

Navnat Vanik Association of the UK

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 2.15 PM on 13 May 2013 at Navnat Centre, Hayes

1. The meeting commenced with prayers and two minutes silence was observed for the peace of departed souls and world peace.
2. President, Bhupendra Shah, introduced the committee and their roles and gave a brief report on the progress made during the year, including opening of the Library, members' survey being carried out and solar panel installation. He thanked all the volunteers and donors for their support in maintaining the four pillars of the Association and the premises, which require a lot of upkeep. His message was to 'think positive to make progress'. He was also pleased to announce that Bharat Parekh, the ex-Hall Secretary, had increased his donation to the Building Fund to £10,000 in memory of his wife, Ushaben.

3. Minutes of the 2012 AGM

The AGM minutes had been uploaded on the website and taken as read.

- i. Corrections were made for two items raised by Mr Avanti Jasani: (1) His point on the email sent by his daughter required to be expanded to elaborate that it related to a recommendation for the hire of the building contractor to refurbish the hall for £16000 and the vice president's reply that it been received after the contract had been signed; and (2) that income included £35,000 for the car park.
 - ii. Matters arising: Jayantibhai Sheth enquired as to when the current five year period of sharing donation income from Ucchhavnis, equally between the building fund and Jiv Daya fund was due to end. He was informed by the President this was the last year, and that members will be consulted for the future split at the next AGM in 2014.
 - iii. The approval of the minutes was proposed by Mahendra Kothary and seconded by Dr Kirti Shah.
- 4. Secretary's Report** - The Honorary Secretary, Dhiru Galani, read his report, detailing the events held and main issues which arose during the year, including a report on the solar energy installation and the potential savings over the long term. He made a special mention of the successful wedding fair held earlier in the year and thanked the many volunteers who helped out at all events, some of whom worked behind the scenes, especially in the kitchen, as they go about their duties whilst others were enjoying and participating in the events. He also thanked various organisations and members who had donated books.
- 5. Treasurer's Report** - The Treasurer, Ramesh Shah, presented the audited consolidated accounts for the year to 31 December 2012, explaining that an abridged version for the Association only had been published in Darpan and members, who had request, had been sent full accounts by email. He explained the main figures in the accounts, income, profit and the funds on deposit with various banks, on time deposits, such that access to funds is no unduly hindered, if required at short notice. Income had increased due to hall hire and interest income. Whilst the funds surplus had increased, there was higher increase in bank balances as depreciation was not a cash flow expense. He also presented a chart showing the increase in funds over the last three years of his office.

i. Matters Arising:

- a) Ashwin Sheth mentioned that all members should have been sent full accounts.
- b) He also mentioned that affiliates should not be included in the accounts but only their income shown as the Association had no control over their assets.
- c) His third point was that there was too much detail and repetition, especially in the notes on pages 3 to 7 of the accounts. In reply the assistant treasurer, Ketan Adani said that we had been consistent and guided by our auditors and perhaps he could meet with our auditors to discuss his views. He agreed and thanked the treasurers for their efforts as this was not an easy task.
- d) Jaysukh Mehta, enquired why income from the Priti Bhojan event was lower resulting in a loss – two explanations were put forward, the low turnout and food ordered for 200 more people in anticipation.
- e) In response to Baburai Shah's questions, it was explained that salaries were all paid under PAYE, NI was included (for the one full time employee) and that the average number of employees shown was averaged, being made up of all staff hired during the year. He was also given a detailed breakdown of the debtors, creditors and bank deposits. He queried the investment in solar panels

rather than improving the car park and was informed that car park was being cleared of grit as the weather improved and was not given priority this year. His recommendation to the incoming committee was that income should not be overestimated and expenses kept under control and to be prudent.

- f) Sarojben Varia queried the small loss on the Janmashtmi Mela event and was informed that we had more stalls at a lower fee and funds had been spent on providing music and other entertainment as this was largely a community event and not for making a profit.
6. The accounts were proposed for adoption by Subhash Bakhai and seconded by Jayman Mehta. They were approved by a majority with Ashwin Sheth noting his objection as per 5 i (b) & (c) above.

7. Proposals to amend Membership Structure

Nitin Parekh explained that two changes were being proposed by the EC to amend the existing membership fee structure. The first one was to offer associate life membership to members, especially non-Navnat members of affiliates, who were paying an annual fee of £50, with no alternative choice.

Members voiced their opposition to this proposal, as it might jeopardise facilities enjoyed by current members, should large numbers join as associate life members; and that we should not take such a risk, just to facilitate the few numbers involved. Furthermore, this would create a new class of membership which may be against our constitution. The proposal was, therefore withdrawn by the EC.

The second proposal was to allow spouses of existing life members to be allowed to become life members at a concessionary rate of £51. This proposal was carried by a majority show of hands.

It was suggested that the membership structure be reviewed going forward to attract larger numbers.

