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**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN HELD ON 26 JUN 2022**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Secretary, Sardar Harbhajan Singh Ghosal, took the rostrum at 1200 hours and after taking into account the members physically present, informed members present, that the total number of 32 persons present were short of the minimum number of 40 members required to form the quorum as per rules 17 and 18 of Gurdwara Sahib Yishun's Constitution. Under the circumstances, the meeting was postponed for half an hour. At 1230 hrs the roll call was taken again by the Secretary, and with 42 members confirmed as present, he then called the meeting to order.
2. Ardaas was performed by Giani Satnam Singh Ji followed by the Hukumnama prior to the commencement of the AGM.
3. The Secretary, Sardar Harbhajan Singh Ghosal thanked all the members present for attending the Annual General Meeting and continued with the proceedings. He briefed members on the agenda for the meeting, as per the letter notification which had been sent to all members 2 weeks in advance as per the Constitution. He requested the co-operation of all members in ensuring that the meeting be conducted smoothly. He then invited the President, Sardar Mejar Singh Gill, to continue with the rest of the proceedings in accordance with the agenda.

**TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN HELD ON 27 DEC 2020**

4. The President then drew members' attention to the first item on the agenda, i.e. to consider and approve the minutes of AGM. Mr Jasbir Singh Minhas sought clarification regarding paragraphs 6.7 to

6.10 where proposals regarding donations to events organised by Sikh Organisations at national level were discussed. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill opined that the minutes were somewhat ambiguous in that while Sardar Mejar Singh's proposal to allow MC to make the appropriate donation was generally agreed upon, Sardar Sukhdev Singh Parmar had proposed a cap on the amount to be donated and Charanjit Singh had proposed that a note be sent to all members and objections, if any, recorded. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill sought more views to put some clarity to matter. It was accepted by all that Gurdwara Yishun should continue to be actively involved in all Sikh national events and that the contributions be allowed to be decided by the MC of the day subject to certain conditions; namely that the MC of the day should first ensure that the agreed upon contributions are reasonable, based on the membership base and financial capacity of our Gurdwara in comparison to other Sikh Institutions (which so far has usually been kept at relatively lower amounts compared to other Gurdwaras, as was the case during the last Guru Nanak Dev's Ji's 550<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in November 2019), and (2) and the contribution must be met from the Gurdwara's Operatinal funds and not the Trusteeses' funds being proposed. Once the amount has been settled, and only if it is in excess of what the MC is authorised to spend, the MC should then send a note out to all members to inform them of the contribution amount being undertaken. There would be no need to call for a formal approval just for this purpose.

5. There being no further queries, the AGM minutes of 27 December 2020 were duly passed, with Sardar Charanjit Singh proposing and Sardar Jasbir Singh Minhas seconding the motion to approve the minutes of the AGM of 27 Dec 2020.

#### **TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EOGM) OF GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN HELD ON 18 APR 2021**

6. The President then drew members' attention to the minutes of the EOGM held on 18 April 2021. He informed members that as agreed at the EOGM, the MC had stood by its commitment that the proposed renovation/refurbishment works would be undertaken strictly through funds collected through the donation drive without touching any of the existing funds. He informed members that approximately \$720,000 had been collected so far and that the renovations executed till date were based on the "wish list" and on a "need to do" basis as highlighted at the EOGM. While he felt proud highlighting the success of the donation drive, he felt that the members also needed to be also made aware of the difficulties that the MC had to go through where a handful of our own members went out of the way to spread malicious rumours that the Gurdwara had ample funds and that there was no need to collect more funds. He highlighted the case of Sikh Missionary Society which was headed by a member of our own Gurdwara, which had contributed only \$5,000. Based on that donation and the on-going rumours, two other organisations initially also decided to donate a similar amount. It was only after much persuasion and pleading by the President personally that they agreed to donate \$10,000. Several individuals and other Gurdwaras too mentioned that they had heard such rumours and all donors had to be assured that while the Gurdwara had sufficient funds for the lease renewal, there were no funds for the urgently required renovations/refurbishments, which had been left neglected by the previous MCs in charge. Sardar Mejar Singh commented that it was a sad state of affairs where

members of the Gurdwara went around spreading such rumours and such bad publicity on the internal matters of the temple should never have taken place. This has never happened in any other Gurdwara, who despite having more than adequate funds in reserve, even today continue to canvass for more donations and no member of theirs has attempted to spread such rumours.

