

BOT Meeting April 28, 2013

Members present: Pradeep (Presiding over the meeting in Kiran's absence), Shiv, Nani, Koeli, Veera, Sanjeeva, Neelu, Subbu, Bal, Shailesh, Raju, Radha.

Members Absent – Bharathi, Kiran, Piyush, Raja, Srinivas (Bal has proxy), Saravanan (Sanjeeva has proxy).

AGENDA

1. May Pratishta event
2. Priest selection process
3. Media Committee and IT Committee reports (additions).

HIGH FIVE

1. Congrats to the volunteers who received the idols, checked it and secured the packages.

Main

2. Bal – we need discuss possibilities of putting a gate and a monitor system to secure the property (On Friday there were several unknown people who stopped at the site while I was here and I was not sure as to their purpose). Shailesh – video camera. DISCUSSION on Gate and Monitor for securing property.
 - Subbu – sign to say we are being monitored. Neelu - Curtains for the deities. Like the ones we had for the Sai Bhajan yesterday. Pradeep – alarm system. Shiv – As soon as May 18-19 event is done alarm system should be turned on. Neelu – we should do it now. Nani – if we put the alarm system so many people are coming and going – everyone has to have the alarm system code. Bal – some non-BOT members are coming and collecting the key too. Nani's point is well taken. Shailesh – Can we turn it off? Pradeep – maybe we should be less generous in giving people the alarm code. Neelu – can we set it to turn off alarm between 6-7 p.m.? Pradeep – we should check on that and activate as soon as possible. Mallu – We could at least secure the inside. Also outside if we have a gate – could be a deterrant. Shailesh – I think we should stop putting keys in the hotel. If somebody vandalizes the idols. Neelu – More than vandalizes, they disrespect.
 - Pradeep - Couple of decisions we will take – 1. Activate the security system. 2. Limit access to temple to devotees without the presence of a BOT member. We can leave the key there but not give it to anyone. DISCUSSION on who has keys among BOT.
 - DISCUSSION on more keys and security cameras. We can make keyes so that every trustee has it. Shiv – That is the important point what Neelu and Koeli are saying. Now we have these expensive idols here, we need to secure the premises right now. Pradeep – if the word gets out that we are doing big inauguration in May 18-19 temptation for miscreant to plan something bad is even higher. Shailoesh – we are worried about idols – big responsibility. Nani – Let us make copies and give to the regular people. Neelu – let us give to the regular people. Pradeep – if there are key volunteers – BOT can decide to give them also. ALL – we can make a few more copies.
 - Raju – we should do a security camera at the entrance. Its not very expensive. And one inside and one outside. Maybe 3-4 cameras. Nani – Srinivas knows but he is not here today. Its a good idea to have cameras. Shailesh – Power? Do we need a power point up on the roof?only \$100. Shiv – Where would we put? That could become the target, now there is no reason NOT to (have an alarm system). Koeli – there are very small cameras.

Nani – Koeli can you check it? All – it is digital and cycles every 7 days.. Neelu - but who will record.

