



SLCFA - EDMONTON

Sri Lanka Canada Friendship Association of Edmonton

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SRI LANKA-CANADA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION OF EDMONTON

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Date: January 28, 2007

Venue: SLCFA Premises at 2913 – 66 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

1.0 Call to Order: The President, Suresh Fernando, called the meeting to order at 2:26pm. The meeting commenced with the singing of the National anthems of Sri Lanka and Canada.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda The following items were added to the proposed agenda:

8.0 Membership Report

9.0 New Business

9.5 Funding for projects utilizing Casino Funds -Mano Senaratne

9.6 Indian Dance Classes – Mano Senaratne

11.2 SLCSF

11.3 SLCFA Scholarship

The house accepted a motion to approve the amended agenda proposed by: Anil Fernando and seconded by: Ransirimal Fernando.

3.0 Approval of the Minutes of the Mid-Year General Meeting: Minutes of this meeting were adopted, as circulated, Proposed by: Ramona Fernando and Seconded by: Mano Senaratne.

4.0 Matters Arising Out of the Minutes: As approved by membership the Bereavement Scheme is to be part of the new Application Form. There will be a section requesting if members wish to contribute to this fund or wish to opt out. If a member agrees to contribute, a cheque for \$25.00 for family and \$15.00 for individual is to be included with the membership dues.

5.0 President's Report: The President tabled his report. This report summarized the events that took place during the year from AGM 2006. He thanked his fellow committee members, and recognized the determination of membership to build on the good works of the past and volunteer their time and talents in contributing towards nurturing and shaping the organization for what it is today. There were no comments from the house

6.0 Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer, Liyana Jayathilake, tabled his report. He summarized the current status of the funds, revenue and expenditure. In response to queries made in advance by a member (Sunil Ranasinghe), he explained how funds were disposed to cultural dance classes. Also, the difference between the General Funds and the Casino funds. A few members queried why no amounts were not specified against Life membership. It was decided that in future only amounts received

as membership subscriptions should be recorded by the Treasurer and the Membership Director should have detailed list of the different categories of membership.

It was also pointed out that the amount paid for consultant under 'Casino Night Expenditure' should have a note or breakdown. Treasurer explained that the expenses came back as an event deposit.

Bandula also pointed out his last name was mis-spelt on the bereavement contribution list.

7.0 Auditor's Report: The Hon. Auditor, Lakshman Samarasinghe said that there should be a guideline for donations. AGLC did not approve the donations to Elephants in Need (\$200.00), Heart and Stroke Foundation \$100.00) and ABVA (\$1000.00). Also disallowed is the amount of \$500.00 for the General Administration.

However, the AGLC gave the option to re-apply for reversing the donations back from the general fund to the casino fund. The auditor also recommended the breakdown on donations should be listed.

8.0 Membership Report: In the absence of Pamela Devanayagam, the report was presented by Ramona Fernando. The membership comprised of 3 Honorary members, 2 Affiliate members; 5 Life Members; 50 Families with children; 9 Families without children; 5 single students; 2 Student families; 2 Single parents; 15 Seniors, 9 Senior couples; and 70 complimentary members. Membership fees 2005 – \$1746; Membership fees 2006 – \$2432.

The following questions were raised from the floor: How many complimentary members will become members and will they be eligible for the Bereavement Fund? It was unanimously decided that no one with a complimentary membership will be entitled to the Bereavement Fund.

9.0 New Business:

9.1 Use of Casino Funds: Some of the projects to which this money (\$150,000) could be considered: (1) Set up a UofA Scholarship, especially since the current President is Sri Lankan. There was no support for this since the President did not so much as acknowledge the Association. But it was pointed out that if a scholarship was to be established it must be made clear that the U of A President does not get the credit for it. (2) Consider sponsoring artists from Sri Lanka. The President said that he looked into this, and it was not allowed. However, it was pointed out by a member that previously approval from the AGLC had been granted for such a venture and therefore it would not harm to pursue it once again. Any out of country projects must have prior approval.

9.2 Revision of SLCFA Objects and By Laws: The EC resolution to revise the existing OBJECT "To encourage excellence in studies and promote amateur games and exercises" to "to encourage excellence in studies and promote sports, amateur games and exercises" was tabled. On a request for membership approval, the house unanimously accepted the wording to include 'sports' as presented. Members voiced various comments, one of which was to why funds approved prior and not utilized in full could not have been used to pay for netball players hotel expenses for the Calgary trip. Youth participation should have encouragement and the EC must ensure membership gets priority on requests.

The Treasurer said that approval for funds was requested, however, the AGLC had specified that only youth under 21 and one chaperone could be paid through the AGLC funds. Prior authorization of any amount could not be used.

Each request had to be forwarded for approval. Chris Senaratne explained that we were not considered a sports organization and that payment and approval were subject to AGLC regulations. There was also the question of how Western Dance classes were approved. It was explained that this was approved on the premise that it meant integrating into the Canadian society. It was concluded that we can achieve more by communicating more with AGLC.

