



**HTA BOD  
EMERGENCY TELECON MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 7, 2006  
Time: 7: 06 pm-8:48 pm**

**Present** : Jagdish Sharma, Ravi Aggarwal, Vijay Sethi, Varinder Narang, Snigdha Sharma, Ashwani Bakshi, Prem Bhardwaja, Mamta Gupta, Kamal Kharbanda, Mohini Ahuja, Sonia Rajvanshi (8:00pm)

**Not Present:** Vasu Atluri, Uma Ramchandra (out of country)

**Meeting Protocols:**

1. **No recording of this telecon meeting is allowed**
2. **Non-Board members are welcome to Join but announce his/her name(s) before the meeting. (all said there is no un-announced member participating in the meeting)**

**Agenda Item: Post Election (December 3, 2006) Discussion**

The primary focus of this discussion was the content written in 3 emails that were received by some Board Members of the Hindu Temple of Arizona. One email was from Dr. Chandana Misra who was one of contestant representing the South Region of India. This email was passed thru Snigdha Sharma to distribute to some Board members. The original email from Dr. Chandana Misra was truncated (probably due to copy & paste) and was missing some important information (exact date, time & other recipients) by the time it reached to the Board members.

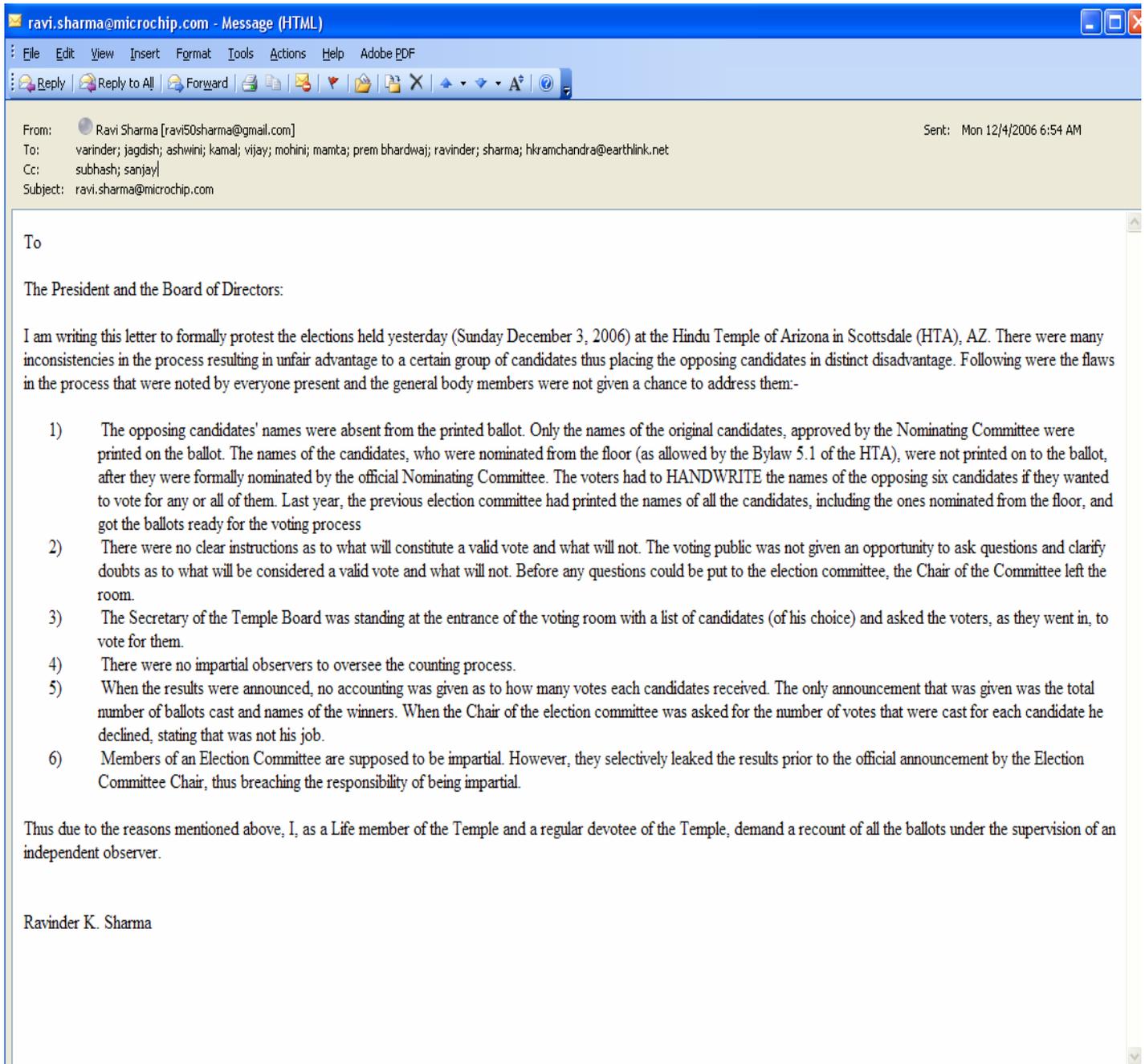
Two other emails were written by a devotee, Mr. Ravi Sharma and were sent to HTA Board Members except the Board Member Mrs. Sonia Rajvanshi. In the first email, Mr. Ravi Sharma requests for Re-Count while in the second email he talks about declaring the entire elections as null & void.