- Pradeep – Do we need a formal vote to put security camera? All – let her find out the information. Subbu – intention is there. Shailesh – if it is professional \$1000. Mallu – it is locked anyway, the only thing is to secure the parking lot. If it is \$1500.
- Motion – Raju proposes motion. Nani seconds. All in favor. We want to install a security system - \$4500.00. All authorize Koeli to check with the vendor.
- Bal – can we call a insurance and ask for lowering premium. ALL agree. Let us get an estimate. Keys DISCUSSION – an Administrative issue – do not need a vote on limiting access to temple (key issue). Neelu – I will go in log and authorize regular community members and send out an email to authorize.
- Neelu – Conference Call with Gurukkal and Mallu was heading Religious Committee for May event. Neelu, Sanjeeva, Mallu, Bharathi. He said we will need a priest to do pujas everyday. Now upto PSC and BOT. Gurukkal will bring 2 priests – Srihari and Vyas Sharma. He prefers to stay at a home. I have to reach out and ask community who will host priests.
 - May 18-19 Event - He said categorically it is a Pran Pratishtha not Chara Pratishtha. Along with Kumbhashikam. We asked if we needed to do regular Puja after the event, and he said yes. Now that is up to the Priest Selection committee and BOT to hire priest, or how we do that.
 - Homam – no limit to how many people can do – he will do it outside. He also gave an idea of puja charges.
 - Mallu – We had 3 session – Sat morning, Sat afternoon, Sunday morn – 4 hours. (timings 8.30 – 12.30 etc.) Details of hours are here in the memo. (We will send an email giving details.) Length of pujas also discussed – once we confirm – we will send details. All things like Jaladivasma, Sainam, Dhana dhanyam – each one might take 10 minutes. Once we confirm we will send the list.
 - Bal – question – in Lemont temple – one of the way they raised lot of funds – kalasam – the coconut bought by temple and people sponsored for \$1000 each. Neelu – That is our plan - we have the kalasams and will do it.
 - Mallu – Gurukkal said - Without Pran Pratishtha, there is no other puja. We should NOT call Chara Pratishtha or anything. “Call it Pran Pratishtha and Kumbhashikam.” Mallu – can I put a motion that we call the event Pran Pratishtha. Shiv – I have a qs – is it clear to him we can move these deities anywhere from here. Does he agree to that? Mallu – yes he knows. Mallu – G said any Pratishtha is Pran Pratishtha. He said there is a program to do that. They put deities in a temporary housing and move them to the permanent abode and do kumbhashikam again. Pradeep – every pratishtha is pran prat. You are saying, God come here and sit and accept our prayers. Detailed Explanation provided. If you go with scriptutres – there is no choice but do PP.
 - Mallu – Motion. Call the May 18-19 Event Pran Pratishtha and Kumbhashikam. Neelu seconds. Unanimously passed. Radha – this all seems too formal to me. Pradeep – in future we will need to decide what is an administrative decision.

- Donation plan – Neelu – I have to meet with the Puja committee again to finalize. Sanjeeva – we might be meeting Gurukkal this coming week. Next Sunday we will present. Time is passing fast. Pradeep – I suggest to Puja Committee – take a decision and email a recommendation to the BOT. Bal – I have no objection but I think if Puja comm. If you have any discussion you can share and we can give opinion as a group.
- Mallu – Homams – 3 event together – general sponsor \$501; Single session – 201; PP – actual deities – you can put depending on your potential and evaluate our potential. No limit to that how many people can do it. Not reached the details on this one yet. Bal – this is an opportunity for us to generate good resources. So when you talk about people when PP is taking place couples can take part – that’s a tremendous sanctimony and honor. I think that amount I would like to discuss – we must be careful not to make the amount so high that there are no sponsors. E.g. \$5000 – I am sure there will be 5 or 8 or 10 couples who will volunteer, come forward. \$5000 for each deity or all deities together. This is an opportunity for people to add to their contribution, to pull in people and give them ownership (if I can use a word that is not objectionable) for this endeavor. Raju – I agree this is the best opportunity to raise funds. 5000 may be too high for all community or might work out. Neelu – BOT might decide – we are just discussing now - for one of the pujas – we wanted \$1000 for one of the pujas we have done in the past, and was told that is too high. So far we have not asked for \$5000 for any puja and that might be too high. Pradeep – we should wrap up this and get to next item.
- Mallu – we have not finalized. Not in dollar amounts but only number of people who can participate. This is up to the Panditji and the BOT Other temple – they raised \$100,000-200000. They cleared debts. That should be our aim. Raju – Event, Puja and Fundraising committee should decide - this is the best opportunity – \$1000 and above are not inappropriate. Once in a lifetime, and people go for it. Neelu- if people give \$5000 they will be allowed to do all pujas? Raju – In my opinion that is the best option.
- Shiv – You have to be innovative what package you can produce . 4-5 major things that they feel they did something none else did. And other smaller items which everyone can participate. So people do not feel left out. If everything is \$5000 then people will shy away. If you have 4-5 people – that is \$20,000 right there. Neelu - can we do the Kalasa Puja and spread it to the whole category and 4 people do the major thing. So that nobody feels left out. Shiv (agrees) – divide it to 3-4 categories. That way you know whom to target to. All agree.
- Pradeep – Guidance from the BOT is that this is a great opportunity – so don’t feel too conservative to ask. Bal –(Opportunity to get good resources) - the contingent effect is fabulous. When we started with handful at the brick in the foundation event but once we started many people just came forward – we collected 160 + people right there. I think we should have, like other temples, kalasa puja minimum \$1001 .
- Mallu – can we discuss when we have numbers. Neelu – can we come up with numbers in the next few days. Shiv – see if you can also project – how many will be able to participate. Radha – if we wait till next Sunday it is already May. Talk about it in the next couple of days. And send out notice. Neelu – we have not

