

HTCSCI Meeting Minutes

Date - 05/14/2013

Members present: Koeli Ji, Nani Da, Raju Ji, Mallu Ji, Neelu Ji, Shiv Ji, Sanjeeva Ji, Subbu Ji, Shailesh Ji, Piyush

Meeting Agenda posted by Koeli Ji before the meeting (email dated May 13th at 10:50 PM by Koeli Ji):

1. High 5s
2. Pran Pratishta
3. Priest Contract finalize & issuing of appointment letter
4. Schedule for formation of Ethics Committee
5. Fundraising

05/14/2013

1. Meeting was called to order by Koeli Ji at 6:46 PM. Koeli Ji presided over the meeting in absence of Kiran Ji and Pradeep Ji.
2. All the members prayed for a few minutes starting at 6:46 PM.
3. Raju Ji distributed a hard copy of the employment letter and the priest contract for the position offered to Mr. Vyas Ramesh Kumar Sharma.
4. Koeli Ji mentioned the situation of Kiran Ji. It was decided that the condolences to Nandini Ji will be sent after she comes back from India.
5. High five to entire BoT for working hard to make the upcoming event a success.
6. Koeli Ji mentioned two main issues:
 - a. Pandit Ramesh Kumar Sharma's employment
 - b. Pran Pratishta and Kumbhabhishekam
7. **Administrative Decision:** For the next three days the keys will not be distributed to general public. Only BoT will have access to the keys. Sanjeeva Ji will issue the directive to Microtel. Mallu Ji mentioned that we should give the list of names to MicroTel. Sanjeeva Ji agreed to take the responsibility of submitting the list of names to MicroTel.

ISSUE 1: Pandit Ramesh Kumar Sharma's employment

Raju Ji started the discussion about the priest contract.

Shiv Ji - How the family insurance for the priest (\$1500 in the original contract) was decided and why that number?

Raju Ji - Subbu's Ji suggestion was adopted to have a fixed number so as to get a better idea of budget and costs to temple.

Shiv Ji - Should we separate the family insurance and housing allowance (*mentioned as allowance hereafter*) or keep them together? Also how does salary fare if we spend less than \$1500 for family insurance/housing?

Raju Ji - Clarified the situation regarding income and insurance. Monthly income is fixed at \$1500 after taxes irrespective of how much we spend on housing/insurance.

Subbu Ji - Mentioned that the figure was decided keeping in mind that we also would like to have insurance for his kids.

Neelu Ji - Kids insurance is free under Illinois Law because of his income.

Neelu Ji - Who pays the utilities bill? Is that also covered under housing allowance?

Subbu Ji - No. It is his own cost. He will have to pay that from his pocket.

Neelu Ji - We should look for an apartment with utilities included for his benefit.

Koeli Ji - Has everybody looked at the contract at least once?

Everybody mentioned that they at least had a cursory glance over the contract.

Shailesh Ji - Our effective cost in that case is \$3200 (\$1500 salary + \$1500 allowance + ~\$200 taxes) which will translate to \$38400 per year. This is more than our annual budget of \$36000.

Shiv Ji - So should we reduce the allowance to \$1400 in that case?

Raju Ji - If everybody agrees, we can reduce the allowance to \$1400.

Shailesh Ji - Should we add an extra line saying that the maximum compensation of \$36000 per year including everything?

Piyush - We should reduce the allowance to \$1300 because if we are keeping it \$1400 we are still looking at a cost of \$37200 which is \$1200 more than our budget. We should aim for \$36000 annually and thus reduce the allowance to \$1300.

Koeli Ji - Does everybody approve to change the allowance to \$1300 in the new employment letter.

Unanimously approved

Neelu Ji - Should we change the second paragraph line "... directly reporting to the Temple Executive Committee." to "...directly reporting to the HTCSCI Board of Trustees".

Subbu Ji - Agree. If we mention only one committee, then there can be conflict of interest.

Koeli Ji - Then he has to be fair to all and complete BoT and not just one committee.

Everybody agrees that changing it to BoT is better.

Koeli Ji - Does everybody approve of the change "... directly reporting to the Temple Executive Committee." to "...directly reporting to the HTCSCI Board of Trustees" ?