7. There being no queries to the EOGM minutes, they were duly passed by the AGM, with Sardar Parmjit Singh proposing and Sardar Jaspreet Singh Chhabra seconding the motion to approve the minutes of the EOGM of 18 April 2021.

**TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 2021 TO DECEMBER 2021**

8. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill then proceeded to highlight in brief the main contents of the annual report (as attached) for 2021, details of which were projected on the screens for easy reference.

9. Sardar Jasbir Singh Minhas drew the President's attention to paragraph 23 of the annual report with regards to the lease arrangements and requested for an update on the latest situation. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill explained that with the rescinding of the lease by the Government and pending the review, the Gurdwara is required to enter into a rental agreement in the interim effective from the time our current 30 year lease expires in Nov 2022. In short, the rental agreement will be for a year with effect from 1 December 2022 onwards pending the lease renewal which may take about 6 months to process from the time the Government makes the offer. The rental amount to be paid will be \$4,200 (exclusive of GST) per month with a security deposit for 3 months (amounting to \$12,600 – exclusive of GST) to be paid at time of signing the rental agreement. In addition, the Gurdwara is required to obtain a \$3 million Public Liability Insurance Policy to insure against claims for personal injury, death, damage or loss of property arising from or in connection with the use or occupation of premises etc. The MC is currently in the process of purchasing the insurance coverage as required.

10. There being no queries related to the annual report, the annual report was duly passed by the AGM, with Sardar Iqbal Singh proposing and Sardar Parmjit Singh seconding the motion to approve the annual report for 2021.

**TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR FROM 1 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020**

11. The President then presented the GSY's Audited Financial Statements for the period Jan to Dec 2020. He explained that these were the accounts under the purview of the last MC. However, as the AGM had been conducted in Dec 2020, the Accounts were being handled by the current MC.

12. Mr Amarpal Singh queried as to why was there was a high amount of \$6,527 reflected for "scripture reading" in 2020 as opposed to \$624 in 2019. Mr Manminder Singh from the Finance Team explained that the amount appears to have been wrongly reflected under "scripture reading". It was in fact the payments made over 4 months from Jan 2020 to April 2020 to the two Indian Sikh Tourists who were allowed to stay at Gurdwara during the Covid Period and whose services were utilised for religious work to supplement the 3 priests remaining in service with Gurdwara during the period. The 4 payments paid to them amounted to a total of \$5900 which should have been rightly reflected under "salaries" and only the remainder sum of \$627 under "scripture reading".

13. With no other queries or questions raised, the audited financial statements for 2020 were duly passed by the AGM with Sardar Jasbir Singh Minhas proposing and Sardar Ajit Singh seconding the motion.

**TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR FROM 1 JANUARY 2021 TO 31 DECEMBER 2021**

14. The President then presented the GSY's Audited Financial Statements for the period Jan to Dec 2021. Sardar Jasbir Singh Minas raised a query with regards to the bank charges paid in 2021. He observed that a total sum of \$1,017 is reflected under expenditure in 2021 compared to \$172 in 2020. He sought clarification for the increase in amount in 2021. Sardar Manminder Singh from the Finance Team explained that the increase was due to additional \$20.00 charges imposed by OCBC Bank for over-the-counter cash transactions undertaken by corporate accounts and hence the increase.