always kept that protocol always. We have been having meeting back to back. We all working and having meetings after work. We are trying our best. If people don't want to sign up for 2 weeks notice – Pradeep - you guys are working very hard – under constraints. Do not wait for Sunday. Try to give 24 hours to think. If I don't reply that means I am agreeing. Bal – here we have a quorum – let us give them a feedback. Pradeep – I want to respect the autonomy of the Puja com. Raju – let them decide and send us emails – then we give them feedback. Mallu – you can send emails. Pradeep – \$5100 upper limit. \$1001 as kalasa. That is enough guideline.

- Neelu – Budget – I have booked the tent, took chairs away - 1500. Estimate of items from India – \$1000 (Rs. 5400), Kalasa \$10 each x 200 = \$2000. Miscellaneous from Chicago – 1000 for rest of puja item. Priest expenses. Audio Video - \$500 Shaileshji is looking at options. Koeliji will give a big tv to screen. From India navartna – \$2000. Rental vans – 2 days - \$500 total. Shailesh – minivan. This is total \$10,000. Including priest cost and shilpi cost. Radha – among all these things – for all these things is sponsorship possible. Neelu – yes. Will send out in puja list - If families want to sponsor mangalsutra (maybe 500 or 1016) and saris. Radha – I want to do mangalsutra but since I am BOT is that a conflict. Pradeep – let us wait for the email to go out. Then reply as the first person to reply. Raju – can you say upto 5 people can sponsor mangasutra. Neelu - How do you honor that? Pradeep – We can say 5 people can sponsor - we need to think about that. They will not know the cost – you can say “mangalsutra for Durga”. Bal – auspiciously we cannot have more people sponsoring one mangalsutra. ALL speak at once. Bal – are you getting flowers on wholesale? Mallu - we are asking for sponsors for flowers and the garlands. Pradeep – I will exercise my executive privilege and stop this discussion. I will ask Puja Committee to come up with recommendations. BOT email your ideas and finally - recommendation.

- Pradeep - Koeli, Do you have a media plan? Koeli - Yes, we have a media plan. We are doing a big commemorative issue and pledge form inserts. Several other smaller items which I will go through it if we have time. I met with the Media Committee and the Chairs of Puja, Event, Fundraising and IT committee. Every BOT member has a copy of the plan – I emailed it. Everyone agrees. No objection. Pradeep – plan approved.
- Pradeep - IT committee would you like to present something? Shailesh – our existing website is a blog, not a full website cannot handle all the recommendations coming from the various committees. We need to upgrade on immediate basis. Do we need old or new content. DO we want an archive. How long back should photos go back. We only have limited storage. Too late now to get a new website too short a time now to get input from people. We can do it after the event. Neelu – we should have an archive. Shiv – we have a small amount to go back to. Pradeep – 5 year archive? Radha – this is one of the most important things people come to. Even before the event – if we can outsource the website update– we should do it now. Right now it looks very archaic. We need to update. Shailesh – Now the website is only a blog. We want to add – an Events Calendar, a Emergency Notification, a Service List, A BOT reference. Koeli supports that. We want provide various services. Shiv – now expense \$250/ year. Now not too much info to

archive. Pradeep – start with new info – Koeli to give the media information. Koeli – you can ask Dr. Kapoor and others for history. Radha - Aroma Curry website looks much more attractive.. Shailesh – we will make a professional website this time. Basic – 10 gb. We can do with that same amount. Shiv and Pradeep – you guys take a decision. If you want to hire it is your decision. DISCUSSION.