All these three emails were received by some Board members on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 which is a day later after the Annual Elections.

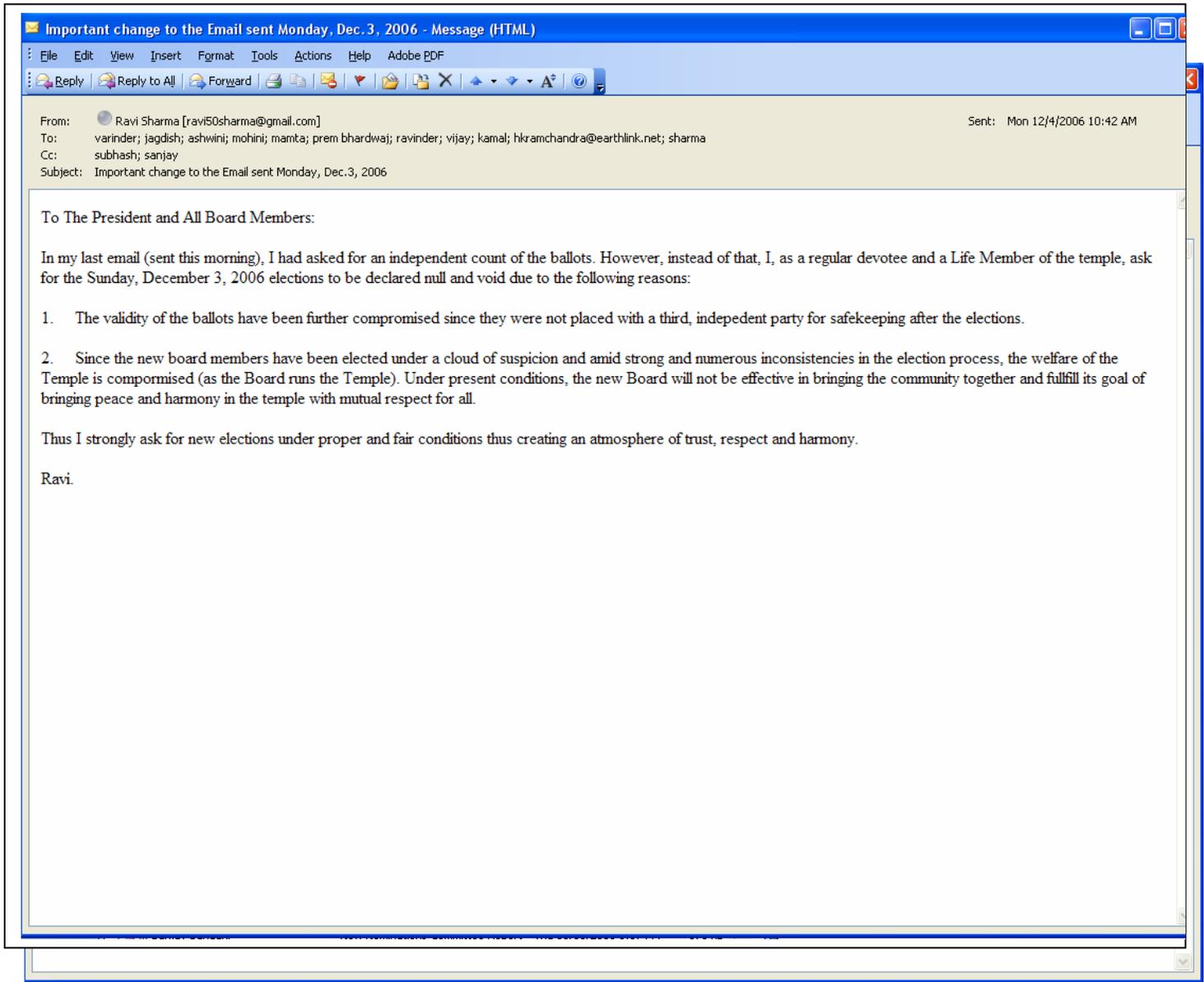
The Board Secretary stated the issue to all and mentioned that the Board has to put a formal request to the Election Committee (if the motion passed by the majority vote) to respond to the questions raised in the emails.

