

BOT December 5, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Shiv Kapoor, Nani Bhowmik, Amit Jain, Pradeep Khanna, P. Saravanan, Kiran Topudurti, Koeli Goel, Neena Tripathy, Raju Perecherla, Sanjeeva Reddy, Uma Rao, Shankar Bhattacharya, Aradhana Chhajed, Kalyanasubbu Sundaravelu, Kaushik Patel.

Members Absent: P. Balgopal, Veera Mallu Boddu

Shiv opens the meeting and introduces agenda: Election of various committees AND Fundraising Event planning.

- Minutes of October 31, 2010 BOT meeting were distributed. Kaushik moved Motion to approve minutes. Seconded by Pradeep. MINUTES APPROVED.
- Shiv: We have to first set up the different committees. We will elect committee chairs and then they can form their committee and form sub-committees. Members can be drawn some from BOT and some from outside so as to bring people into the system.
  - Committees: Fundraising, Religious Activities, Facilities, Technology, Landscaping & Maintenance, Public Relations and Communications, Administration & Rules
  - Nomination for Fundraising: Shiv Proposes Pradeep Khanna
    - Pradeep – since I have come back after a long time let one of the continuing members do the fundraising chair.
    - Shiv: The reason I said this was that you've been on this BOT and know the lead and will know better than most.
    - Aradhana: I'd like to suggest Kiran.
    - Kiran: I'm already doing a lot of things and taking overall responsibility for everything. So someone else should do it.
- Sanjeeva: I propose Kaushik Patel as chair of Fundraising Committee. Raju seconds. ALL APPROVE.
- Sanjeeva: I propose Nani Bhowmik as the chair of Facilities Committee. Shankar seconds. ALL APPROVE.
- Sanjeeva: I propose Aradhana Chhajed as the chair of Religious and Cultural Committee. Koeli seconds. ALL APPROVE.
- Koeli: Information Technology Chair should be Amit Jain. ALL APPROVE.
- Shiv : We should work with our website so that it reflects it is a current one and not outdated. We will have to work on it.
- DISCUSSION ON WEBSITE, ONLINE REGISTRATION AND DONATION.
- Landscape planning and Maintenance Chair: Subbu. ALL APPROVE.
- Public/ Social Relations Chair: Koeli. ALL APPROVE.
  - Shiv: For PR, we have done a few events. Basic function - organize talks and community connection.
  - Koeli: Well we have been doing the newsletter. [Rao: Let us put a link on the IllinoisHomepageNet. Pradeep: They will charge. And I am not sure if they will agree to put religious information up. We have to find that out and also how much they will charge. Rao: We have to find out. We can spend some money.]
- Administration and Rule: [Shiv clarifies: Administration is regarding by-laws and other changes and deals with due business rules related to administration.] Raju: I propose Pradeep Khanna as chair of Administration and Rules Committee. He has done that before. ALL AGREE.
- DISCUSSION: On Committee directions.
- Kaushik: My expertise is zero so I need help in the Fundraising Committee. I have heard it voiced that people think we have given the money and we need to be part of the actual organization. We need to keep people

informed on what decisions are being taken and why. Right now the biggest thing is to decide how to raise funds.

- DISCUSSION on emails/ databases/ website postings to be kept current/ event planning:
  - Kaushik: Everytime we could have some planned occasions. Right now we are organizing sporadically. But if we look at the calendar and arrange to have some sort of celebration regularly then it gets organized, you communicate it, sub-committee plans it. Here at BOT we discuss the masterplan, and then individual committees deal with details.
  - Saravanan: We are doing the civic center thing and people are losing interest because we have no temple yet and nobody wants to attend events there.
  - Sanjeeva: We can do a picnic in summer.
  - Shiv: I think this is the idea: We have something every month. Month of Feb: Shivratri, March: We have Holi.
  - Koeli: And we can have a calendar put out with all the events listed. We can have local businesses sponsor the calendar.
  - Kaushik: Are there local businesses who will sponsor?
  - Nani: I think the calendar is a great idea. I am part of the Bengali community. Our Saraswati puja is coming up in January we can put that and the Durga puja on the calendar.
  - Aradhana: We did regular occasions – we did different pujas at the Urbana Civic Center but only 10-15 people turned up.
- DISCUSSION: Phone Tree, Medical community outreach, Committee Planning/ Implementation and Reports.
- Shiv Kapoor Presents CONSTRUCTION PLAN UPDATE:
  - We have the bids from 7 people out of which the committee met with 6 contractors [with the lowest bids]. All came back and cut down the costs from 1.3 to 1 mn. But one suggested one way to cut down one item and other suggested another way. So we decided to go to architect and we are at the stage where the architects need to advise.
  - Kiran: Even for the same item, the savings from different contractors had enormous differences.
  - Shiv: Pradip, Raju, Kaushik, Chhotabhai and I discussed. All drawings with both floor plans given to Chhotabhai and Raju. Where you are on that – both things need to go on parallel.
  - DISCUSSION ON: Reducing costs, finished/ unfinished basement, one-storey vs. two-storey, Spring 2010 construction initiation.
  - Pradeep: I heard from Chhotabhai that he felt that he was prepared TO GO AFTER RAISING MONEY but not given chance to do it fully. In fundraising time, 2 floors were proposed and later suddenly changed. People felt the information was not correct. Can we have 2 people take a fresh look at the drawings and give us a plan? AND can we get a jump in fundraising going in parallel with other exercises.
  - Subbu: What is frustrating is that we are taking decisions and going back and forth, making decisions and going back again and again.