- 9.3 **Appointment of Building Management Committee:** Resolution by Dilu Fernando and Ramona Fernando to abolish the committee and employ a person to oversee and carry out the established guidelines for building management was discussed in detail. Proposed by Mano Senaratne and seconded by Ramona Fernando, the house agreed, by a majority vote, with 5 opposing, that a building caretaker position be looked into at the discretion of the incoming Executive Committee.
- 9.4 **Funding for projects utilizing Casino funds-EC role in evaluation and approval:** Some members voiced their disappointment in the Executive Committee's handling of the request for utilizing AGLC funds. The committee should be willing to look into and try and support membership requests. Should maintain a positive and not a negative attitude.
- 9.5 **Project for new SLCFA Building – Utilization of casino Funds:** – Mano made a suggestion that the current building is a great asset but has limitations. He proposed that the Association should explore the possibility of acquiring a large piece of land, since money was available in the Casino fund, subject to use in accordance with the AGLC guidelines. He indicated that the seller of the land on which the current building is located owns 3 more vacant lots, 2 of which are for sale. The cost per lot may be around \$200,000.
Concerns were expressed that undertaking this venture would deplete the Casino funds, require City of Edmonton approval to have another community centre in close proximity, incur building construction costs, and if this is feasible, may be subject to limits set by the AGLC. After much discussion, on a motion by Jayathilake, seconded by Anil it was agreed that a 3-member committee consisting of: Mano, Lakshman and Raja should look into this project. Chris Senaratne brought in an amendment that there should be a dollar figure to the financing and we would have to support the building up to \$120,000 buffer. Anil proposed and Jayathilake seconded the motion that Mano leads the 3-member team, which the house accepted. On a show of hands, with 2 abstaining and one opposing, the motion was carried.
- 9.6 **Indian Dance Classes:** There was a lengthy debate on this issue. In response to a request from some members to organize formal Indian dance classes, Mano found a teacher and the planned to hold classes at the association building on the weekend. Since he felt these classes were similar to the Western Dance Classes and that Indian dancing was closely related to our culture, he requested the EC to consider funding this project using the Casino Funds. The EC felt that Bollywood dancing would not help retain the Sri Lankan culture and the matter was brought to the AGM for decision. A member accused the EC of mishandling the request and asked for valid reasons for refusing the funding request instead of coming up with lame excuses.

Other members felt that the EC was elected to take decisions on behalf of the membership but the members cannot ask for valid reasons which can be subjective. As consensus could not be reached following a lengthy discussion, Mano brought forward a motion that the Bhangara dance classes should be sanctioned as an SLCFA activity. This motion was seconded by Anil and 11 ayes, 9 opposed and 4 abstaining, the house agreed that the EC should write to the AGLC seeking funding for this project. Mano agreed to draft a letter for submission to AGLC.

10.0 Election of Office Bearers 2007: Suresh invited Chris Senaratne, Returning Officer to preside over the election of the new office bearers. The house elected the following office bearers by acclamation:

President – Chris Sellathamby

(Proposed by Gothami Wickremasekara, Seconded by Ramona Fernando)

Vice President – Celia Daniel

(Proposed by Dushanthi Fernando, Seconded by Madhuni Sellathamby)

Treasurer – Chandani Kalupahana

(Proposed by Gothami Wickremasekara, Seconded by Ramona Fernando)

Director of Membership and Welfare – Nissanka Wijayanayaka

(Proposed by Sali Kulatunge, Seconded by Chitra Rajapakse)

Director of Social and Recreational Activities – Ramona Fernando

(Proposed by Liyana Jayathilake, Seconded by Ransirimal Fernando)

Director Publicity & Communication – Albert Fernando

(Proposed by Ransirimal Fernando, Seconded by Nissanka Wijayanayaka)

Director of Cultural Affairs – Pamela Devanayagam

(Proposed by Ramona Fernando, Seconded by Liyana Jayathilake)

The Honourary Auditor – Nishani Jayathilake

(Proposed by Chandrani Wijayasinghe, Seconded by Ransirimal Fernando)

Cultural Committee: Madhuni was proposed by Nimmi and seconded by Ransirimal to be in charge of this committee.

Coordinator of Seniors Activities – Dilu Fernando was nominated by Ramona Fernando and seconded by Liyana Jayathilake.

Policies & Procedures Committee: Chris Senaratne advised the membership that at present the committee consisted of: Lakshman, Chris Senaratne and Ratnasiri. If members had no objections he would like to include Dilu to this. The house unanimously agreed.

The Returning Office then invited Chris Sellathamby to chair the meeting. Chris Sellathamby thanked the membership for electing him and said that the reason he took the helm was because he did not want all that the members had built over the years to be lost due to the lack of a President. The EC will try doing its best and doing what is needed to be done to take the Association one step further. He thanked the outgoing committee for a great job done.

11.0 Any Other Business:

11.1 **Heritage Festival** – Incoming committee to handle

11.2 **SLCSF** - Anil presented a unique opportunity for individual members to assist underprivileged, but academically outstanding Sri Lankan students to continue with their higher education in grade 11 and 12 (entry level to university) through scholarships organized by the SLCSF. The cost of a scholarship is C\$135 per year for 2 years.

Anil further requested that the Association also get involved with this charitable and worthy cause by matching each sponsored scholarship up to a maximum of \$3000 per year, with the Casino money, subject to approval by the AGLC.

A motion to this effect proposed by Sunil Ranasinghe and seconded by Gothami Wickremasekera was unanimously approved by the House."

11.3 **Scholarship** – Jayathilake proposed that the present scholarship amount of \$100.00 was not sufficient and it should be increased to at least \$300.00. The house felt that a maximum limit should be set. Mano brought forward a motion that students attaining an average of 90% or above be given a scholarship of \$1200 down to \$300.00 on a pro-rated basis. Motion seconded by Jayathilake and carried unanimously.

12.0 Adjournment: Proposed by Chris Senaratne and seconded by Anil Fernando, meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm

Minutes recorded by: Celia Daniel