*Please see below the screen images of these emails*

Mr. Ravi Sharma's First email with date, time stamp (Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at 6:54 AM) requesting for a Re-count of the votes.



Please see Mr. Ravi's second email below with date, time stamp (Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at 10:42 AM) now requesting a complete Re-election.



Following is the snapshot of Dr. Chandana Misra's Email (dated Dec. 4, 2006 15:27:58 military time)

Devotee's Official Protest to the election - Message (Plain Text)

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Actions Help Adobe PDF

Reply Reply to All Forward

Extra line breaks in this message were removed.

From: sharma5@cox.net Sent: Mon 12/4/2006 8:21 PM  
To: subhash\_arora@msn.com; kamalaz@aol.com; sharma5@cox.net; ravinder85233@yahoo.com; vmgupta@msn.com; varinder.narang@honeywell.com; hkramchandra@earthlink.com; jcsharma@cox.net; mohinihujaj@hotmail.com; i0642@redroof.com; prem2kai@yahoo.com; hkramchandra@earthlink.net; ashu\_bakshi85257@yahoo.com; vpatluri@ieee.org  
Cc: subhash\_arora@msn.com; srs555@cox.net  
Subject: Devotee's Official Protest to the election

To All Board Members

I am forwarding this email that was sent to me by Dr.Chandana Misra, who is a regular devotee of the temple, a life member of the temple and a candidate who stood for elections this past Sunday, December 3, 2006. Since she did not have all the board member's email addresses she requested me to forward it to all the Board members, Election Committee and Nominating Committee. Please respond to her directly at cm\_md@cox.net

Snigdha

> From: "cm" <cm\_md@cox.net>  
> To: <sharma5@cox.net>  
> Subject:  
> Date: Mon, 4 Dec 2006 15:27:58 -0700  
>  
> Date: December,4 2006  
>  
> To the Board of directors, HTA/ Nomination committee/ Election committee.