- Neena: You have a chick and egg situation. The biggest issue: You cannot build something right now and not look at the future. My understanding was that this was the Hindu temple and cultural center. I see thread ceremonies, and other ceremonies being held here besides particular pujas only. I want a nice place which feels like India and home. I am not like, let us quickly build something for which people will give us money but instead, I would like something nice – not only for just Indians and Hindus, but something like a full center which encompasses all the needs and brings in all people. We need to make a decision to what we want the center to be.
- Kiran: That is what the BOT discussed in May and decided that we will go for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor option. The BOT voted – and everyone said lets go for the temple first and then the cultural center will come later. We talked about it already. Now we are reopening this thing again. We are losing credibility in the community. It means different things for different people but with resources we have, we will never be able to build to satisfy every need. So we decided as a group to build one thing first. If we have 1.5 mn we could build everything. But we have only 300 k. Whatever we do we have to be aware of that. To proceed: Either we have to raise more funds or go get from bank. But the question is: how much loan should we take. How much can this community absorb.
- Nani: As Facilities Committee chair let me say this – if we start in March or April – the plan should be ready by this month. So, firstly, we have to make collective decision about whether we want the build next year – then we MUST have the plan ready THIS MONTH. All these discussions, BOT made decision to go for 1 floor because, reality check, we just cannot do 2 floors with the money we have because it is just not going to happen unless someone gives \$500,000 tomorrow. Or a builder says he can do both floors for \$1 mn and we can work for funds but I don't think we can raise that money.
- DISCUSSION ON: Construction timeline, Fundraising, Realistic evaluation of fund situation, fundraising challenges, Latest date for new estimates [Raju],

#### DISCUSSION on DATE FOR THE FEBRUARY FUNDRAISER.

Aradhana: Shiv Ratri puja is on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Also we need time for a community Satynarayan puja - we can do it in April.

Shiv: Realistically by Feb 1 we should have a very good idea, otherwise we can go back to the orginial paln.

#### DISCUSSION on communications and community response.

- Kaushik: When we have hospital situation where people don't come to meeting, we have electronic communication. I suggest we communicate to people and ask them for money before the end of year tax credits. Email may say – “BOT is trying very hard, we are asking you to renew and send some money in. We will appreciate anything you can afford. Would you respond and let us know your opinion?”
- Shiv: I am asking for dates for both plans in terms of plans and fundraising.

Neena: I think Jan 15 and early Feb for presenting to the community are good dates.

Kaushik: I think 4 weeks is reasonable. By mid Jan they can give us a plan. Then we need to look at all options. We have to make decisions based on reality by Jan 16. We can have a progress report around that time: At least if we do not have the money, we would have a realistic plan. I don't think it is a good plan to start the temple in the basement. But if people see and hear about the reason why it is being done, that's a realistic thing.

Raju: My intent has always been to see how we can build with the minimum amount, not bidding process – but how LOW we can get. That is my only intent. My plan was that let us talk to the community and not even go for bidding and outside bidders. Main goal: How can we get it done at the lowest price.

Kiran: By Jan 15 we should know the option. I recommend that we should not wait for the decision to go on with the fundraising effort. We should not waste time but carry on ahead with all fundraising efforts – I don't want to lose 6 weeks.

Koeli: Who will send end-of-the-year letter to the community with update and year-end donation request?

Kaushik: Koeli let us talk on that and we can plan on sending out a communication soon.

MEETING ADJOURNED.