Unanimously approved

Shiv Ji - What about employment time? I think 2 years is better.

Shailesh Ji - Agree.

Raju Ji - We have upper hand because we can always terminate the contract based on his annual evaluation.

Shiv Ji - That works both ways. He can also give us a notice and leave.

Shailesh Ji - If we terminate the contract, we have to pay 6 months of salary under Illinois law.

Shailesh Ji - How about probation period?

Nani da - But we have to make the offer more palatable to the priest.

Shiv Ji - But we still have legal issue. This is also a very critical issue. It may never be used but its good to have it here.

Koeli Ji - I agree. We can explain the situation to him.

Shiv Ji - Brahmananda Ji mentioned that feelings/emotions are alright but be careful that everything should be in writing when offering the position.

Raju - Clause 5 will include a "new probationary" period for the priest.

Neelu - What about "at home" Puja?

Raju Ji - Its in the clause. Page 2, B4. He loudly read out the point in question from the contract.

Shiv Ji - What about the people who give donation to O&M who are entitled to the "free pujas"? What about travel expenses of the priest?

RajuJi/Neelu Ji - They should pay the travel expenses.

Mallu - We need to have a separate committee to handle the "outside temple" puja procedures.

Subbu Ji - The puja money should not go to priest from HTCSCI. Tax consequences of the priest money (40% of the cost of puja) should not be our problem. Priest is responsible for his self-employment tax, federal tax, state tax and local taxes.

Raju Ji - We should not put all this into contract.

Shiv Ji - I think we should mention everything to be on the safer side.

Raju Ji - We can have this discussion later after the BoT meeting.

Shiv Ji - All the members are providing good inputs and thus it should happen now as this is very critical for us.

Raju Ji - Actually this clause is already there. Clause B.

Koeli Ji - We should send the letter. We can wait for a few days to send the contract.

Shiv Ji - I would run it by Jay Kesan. We should still give the letter to the candidate.

Koeli Ji - Raju Ji will make the changes and give it to Shiv Ji and then he will forward it to Jay Kesan and get back to BoT.

Raju Ji - I will also add the clause of probationary period.

ISSUE 2: Pran Pratishtha

Koeli Ji - If anybody wants something printed, send me by tonight. We are still debating with the correct members list for their categories. Some people have not paid their dues and are in wrong category. What should we do? Should we push them back or still put them in the same category?

Mallu Ji - We are taking out potential income if we push them back in a different category.

Raji Ji - According to constitution, they have three years to pay.

Neelu Ji - Should we send them a notice?

Shailesh Ji - We should push them back. Otherwise it will set the wrong precedence and will give the wrong idea.

Shiv Ji read out a part of constitution dealing with this matter.

Nani Da- Kiran Ji, Srinivasa Ji, Nani Da have called everyone of them. So we have given them a notice. So we should put them accordingly.

Administrative Decision: The decision is to move back the category for the people based on the amount already paid and in accordance to the constitution.

Koeli Ji - What about people with loans? Sanjeeva ji is requested to present his idea.

Sanjeeva Ji - How about if people with loans can apply their loan towards the temple membership?

Mallu Ji - How are we going to recognize them?

Sanjeeva Ji - Dr Shekhar gave a loan of \$15000 but is not any kind of member.

Shiv Ji - How the Puja sponsorship is handled? Can it be applied towards that too?

Neelu Ji - This is what is happening till now.

Shiv Ji - Srinivasa separated out the numbers.

Nani Da- There are 2-3 cases where it has happened.

Shiv Ji - Srinivasa made changes to all those people also.

Mallu Ji - We need a clear guidance on how to handle this.

Shailesh Ji - This can be a good attraction for more members to the temple.

Shiv Ji - People will find an argument to argue.

Subbu Ji - Is this only for loans? Does this mean we are giving them double advantage?

Neelu Ji - We can offer them Pujas instead of the membership.

There was some more discussion. I apologize for removing this part. I could not write everything.

Koeli Ji - (After discussion) Exception to this event, for people only with loans. Whatever the amount of they want to write off as loan waiver will be counted towards pujas that can be performed at their desired locations. And the remaining amount will be counted towards membership amount.

Unanimously approved

Neelu Ji - Extra tent ordered because of weather. Size 40x60.