- Priest Selection – Shiv – last Sunday we reported – The Priest Selection Committee was formed. After the Puja last Sunday, we interviewed this priest for couple of hours. We discussed number of things with him. Also started working on the criteria from last time and the process. As I told to BOT 13-14 criteria and we want to give weights – to show the priority of the different categories. This week through email communicated with committee members. Today we are meeting after this BOT. Also community feedback. Some committee members did not meet this priest when he was here. Idea – can he do some puja and aarti – so those who have not observed can observe. Criteria – I brought this handout – I collected information from every member of community. HANDOUT.
 - DISCUSSION on Compensation and English proficiency. Members raise questions about criteria. Shiv – if someone says I want \$60,000 then the question does not rise. Mallu – let at elast get an idea. Subbu – I have a very good idea – a shortlist idea. Basic knowledge of performing puja. I want to keep simple and transparent. For me if you ask me to rank it – I will say English proficiency. Ability to communicate to the younger generation. Anything more – that is a bonus point. Some of these things – do not know how to decide. Shiv – we have resumes which give enough information for deciding these categories. Neelu – sometime it is hard to know. We were not in the interview. Shiv – that is the PSC job. Neelu – English proficiency be given its own number. Instead of 3b. Shiv - We will talk inside the committee and give the recommendation. And we will share it with all of you. Pradeep – BOT would like to see the final criteria and the weight you have given. When I see 3 a.b.c - this is heavily leaning towards Sanskrit base. Today was an eye-opening experience for me – out of all of us no one could recite the Sanskrit mantra. Even I struggle. I graduated in Sanskrit. 90% of people who attend do not know Sanskrit. If Veda, then how about Puranas? My thing – greater emphasis on English category. Bal – let me clarify in depth – these things are not coming across from the committee. Ability to teach Veda – there are many young people who would like to chant. These are not Vedas, these are ragas. Smarta tradition – one who will be performing Vishnu puja and Shiv puja. We have to ask that question and if they say “I cannot do Shiv puja”, and we have a Shivalingam here, then we cannot hire him. Neelu – We really don’t need the priest to teach us the Vedas and scriptures in Sanskrit, we are reading from books for the mantras and we can continue to do so. More important is English proficiency, I think we are all here so our children so they can learn and understand. Koeli - taking off from what Dr. Balgopal said – what is happening in committee is not coming across here very well. So I would like to propose that more BOT members sit in. I have mentioned English proficiency in the committee. When I mentioned that with reference to the fact that one candidate spoke in Telegu the entire interview, I received email from one non-BOT member accusing me – that I am making “derogatory comments about one candidate just to promote any other candidate.”

