



Bharatiya Temple of Lansing: Monthly Temple Board Meeting

May 4th 2014

Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Place: Temple

Present: Ashok Gupta, Madan Lalwani, Bidhan Redey, Mathi Ramachandran, Sarala Masti, Vani Avula, Manasi Upadheye, and Meena Sharma, Sanjay Gupta

Absent:

Reported by; Sarala Masti

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
	Meeting started with prayer	
Review of meeting minutes of April	Since the quorum was absent, Meenaji will summarize the notes and e-mail to everybody	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
Treasurers Report	Madanji reported the balance is between \$ 50K - 60K. Bidanji said, last year we raised \$10K towards landscaping and we should be using that now. Ashokji replied, "there was plan of getting whole community involved with idea of donor's name on the bricks and it became an expensive venture almost costing \$50K and didn't go through. We now have to have a simple landscape". Vaniji suggested having a nice archway and some benches to rest for devotees. Madanji expressed that the feedback from some of the members about the sentimentality of not stepping on bricks. Madanji recommended to have a concrete plan to show to the board and get an approval before starting anything. He felt, last two years due to efforts of fund raising committee temple got major donations, so it helped with renovation and beautifying temple. Unless the same type of funding flows in, it may be difficult to overspend money. There were lot of suggestions on fund raising from various board members. There was consensus regarding increasing communication and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each board member to send a list of 3 people in community to reach out for donations.• Board members and volunteers to be volunteering on each Sunday puja with a list to explain and be available to answer questions regarding membership, motivating devotees to become members and be involved in the temple activities.

	reaching out to younger generations to help them change their perceptions and contributing \$1/day.	
Constitution Update	Sanjayji updated on constitution saying Dr Reddy has almost completed editing the document. It needs to go to constitution committee before June 30th and then it will be presented to the board for review.	
Youth Engagement Committee	<p>Manasiji suggested to have a meeting to formulate ideas with Saralaji and Mathiji to have monthly activities with kids.</p> <p>Saralaji and Bidanji suggested to bring Shashiji's Balvihar back to temple. Madanji and Meenaji said, "there was break in communication sometime ago". Meenaji suggested that before approaching her again we need to make sure we can provide the space that she needs to have 50 kids. Sundays may be an issue because of lot of programs interfering. So need to see if anyway we can work this. Ashokji and Meenaji both felt that Shashiji is a great volunteer and we really need to work with her and try to provide her what she needs.</p> <p>Meenaji also commented that Chinmaya Mission uses only in the Sunday afternoon when all the functions are over and they donate 30% of their registration fees to temple.</p> <p>There was a discussion on Subba Raoji's camp, Saralaji said, "received e-mail from his coordinator of his availability in Aug 30 and 31st weekend and since it is the school beginning and the labor day weekend I may not be available like last time to conduct the camp and continue to ask if Dr Raju or Poddarji calls or requests any board member for sponsorship for Subba Raoji what should be the board's position on it".</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth committee to meet and decide on the plan • Meenaji to have a dialogue with Shashiji regarding bringing Balvihar back to temple. • If any community members are interested in conducting the camp board will support.
Estate Gifts and Fund Raising	<p>Sanjayji suggested we should have concrete ways of approaching people to bring them to sign-up for estate planning by the end of June.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priest support fund 2. Building maintenance fund. <p>Reformatting message to have a target of \$500K for priest fund and another \$500K for maintenance fund.</p> <p>Bidanji said "we should put in such a way this will be used only when the fund raising does not meet the goal."</p>	

Religious and Social
Events Update by
Meenaji

- May 10th will be Maata ki Chowki, there will be a time slot for board of trustee.
 - Dr. Ambani's proposal of approaching large organizations for fund raising.
 - Mathiji was conveying to Madanji regarding priest's enquiry into getting the remuneration for Sita Rama Kalyana. Madanji replied "program manager has to request to issue check for them and treasurer is responsible to write a check". He also wanted to know if it was in the contract. Mathiji replied that there was remunerations for 3 Kalyanotsavs. Bidanji, suggested that the remuneration should be based on percentage of money collected from the program, for example 20-25%. In the event that program brings in less money, then the other board may have difficulties in future. Madanji said, "that was the reason earlier there was a range between \$ 150 - \$300 for the same. But board decided to make priests happy and give them \$ 200.
 - Chaandi pot was distributed to raise donation to Panditji and Shastriji and demanded explanation from Mathiji. Mathiji replied, " probably this was the culture of at least 10 yrs priests work hard on special pooja days and wedding ceremonies and according to people beliefs priest needs to be sentimentally satisfied during those times and devotees want to do it".
 - Navarathri plans
 - It has come to Meenaji's attention that non-members not from our Indian community have been using temple premises for yoga on Tuesdays. Sanjayji suggested we can have a gentle discussion and explain (to yoga teacher) that board has implemented new policy on renting the premises to members only and having a rent of \$ 50 per hour to use it.
 - According to the policy, when one priest books a pooja other priest should be available for the temple. And it has come to the attention of some of the board members that one of the priests, when out may be late for temple hours and has his wife covering for him. Mathiji said " it has to be addressed based on individual case basis". Ashokji asked Mathiji, whether priests were making
- Ashokji to update on temple activities to devotees
 - Ambaniji to take lead on this
 - Mathiji to revisit the contract and explain this to priests.
 - Meenaji to set-up a date to meet all groups.
 - Meenaji to call the yoga group to address this issue.

priest committee aware of their programs before leaving ? Meenaji replied "if we are not implementing our own policies, then we are wasting our time". Ashokji agreed it is a tough situation. Bidanji suggested, at least for the weekends one priest should be available during temple hours. He also expressed concern over safety of non-employee being on the premises when contracted employee is unavailable. Meenaji replied it is not obligatory that they take outside work when they cannot adhere to the contractual requirements. Madanji said, contract is bound by both employee and the employer. It has to be both ways. Already we have addressed many issues like mail not being picked up, not opening temple on right time and using telephone for personal use. We shouldn't be repeating same thing over and over again. If employer is not going to enforce, then the employee will dictate the employer. Manasiji suggested to go through contract and day to day list one more time. Ashokji also suggested to give them a check list and check on it every week and after certain time it may become a habit and to put nicely across to the priests.

- Statue of Nataraj still in temple
- Pandu and Sudha Yenumala has donated \$ 5000 for Navagraha plaque in 2012. She never gave the information to facilitate that at that time. Meenaji asked Madanji to look in to it.
- Manasiji is creating mail box ID for temple volunteers.
- Bidanji suggested each board member to suggest at least one person for nomination committee.
- Mathiji said he got a letter from priest regarding Ram Ram Pandithji. Bidanji and Mathiji looked in to the letter from court, the car registered in his name was abandoned. So county has towed and auctioned it. They had sent ticket regarding it .

- Priest committee to go through check list with priests
- To put away the statue in storage on May 17th with the help of Tom during temple cleaning.
- Meenaji to get information for the plaque and send it to Madanji and Madanji to look in to the records.
- Bidanji to notify the county that priest has left the country.