



SLCFA - EDMONTON

Sri Lanka Canada Friendship Association of Edmonton

Cedars Professional Park, 2913 - 66 Street

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**MINUTES OF THE SLCFA ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

Sunday, January 28, 2024

At 2913-66 Street - Edmonton, Alberta

1.0 Call to Order: In the absence of the President Mano Senaratne (he sent regrets), Chris Senaratne was elected the pro tem chairperson, proposed by Lakshaman Samarasinghe and seconded by Anil Fernando. The meeting was called to order by Pro tem chair Chris Senaratne at 2.30pm.

Present: Chris Senaratne, Pandula Wickramarachchi, Shirani Samaratinga, Albert Fernando, Dushanthi Fernando, Sharmini Senaratne, Maya Silva, Celia Daniel, Nelum Ranasinghe, Anil Fernando, Shehan Devapura, Chandani Devapura, Bandula Samaratinga, Lakshaman Samarasinghe, Ramona Fernando, Priyantha Silva, Victor Jayatunge, Raja Liyanage, Pushpa Liyanage, Lalithie Jayatunge, Gothami Wickramasekara, Lasith Witharana, Akalanka Galappaththi, Helene Marthalingam and Jayantha Ranatunge

2.0 Adoption of the Agenda: The agenda (attached) was adopted, proposed by Ramona Fernando and seconded by Lasith Witharana.

3.0 Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meetings held in January – April 2023: Chris Senaratne briefed the house on the events that led to the three AGM's and stated that the heading for the minutes of the first AGM session had been incorrectly noted as the "SIXTH EC MEETING" and should be replaced with "AGM". Celia Daniel said that the item 9.0 on the minutes of the second AGM should read "Returning officer" instead of "Retaining officer". The corrections were proposed by Anil Fernando and seconded by Nelum Ranasinghe. The amended AGM minutes (attached) were proposed by Shyama Fernando and seconded by Pushpa Liyanage.

4.0 Matters arising from Annual General Meeting held in January – April 2023:

(a) AGLC/General Account irregularities – Reconciliation: Listing the irregularities Lakshaman stated that \$ 14,046 had been transferred from the general account to the casino account and \$ 1,689 has been paid into the casino account which was not an AGLC approved type of payment. The report submitted to AGLC was in the form of excel spreadsheets and not in a proper format. AGLC was contacted and approval was obtained to resubmit with these corrections. AGLC warned that in the future, money deposited in the casino account cannot be transferred out and will have to remain in the casino account.

(b) Improvisation/Modification of Financial Management – credit cards, quick books:

The credit card issued to SLCFA did not comply with the by-laws and was cancelled. We were paying Quick Books a subscription fee of \$ 42 per month and that was cancelled as it was felt that we did not receive value for the money. Our bank accounts in 2022, were of the Business profile

type which required us to maintain a minimum balance of \$ 20,000, failing which a penalty of \$ 19 per month was being charged. In 2022, we had paid \$ 462 in such penalties. The bank accounts were now changed to a community plan profile, which require us to maintain a minimum balance of \$ 4500 with an associated penalty of \$ 4.50 per month.

(c) Draft Framework for Dissolution of SLCFA: Chris Senaratne explained that the EC did not advocate the dissolution of SLCFA, but was only preparing the steps required for it, as tasked at the last AGM. He went on to explain the highlights of the procedure. As per the bylaws, dissolution has to be done at a special general meeting consisting of a regular quorum and called up expressly for this purpose. Dissolution at an Annual General Meeting, just due to a lack of quorum or lack of members for the EC, is not permitted. For the dissolution at the special general meeting, a motion to dissolve has to be tabled and approved by a minimum of 75% of the quorum. It should be noted that those opposing dissolution at the meeting called up for this purpose must be willing to accept EC positions, if a lack of EC was the reason for embarking on the process of dissolution. In addition, there are legal steps we need to follow as we are incorporated under the Societies Act of Alberta. The process is easy if we can disburse all of our assets as any remainder will go to the public trustee. Our biggest asset is the building, which has been appreciated over the years. The building was purchased with the bulk of the monies from the AGLC account. However, approximately 15% of the purchase price was contributed from the SLCFA general account. So, we will need to have discussions and negotiations with AGLC when the time arrives. Additional details are given in the dissolution documents (attached) prepared by Chris and Mano Senaratne at the direction of the last AGM. The outlined procedure is subject to changes and modifications in the future, were proposed by Ramona Fernando and seconded by Shirani Samaratinga, as an acceptable procedure in the case of dissolution/

(d) Mid-year general meeting: Was not conducted as the current EC took over only at the end of April. Also, there was no need for one as all our activities were notified to the membership, via newsletters and emails.

5.0 President's Report (presented by Chris Senaratne): In the absence of the President Mano Senaratne, Chris read the President's report (attached) to the membership. On behalf of the President, Chris informed the membership and incoming EC that an application has been submitted to Alberta Immigration and Multiculturalism for a grant to conduct a Sri Lanka Glory Day in September, 2024. This was in response to an email we received from the Alberta government on January 13th seeking project proposals before January 26th.

6.0 Treasurer's Report (presented by Lakshaman Samarasinghe): Lakshaman discussed the highlights of the audited Financial Report (attached). He thanked Ramona Fernando for completing her task in less than ten days. The Treasurer's Report was proposed by Lasith Witharana and seconded by Shyama Fernando.