8. Reports from representatives of affiliates.

The appointed representatives of BoT, NVBS, NVM, NYA, NBC and NGC gave a resume of their activities during the year and planned future events in the ensuing year. Secretary also informed members of the formation of the Navnat Badminton Club, which ran sessions at the Centre on Wednesday and Friday evenings under the leadership of Anil Lakhani.

9. Any Other Business and Questions and Answers from the Floor

1. Jaysukh Mehta suggested that since Maitri Bhavnu was a universal prayer we should not be reciting other prayers as well unless it was appropriate for the occasion. He commended the EC for the solar panel investment and recommended the use of biodegradable plates.
2. Jaysukh Mehta – queried when and why did the EC stop hosting the Swami Vatsalya event after Paryushan and why the cost of Priti Bhojan/Swami Vatsalya was being met by the Association when it was meant to be a function based on self-sufficiency principles – he was informed that this tradition has evolved to the present form in London to ensure that maximum number of people attend the function, costs are covered year on year and that donors were informed that they were contributing to more than one fund. Related to this topic Harshad Sanghrajka mentioned that wastage of food at functions and especially Priti Bhojan should be avoided by use of passes etc; Subhash Bakhai recommended keeping a restricted account for Priti Bhojan, so that surplus/deficits can be identified and set-off accordingly to ensure donors are not misled; Baburai Shah, said there was no easy solution, but we should plan in advance and for example, order for fewer attendees but make provision to cook on site in the event of a shortage.
3. Jitendra Mehta commended the use of the new crowd control barriers, scrapping of the caravan and other improvements initiated by the EC from members' recommendations. He suggested that members should not hesitate to make recommendations and that the EC continue to make progress. He was informed that photographs and other items of interest should be emailed to the Secretary.
4. Kishore Mehta asked why Board of Trustees was made up of male members only when there were lady members as well who were quite capable. President said that thus far appointments had been from recommendations from the EC, but in future we could perhaps ask members as well.
5. Baburai Shah raised following points/recommendations:

- i. How many times did the grievance committee meet this year? Answer was 'none'
 - ii. How many times were civil wedding ceremonies performed? Answer was 4 times.
 - iii. Has a market valuation of the property been undertaken? Answer was no, but may have to be done on incorporation.
 - iv. Treasurer to note that gift aid on small cash collections was available from April 2013;
 - v. Can the website access by complicated password be avoided
 - vi. Can we arrange for crowd control at Navratri weekends?
 - vii. We should have live telecasts on webcam for members who are not able to attend.
 - viii. Why have we not joined Hindu Forum and participated in Trafalgar Square function
 - ix. We should try for lottery grants
 - x. Volunteers bank should be exploited for our benefit, similar to sister organisations.
6. Ila Shah suggested inclusion of a report from the Hall Secretary at the AGM

10. **Vote of Thanks and Re-appointment of Honorary Auditors and Solicitors**

The proposals to re-appoint PSJ Alexander as Auditors and Mrs Mamta Parekh as honorary solicitor were duly approved and a vote of thanks proposed unanimously to appreciate their donated services.

11. **Appointment of Independent Chairperson for Election of incoming EC**

Harshadbhai Sanghrajka proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring EC, prior to the President announcing that the committee was dissolved, there being no further business.

Manhar Mehta, chairman of the BoT was invited to the chair to conduct the proceedings.

12. **Dissolution of 2012 EC and Election of 2013 EC**

Manhar Mehta declared the 2012 EC as dissolved and proceeded with the election process to elect a new committee for 2013/14.

He announced that only one valid nomination had been received for the post of president, this being from Bhupendra Shah. He added further that another nomination had been received by the BoT, from Subhash Bakhai, but this had been invalidated, as it did not satisfy the criteria of clause 7(a) of the constitution, and that he had been correctly informed. A debate ensued about the validity of the time period criteria of this clause in the constitution, after which the chairman concluded that the action taken on Subhash Bakhai's nomination was correct. He therefore announced Bhupendra Shah as being elected without opposition.

All the office bearers nominated were elected without opposition, Ketan Adani, having withdrawn his nomination to stand as assistant treasurer.

There was a ballot for the election of seven committee members as 11 nominations had been received, following Hasmita Doshi's withdrawal as she had been elected Hall Secretary. Following the results of the ballot, Harshad Shah, Roopal Punater, Bharat Parekh and Dipak Mehta were not successful.

The following nominations having been received resulted in all of them being elected unopposed as office bearers and committee members: -

President	Bhupendra
Vice-President	Paresh Mehta
Secretary	Dhiru Galani
Joint-Secretary	Dipak Shah
Treasurer	Bhupendra
Assistant-Treasurer	Ramesh Shah
Hall Secretary	Hasmita Doshi
Membership Secretary	Nitin Parekh
Committee:	Kirit Batavia
	Sangeeta
	David Holden

	Bharat Mehta
	Ketan Adani
	Nemish Mehta
	Hetal Shah

The meeting was concluded at 6.30 PM and the independent chairperson, Manhar Mehta and his colleagues were thanked for their assistance.

Bhupendra Shah
President

Dhiru Galani
General Secretary