- Shiv we have met to discuss the criteria once only. We are going to talk more about it. Matters in the subcommittee should be confidential. We need to talk about everybody rather than get excited about one person. We have not seen the other two people. People are not available on weekdays. We will discuss more about it. Then only we can discuss about this person – why he could not communicate. Pradeep – But here, BOT should ensure insulting emails are prevented. Neelu – I think we should have a code of conduct on emails. Shiv – we should. Nani – Shiv, nobody says, whether you or I or Bal have sat in committees – but others are saying. It should not be discussed but it IS being discussed. The problem – you are trying your level best. But the Problem is that somebody else sends email; Emails are being sent – someone sent an email on something I said from 12 months back and that email was sent just last week to the entire BOT – whether that was to influence the BOT decision, Search committee decision? There has been lot of things going on that should not go on. I support Koeli – BOT members can sit in the PSC. I have no problem. Raju – I talked about this a long time ago - we need transparency. What is so secret about sharing info from Subcommittee discussions – we are sharing with BOT. Why not BOT attend subcommittee meetings?
- Shiv – there is no reason to form subcommittee for the selection which is so important – let us dissolve it. Let BOT do it. The s/c was formed because too many players. Neelu – I agree, because people come and ask us and we do not know. Sanjeeva – I agree. Bal – I agree.
- Raju – The reason for this and for which I am not very happy this thing, Srinivas sent an email about one of the priests. What we said here is that subcommittee is supposed to deal with it and no one else. He sent email about a candidate who did a puja a year ago. Neelu – I responded – we should be able to give input on all priests and not selectively like that. It was not appropriate at all. Why puja at this short notice. Sanjeeva – Why was no information given to us? The PSC should have sent it to BOT. Pradeep – we should send it as job interview.
- Mallu – According to Constitution and bylaws – any BOT member can sit in any meeting. Only requirement – when they talk, chair has to give permission. Any subcommittee – any member can come and attend. One year Bal was not a member and he gave recommendation and we welcomed it. I think I should strongly propose that meeting should be open to BOT. And if you follow what you said and dissolve the PSC and BOT take over, I am for it too. Openness is needed. This criteria here in this paper given to us by PSC chair - it is something I am seeing for the first time. I have the old criteria. I put a lot of thought to it – it has to be open. Sanjeeva – I think we should dissolve this priest committee and BOT as a whole decision. Radha – I am a new member. When I saw Srinivas email it reminded me of the puja Mahadev Shastri had performed year ago. Other candidates who passed through the process – e.g. Sandeep Shastri. We have their resumes. And then we realized the resumes – I thought Sandeep Shastri best person – but then he was rejected.
- Pradeep – criteria – how the table stands now – There are two things which are important. 1. Categories - minimum and maximum categories 2. This is a community based thing – happy and sad things – priest should be able to talk to

everyone, including people like me - Arya Samajis and many different sub-groups. The priest should be willing to tolerate all things. Everyone should be given chance to give a vote within the BOT. Community told he is coming for a puja.

- Bal – standing committee open for all BOT and all. Personnel committee is NOT open for everybody. It goes into executive session. I am troubled and pained that the 7 members who took assignment very seriously – including 3 community members involved with sincerity and conviction. I think we have lost confidence of this BOT. I move immediately the Priest Selection Committee be dissolved. Shiv second. Radha – I suggest the PSC members second.
- Bal – when people very vocally saying let us dissolve it, how can the committee continue. Neelu – can the BOT sit in that committee? None of us said BOT cannot sit in. Sanjeeva – you guys lined up. We need to sit in.
- Pradeep – the Resolution on table is as follows and need to be voted upon. Dissolving Priest Selection Committee – Any more discussion on it and then vote?
- Subbu – we did not know smarta tradition. DISCUSSION.
- Bal proposes MOTION to dissolve the Priest Selection Committee. Shiv seconds. Everyone else approves. Except Radha who objects to dissolution of PSC. Bal – voting for Srinivas as abstaining. Sanjeeva – voting for Saravanan as favoring motion. 12 favoring it. Motion passed 12 in favor, 1 against. 1 abstain. The Priest Selection Committee is dissolved and BOT resumes responsibility of selecting priest.
- Pradeep – the responsibility of Priest Selection has now come back to the BOT. The BOT should choose a few members to coordinate the effort. The entire BOT is the Priest Selection Committee now. Form a lead within the BOT who will take the lead. Neelu – Shivji? Shiv shakes his head in refusal. Rest - ? Shiv – the people who were invited from community – they should continue to be engaged. They will be told the committee has been expanded to include the entire BOT. ALL AGREE.
- Nani – if anybody wants to add to this table of criteria, this should be used as a guide. BOT can decide what weight to put it. Koeli - Subbu lead the BOT and Neelu take lead? ALL – we will all support you – Subbu and Neelu selected as BOT members to lead the effort. Subbu – there should be filter criteria and then evaluation criteria. And the Puranas should be given thought too. Not keep saying only Vedas. Shiv – Code of Ethics. Pradeep – I am yet to see a Hindu priest to teach Hindu ethics. Maybe ability to teach ethics should be included. Nani – he who follows some ethical standard. Mallu – Subbu and Neelu should be asked to approach the priest and lead the interview effort. At the request of members present Subbu and Neelu have agreed to serve as coordinators of the priest selection process.
- MEETING adjourned.