Shailesh Ji - All people from a part of Gujarat are going to Chicago for an event on that day.

Mallu Ji - What about Saturday Lunch? How many do we need?

Shailesh Ji - Those are a different set of people.

Piyush - We made 375 lunch boxes and almost everything was over for inauguration event.

Neelu Ji - Is board ok with puja going on and people eating at the same time?

Everybody - It should be ok because lunches are outside.

Neelu Ji - There is a puja from 4:30 - 9:00 PM.

Mallu Ji - We should have flood lights.

Shiv Ji - Ask the tent people about the flood lights.

Nani Da - Do we need a generator?

Neelu Ji/Sanjeeva Ji - No generator. Extension coords should be enough and two flood lights.

Raju Ji - Music system is from Telugu Association

(I was out on a phone call for 10 minutes, so I don't have detailed notes of that time. But the issue of Music system was handled in that time)

Nani Da- What about moving the idols tomorrow and on the day of event?

Shiv Ji - This should be done professionally.

Sanjeeva Ji - Joe said that he contacted 4 guys.

Mallu Ji - We should 3,4 strong people stand by just in case.

Nani Da- Ron Hunter did the job for the Durga Puja.

Koeli Ji - We need a crane lift.

Mallu Ji - Nani Da and Sanjeeva will plan this out. Tell Joe about the manpower exactly.

Subbu Ji - We need professional statue handlers.

Shiv Ji - These people are called Ironworkers. Paying them and getting the job done is safer for us.

Shailesh Ji - There are going to be a lot of people on Saturday.

Raju Ji - Finish the moving and all by Friday.

Mallu Ji - We have all the puja sequences set. I am trying to get all the people to come. I will make 2-3 people responsible for each session. We have pujas both inside and outside. For *Netromelanam* puja we will have a lot of people inside, so we need to manage it well inside.

Sanjeeva Ji - We will give that job to Piyush and events committee.

Mallu Ji - We also have 2 small Mandirs. Gurukkal suggested to put Ram Parivar there. We are not going to have any pratishtha for them. We need a Shiva for the other small mandir. Nani da is going to provide the Shiva photo. Each session's puja samagri should be kept on separate shelves to manage better. We bought two baby pools for Ganesh pooja. For abhishekam we need to put Utsav Murtis. We now have to test if water is draining properly in the mandir. We need to have a small barrier to prevent water from coming towards the carpet area for Ganesh Puja.

Neelu Ji - We can order thick towels. We also need 4 fire extinguishers. There was some kind of fire during Sai Bhajans.

Mallu Ji - Who is responsible for that?

Nani Da - I will buy the 6 inch thick plastic sheet for the water issue for Ganesh puja.

Shailesh Ji - I will get the 4 extra fire extinguishers.

Neelu Ji - All the priests are staying at MicroTel. Ramesh Kumar Sharma is coming with family.

Mallu Ji - What if the stuff from India doesn't arrive on time?

Neelu Ji - There are couple of important things - Navratnas etc.

Sanjeeva Ji - We can track the order from Srinivasa.

Shiv Ji - We should have contingency plans. Call St Louis and NJ. Ask about the items needed. If things don't come by Thursday, ask them to ship overnight.

Koeli Ji - There are not many signups for puja sponsorships.

Neelu Ji - Should we give benefactors an extra chance?

Mallu Ji - Gurukal is fine with the idea of giving benefactors a chance.

Neelu Ji - We should ask somebody else to help Gurukal to read out the names.

Neelu Ji - Ask them to print up their names and gotras and bring it to the puja if they want to sponsor late.

Subbu Ji - How to handle Youth Volunteers? What about badges? The reason is to make them happy.

Neelu Ji - I will give them some rectangular badge with ribbons.

Shailesh Ji - Cleaning lady will come at 4:00 PM on Saturday and a little earlier on Sunday.

Koeli - Each committee should give Koeli Ji the list of volunteers.

Neelu Ji - Some BoT member is looking for a kidney donation. What is BoT's stand on this?
Should we announce it?

Everybody agrees that it can be accommodated preferably on Sunday.

Mallu Ji - Kiran Ji's situation can be mentioned one on one if somebody asks but should not be announced to general public.

BOT meeting is adjourned at 8:36 PM.