to USA later he will have to arrange for accommodation for them at his own expense at some place outside the temple.

Following motion was proposed by Ravinder Aggarwal and seconded by Prem Bhardwaja.

The contract to be offered to Sh Jai Gopal Ji should be reviewed and finalized by the priest selection committee within 2 weeks (from the date of the meeting) and ratified by the board within 1 week of the approval by the priest selection committee. At that time the contract can be sent to Sh Jai Gopal Ji for his signatures.

All voted in favor of the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

Agenda item # 4—Formation of upcoming election committee.

An election committee was formed after some discussions about who should and could be a member of the election committee. It was finalized that Dr Nemi Jain would be the chair person of the election committee and Rohit Tripathi and Debashish Panda will be the other two members of the election committee. It was also agreed that if Ashok Seth agrees he can also be added to the election committee so that Dr Nemi Jain could benefit from his experience.

Agenda item # 5—AGM meeting, reporting protocol.

It was decided that following items must be covered.

- a) President's report
- b) Secretary's update
- c) Financial report
- d) Election of the BOD—How many are leaving and how many are staying.
- e) QA session –appx 20 minutes maximum.

Some details of timings for various things were discussed and Jagdish Sharma will publish a schedule for that day with time slots allotted to various activities as listed above.

Agenda Item # 6—Approval for flooring/marble slabs

Ravinder Aggarwal provided details of how he had visited at least 20 shops in Delhi looking for good quality marble tiles after Mr Vaid had failed to provide any details or confirmation about the shipment of tiles by his company (Prior to the meeting Mr Vaid had stated that he was not interested in shipping tiles from India for HTA). The board

was informed that the shops in Delhi do not cut slabs into tiles anymore after the restrictions imposed by the government a few years ago.

Vasu stated that he knew some people in the tile business in India and offered to send an E mail to them (with copy to Ravinder Aggarwal) looking for some help from them with regard to shipment of marble tiles. Vasu stated that he would send the e mail with 2-3 days.

AR—Vasu to send an E mail to his contacts in Andhra Pradesh, India requesting help in the procurement and shipment of marble tiles from India.

Prem Bhardwaja agreed to contact Abdul (architect in the valley) to find out some information about the installers of the marble tiles.

AR: Prem Bhardwaja to contact Abdul and provide information to BOD about contractors who can install marble tiles in the temple.

Agenda Item # 7—Murtis/Mandap's order status

Ravinder Aggarwal informed the board that the order for the murtis and mandaps had been placed with Pandey Exports of Jaipur. Copies of signed documents from Pandey Exports were also shown to the members of the board and the exact cost figures of murtis and mandaps were also shared. Delivery time for both items is 3-4 months (ready for shipment). It was decided that we will try to pay the advance for the mandaps using a credit card but if that could not materialize the treasurer will transfer the required amount in their bank account in New York, details of which are already available.

Copies of the photographs for the murtis were provided to Jagdish Sharma so that he could put them on the website of HTA.

Ashwani Bakshi informed the board that Bala Ji's murti from Tirupati ji is available for shipment. Vasu will write a letter to the Tirupati organization (Mr Hari Kumar) to find out details about how the delivery can be taken for shipment to USA. Ashwani Bakshi will find out the cost of shipping the murti to HTA.

The meeting was adjourned at 6 PM.