7.0 Auditor's Report (presented by Ramona Fernando): Chris Senaratne also thanked Ramona Fernando for accepting the role of the Auditor and auditing the Financial Report, despite the jet lag from her recent trip. Ramona commended the work of Lakshaman Samarasinghe and gave a clean report. The Auditor also provided additional comments which she stated were outside of the Auditor's Report and thus not recorded in these minutes. The ensuing comments from the house were also not recorded.

8.0 New Business:

8.1 Scholarship: It was advertised, but there were no applicants for the past year.

8.2 Heritage Festival: Chris Senaratne provided a historical timeline of the events that transpired pertaining to the matters regarding the Heritage Festival. The 2023 EC took office in mid-April and most of the deadlines for the applications had passed. Although it was still possible to apply, the EC had to make a conscious decision not to participate, taking into consideration that we had lost over \$ 5000 in each of the prior two years. Then it was time to decide whether we should participate in the 2024 Heritage Festival. The EC decided to canvass the membership for volunteers to take the key positions of the Heritage Committee. Only Desmond Fernando accepted the invitation and was willing to take up the Heritage Chairperson position. We are very thankful to Desmond for his community spirit. Meetings and discussions followed. Desmond wanted in-depth details of the past Heritage Festivals that we had participated in. Unfortunately, we had no records of the number of items that were bought, at what price they were bought and what was sold. We only had records of our expenses and income. Shyama Fernando and Pandula Wickramarachchi volunteered to help Desmond in his efforts. Desmond was requested to join these two EC members and come up with a plan to be presented at the AGM. Meanwhile, we had to pay an application fee of \$ 1900 by 5th January, to the Heritage Festival Association. If we withdraw this application by 31st March, the \$ 1900 will be reimbursed, but we will forfeit \$ 265. So, the EC decided to pay the application fee and to have Desmond present his proposal to the AGM. Desmond is now of the opinion that with the meagre information he has on the participation of past Heritage Festivals, this would be a very risky venture. He was also disillusioned with vendors' demands based on the commissions they had to give for past events that set precedence. There was another situation where someone had organized a meeting without his input. The bottom line is, he withdrew his offer of taking the Chairperson position. Ramona Fernando proposed that we not participate in the Heritage Festival this year. Sharmini Senaratne seconded the motion.

8.3 NHSP Grant: Chris Senaratne explained the details of this Alberta Government grant, for Alberta seniors, amounting to \$ 25,000. Desmond Fernando had intimated that he was willing to take part in filling out the application if he is given the task and there is no interference. Chris to give the application form to Maya to circulate it to the membership. Shyama explained that it could not be presented to the seniors, as the last seniors' event was cancelled. The seniors present and the rest of the members did not have any objection to Desmond leading the task of completing the application with due consideration for any input given by the seniors especially.

9.0 Election of the Office Bearers (Returning Officer – Celia Daniel)

Celia Daniel said that she was given a list of proposed contenders for the office bearer positions who would accept the positions only if no one else will be contesting.

9.1 Executive Committee:

- (a) President– Pandula Wickremarachchi Proposed –
Gothami Wickramasekara
Seconded – Shehan Devapura
- (b) Vice President–Jayantha Ranatunge Proposed –
Ramona Fernando Seconded –
Pushpa Liyanage
- (c) Secretary – Priyantha Silva
Proposed = Chris Senaratne
Seconded = Sharmini Senaratne
- (d) Treasurer – Lakshaman Samarasinghe Proposed –
Chris Senaratne
Seconded – Maya Silva
- (e) Director of Cultural Affairs – Shyama Fernando Proposed –
Lakshaman Samarasinghe
Seconded – Shirani Samaratunga
- (f) Director of Membership & Welfare – Maya Silva, Proposed –
Shyama Fernando
Seconded – Lasith Witharana
- (g) Director of Projects & Fundraising – open

- (h) Director of Publicity & Communications – Lasith Witharana
Proposed – Ramona Fernando
Seconded – Shehan Devapura
- (i) Director of Recreation & Cultural Affairs–Chandani Devapura
Proposed – Lakshaman Samarasinghe
Seconded – Chris Senaratne

9.2 Honorary Auditor

- (a) Ramona Fernando
Proposed - Shirani Samaratunga
Seconded - Sharmini Senaratne

9.3 Coordinators:

- (a) Seniors (joint) - Shanthi & Shyama
Proposed - Lakshaman Samarasinghe
Seconded - Sharmini Senaratne

- (b) First Friday - Ramona Fernando
Proposed - Gothami Wickramasekara
Seconded - Shirani Samaratunga

(c) Movie Night - Lakshaman Samarasinghe

Proposed - Ramona Fernando

Seconded - Shirani Samaratunga

(d) Youth & Adult - Shehan Devapura

Proposed - Ramona Fernando

Seconded - Bandula Samaratunga

10.0 Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.



Priyantha Silva
Secretary / SLCFA

Attachments:

- (1) Agenda
- (2) Articles of Dissolution
- (3) Audited Financial Statement
- (4) 2023 AGM minutes 1 & 3 session
- (5) President's Message
- (6) SLCFA Dissolution
- (7) 2023 AGM minutes 3rd session