> |  
> This is a formal request to invalidate the elections held by the HTA  
> on December 3rd 2006. There were several irregularities in the  
> election procedure, as follows:

>  
> 1. The ballot was discriminatory to the floor candidates, as their  
> names were not typed out on the ballot papers. This prevented equal  
> opportunity for access to a democratic process by a set of  
> contestants. This is unacceptable. The constitution allows for floor  
> nomination, thus these candidates should have no less prominence in  
> the ballot paper as any other candidate. In the previous year, the  
> floor candidates' names were incorporated to the ballot in typed manner, this insured proper voting.  
> 2. The election committee was selected by the existing board which also  
> selected/nominated candidates for this election. This process leads to  
> significant bias on the part of the election committee, thus imposing  
> significant unfairness and undue disadvantage on the floor candidates.  
> 3. There were no impartial observers to oversee the election process,  
> this leads to questioning of the accuracy of the votes counted.  
> 4. There were no written directions as to the voting procedure,  
> therefore members who misunderstood verbal instructions or came late  
> were apt to make unintended mistakes, which undermines their right to  
> cast a valid ballot.  
> 5. The final declaration was a statement announcing the total number of  
> votes casted, the numbers that were discarded, and the names of the winners.  
> This is not acceptable, as there were no observers to ensure a fair  
> process of vote counting,. declaration of actual number of votes for  
> each candidate is absolutely mandatory to prevent any entertainment of voting disputes.

> 5. The final declaration was a statement announcing the total number of  
> votes casted, the numbers that were discarded, and the names of the winners.  
> This is not acceptable, as there were no observers to ensure a fair  
> process of vote counting,. declaration of actual number of votes for  
> each candidate is absolutely mandatory to prevent any entertainment of voting disputes.

>  
> The whole election procedure should be declared null and void.  
>  
> The board should apologize to the general body for placing such undue  
> burden on them in this extremely undemocratic, unethical election process.  
>  
> The board should call for a general body meeting where from the  
> nomination and election committee members shall be chosen.  
>  
> And, most importantly ballots should give equal prominence to ALL  
> LEGAL candidates.

> Chandana Mishra

**Following comments were made by the Board members after the Secretary brought these issues to the floor :**

Kamal Kharbanda: All the Committees worked really hard and followed all the rules, some of the candidates won and some lost the elections. Those who lost the elections are still welcome at the Temple and they can still help out the temple. There is no further need to discuss this issue.

Snigdha Sharma: She raised the question about Ballot papers not having all the names of the candidates nominated from the floor. Also, she mentioned that Election Committee Chair did not explain the ballot rules.

Mohini Ahuja : Nomination Committee has the right to make decisions and they made the ruling that no names will be printed of those candidates being nominated from the floor. Mr. Subhash Arora explained the rules very well and nobody expressed any dis-satisfaction with that up until the following day.

Ashwani Bakshi: Nomination form had clearly stated the rules and also that during and or after Subhash explained all the rules clearly to everyone, nobody including any candidate or supporters had any objections on the ballot paper or anything else.

Vijay Sethi: Couple of senior Board members were standing at the entrance door and canvassing. Secondly, the floor nominated candidates did not have their names printed on the ballot papers. There were the observations that he made and he is not challenging anybody or anything.

Prem Bhardwaja: Echoing what Ashwani Ji said and also that all efforts were made to make everybody aware of the ballot and nomination rules (including candidates and the general devotees). The election results are valid and will stand. He also had a question about the truncated email message that was copied and pasted to distribute to the rest of the Board. This email is missing date, time stamp and the subject line.

Ravi Aggarwal: All efforts were made to explain all the voting and nomination rules by Sanjay Sangani (Nomination Committee member) and Subhash Arora (Election Committee Chair). Several other questions came from the floor however; none of those questions were related to the Ballot rules or nomination rules. Nomination rules were posted on the Temple website and on the Temple Bulletin Board in advance. All the names of candidates were posted on both sides of the voting booth to facilitate easy voting. There is no merit in any one of these issues raised in the three emails.

Mamta Gupta: Echoing what was said by Ravi Aggarwal and also that it is time to move forward because the Board has so many other important things to accomplish.

Varinder Narang: All devotees/voters are intelligent. Based on this assumption, right from the beginning of the meeting till the end of the voting results announcements time, the entire process was explained step by step by Nominating Committee member and the Election Committee chair. He mentioned that he watched the entire video of the Election Day to ensure that all the explanation is properly done by the all the committees to the voters. None of the questions related to these issues were asked by anybody. Subhash Ji posted the names of candidates on both sides in the voting booth. Therefore, the election results are valid and will stay.

Jagdish Sharma: Wanted to make sure that all devotees who had a question and raised their hands will be given an opportunity (within the time frame) to state their question(s) while accommodating this, the Secretary went well beyond the allotted time slot for Q & A session. There was enough time for anybody who wanted to ask any question even if it about the nomination or election process. The fact of the matter is that nobody asked any question(s) pertaining to the issues at hand. He clarified further of one of the question raised in Dr. Chandana Misra's email about giving possession of Ballot Boxes to third party. The Secretary mentioned that for all practical purposes, the election committee is third party to everybody. The election committee was selected by majority vote of the Board. Sanjay Sangani and Subhash Arora did an exceptionally great job and were very professional. Also, in response to Mr. Sethi's version that he heard from couple of people (Mr. Sethi's words "observations") that some Board members were canvassing at the door, the Board secretary mentioned that no such thing happened and there is no iota of truth in his so called baseless "observation". Rather several Board Members have seen Mr. Vijay Sethi himself handing out the orange color fliers to the devotees. Mr. Sethi denies this observation.

Two questions were raised during this time. They are as following:

First Question came from Bhardwaja Ji regarding the validity of Snigdha's email that included Dr. Chandana Misra's email. Prem Ji pointed out that this email was missing very important components such as day, date and time stamp and also missing was the original subject line and who the original recipients of Chandana's email were. Snigdha's response to this question was that she just forwarded Chandana's email because Chandana Ji did not have the Board members' individual email addresses.

Varinder offered a resolution to resolve the validity question of this email by stating that if it possible for Snigdha Ji to directly forward Chandana's email or print out the original version and provide a hard copy to the Board Secretary. Snigdha Ji agreed to forward Dr. Chandana's original email without any changes to Board Secretary.

The Board Secretary has not received that forwarded email or a printed copy thereof, from Snigdha Ji as of today (December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006).

Second question was raised by Snigdha Ji that nobody explained the rule that floor nominated candidates' names will have to be hand-written by the voters.

Ravi Aggarwal answered that Mr. Subhash Arora and Mr. Sanjay Sangani explained the rules of voting ballot and Nomination process.

Snigdha Ji further mentioned that once Subhash Ji was done, he quickly went inside and she had couple questions herself to ask from Subhash Ji. In response to this Varinder said that if she had a question, why she did not protest and would not have voted until all her questions were answered. Also that if she had couple of questions, why did she not raise them atleast during the AGM meeting.

At the end of this discussion, the secretary requested a motion from the Board members. Mr. Ravi Aggarwal Made the following motion:

The Board has reviewed the three emails so far, we had an open discussion about it, now it appears that a due diligence was done by all the nomination as well as election committee, every information related to the elections, was posted on the temple bulletin board and also on the temple's website, since no such issues were raised before, and during the election time, and hence this issue being raised in the emails should be considered meritless and move forward.

Varinder Ji seconded the motion with the following additions:

Executive committee consulted various founding members and respectable community members, including the advice from legal counsel for HTA

Additional Comments:

Snigdha Sharma asked the question from Varinder as to who are those community members who gave the advice, to answer her question, Varinder Narang mentioned couple of names. Snigdha made a comment after hearing those two names that these individuals are very biased people and Varinder should have consulted with some people from outside the community.

*The voting on this motion went as following:*

**A Yes Vote will constitute that the respective board member agrees with the motion and that the Election results are valid and stand , therefore there is no need to put a formal request to the Election Committee.**

**A No vote will constitute that this matter be put in a formal request to the Election Committee**

**Yes Votes: Kamal Kharbanda, Mohini Ahuja, Ashwani Bakshi, Prem Bhardwaja, Ravi Aggarwal, Mamta Gupta, Varinder Narang, Jagdish Sharma**

**No Votes: Snigdha Sharma, Vijay Sethi**

**Motion carried with 8 votes to 2.**

**Second Motion by Ravi Aggarwal:**

HTA Board considers the election held on December 3, 2006 is valid and the election Results announced by the Election Committee Chairman are valid and will stand.

Ashwani Bakshi second the motion.

**Discussion:**

Snigdha Sharma asked about the final vote count for each candidate of the elections. There was no other discussion on this issue. Secretary requested to move on to the voting for this motion.

Voting Yes Members: (meaning agreed with the motion) as following:

Kamal Kharbanda, Mohini Ahuja, Ashwani Bakshi, Prem Bhardwaja, Ravi Aggarwal, Mamta Gupta, Varinder Narang, Jagdish Sharma

Voting No Members : Snigdha Sharma, Vijay Sethi

Motion carried.

### **Third Motion by Mr. Vijay Sethi**

Mr. Vijay Sethi made the motion that Board should appoint an independent committee of 2 to 3 members from the HTA Devotees and have that committee investigate the issues at hand and the Committee will compose a final letter and bring it to the Board.

Motion seconded by Snigdha Sharma

#### **Discussion:**

Mamta Gupta mentioned that how and who will decide as to who is biased and who is not. Vijay Sethi recommended that why not include the previous three HTA Board Presidents to do this investigation but later retracted this statement. There was no further discussion on this issue. Prem Ji echoed what Mamta Ji said earlier as to how we will decide as to who is and isn't biased. Sonia Ji made it clear that she did not receive any emails and stated that the person who originally sent those emails to the Board was a biased person. On the side note, the Secretary stated that the proper procedure was not followed by sending these emails to the Board secretary first so that he can pass it on to each and every Board member. But rather those emails were sent in a "hit & miss" methodology.

**Yes Votes: Snigdha Sharma, Vijay Sethi**

**No Votes: Kamal Kharbanda, Mohini Ahuja, Ashwani Bakshi, Prem Bhardwaja, Ravi Aggarwal, Mamta Gupta, Varinder Narang, Sonia Rajvanshi, Jagdish Sharma**

Third motion did not carry with two to nine votes.

#### **Fourth Motion by Snigdha Sharma:**

Snigdha Sharma made a motion with respect to the final vote count for each candidate who was running in the elections on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006. She wants the Board to put a request to Mr. Arora as to make the final vote count public by amending the Election Procedure for this year only.

This motion was seconded by Ashwani Bakshi

Varinder Ji brought the issue that because the Election Procedure prohibits the Election Chairperson from announcing the final vote count for each candidate. Prem Ji added that we should not ask the Election Committee for the vote counts primarily because the Election procedures do not allow them to disclose this information. Sonia Rajvanshi added that this Board first selected the Election Committee members and now we are questioning them and their integrity. Ravi Aggarwal mentioned that by not disclosing the final vote counts, adds more curiosity and might create problem, he said we should ask for the count. The secretary added that if we request the Election Committee to deviate from their established norms, we must include all committees including Nomination and Election Committee to decide whether this particular request can be made for the vote count. Mamta Ji said that we should not ask the Election Committee for the individual vote count.

Ashwani Bakshi, Snigdha Sharma, Vijay Sethi and Ravi Aggarwal voted in favor of the motion.

Kamal Kharbanda, Mohini Ahuja, Prem Bhardwaja, Mamta Gupta, Varinder Narang, Sonia Rajvanshi, and Jagdish Sharma voted against the motion.

The motion did not carry.

Varinder Narang notified all the members in this meeting that some Board Members received (by hand) a letter from Dr. Hara Misra and that the Board President and Secretary will be drafting the response to his letter. If anybody has any objection, please state it now. Nobody who was in the teleconference said anything presumably indicating concurrence.

The Board President and the Secretary thanked everybody and the Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.