15. Sardar Jasbir Singh Minhas also enquired regarding the increase in cleaning expenditure. Sardar Mejar Singh explained that there had been no cleaning contractor employed for the purpose in recent years. The Committee had therefore decided to formally engage a contractor on a part time basis twice a week for the purpose and hence the increase in expenditure as reflected in the accounts.

16. With no other queries or questions raised, the financial statements for 2021 were duly passed by the AGM with Sardar Iqbal Singh proposing and Sardar Gordev Singh seconding the motion.

**TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE AMENDMENTS TO GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN'S CONSTITUTION**

17. The President drew attention of members to the proposed amendments to the Gurdwara Sahib Yishun's Constitution as per Annex to the AGM Agenda posted to all members. He informed members that Sardar Charanjit Singh had sent a letter (as per copy attached for record) related to the Constitution. So instead of discussing it separately under resolutions and/or other matters received from members, the President proposed to discuss the contents based on their applicability to

constitutional matters being discussed. Sardar Charanjit Singh had no objections to the approach being taken by the President.

#### **Letter from Sardar Charanjit Singh related to Constitutional Matters**

18. The President brought to members' attention the contents of Sardar Charanjit's letter, which were mainly related to the proposed changes to Constitution. Sardar Charanjit had also drawn attention to the Code of Governance of Registered Societies. In summary, Sardar Charanjit, had proposed 3 changes to the Gurdwara Constitution, namely Rule 6 – related to Membership; Rule 21 – Conduct of Elections; and Rule 36 (a) – Correction of a typo error. In addition, Sardar Charanjit had raised observations on two proposed amendments, namely Rules 18 and 39 – related to quorum and authority to execute amendments. Mr Charanjit had also queried regarding MC's right to approve membership for those donating \$2,100 and above not being in conformity with Rule 7.

19. Sardar Mejar Singh briefed members that as Charanjit had copied both other trustees in his email, he had taken the liberty to check if the contents were of concern to Trustees (though this does not come under their purview) and Sardar Ajit Singh had clarified that he had nothing to do with the contents. So basically the issues raised by Charanjit were in his capacity as a member.

#### **Issue of Compliance with the Code of Governance of ROS/MCCY**

20. Sardar Charanjit had raised the issue of the Gurdwara being required to be in compliance with the Code of Governance. Sardar Mejar Singh thanked Sardar Charanjit Singh for raising this extremely important issue. He explained that the Code of Governance of ROS had been in existence for many years and needed to be complied with but he was rather surprised that reference to it was being made only now. He noted that, while numerous shortcomings of previous MCs had been raised intermittently at various AGMs, nothing had been done to rectify the matter by Trustees, MCs and members alike, albeit most members being ignorant of such rules. But those who are aware, should have taken cognizance earlier and not when only after this MC took over, as was being done now. He added that while most of the non-compliances are all "water under the bridge", and he frankly had no desire to reopen the can of worms, the raising of the matter of Code of Governance was an opportune time to further reinforce the matter as it warranted serious attention for the benefit and understanding of all members so as to ensure that our Gurdwara strives to be in full compliance at all times henceforth, not just with such Codes of Governance but best practices also for internal administration and day to day management of the Gurdwara.

21. Sardar Mejar Singh went on to give a brief on the applicability of the Code of Governance not just of the ROS as highlighted by Charanjit but also MCCY's Code of Governance for Charities as is applicable to our Gurdwara too. The Codes operate on the principle of "comply or explain". For example, the Code of Governance for Charities requires organisations such as our Gurdwara to submit the Governance Evaluation Checklist on Charity Portal, "otherwise should explain why it cannot comply,

should indicate the steps planned to take to comply and disclose the checklist is made available for public viewing on the Charity Portal” as required by MCCY. Unfortunately, there had been total disregard of such matters, especially so over the last 10 to 12 years. Sardar Mejar Singh then went on to highlight some of the violations of the Gurdwara’s Constitution and/or Code of Conduct/Governance as well as the administrative lapses/shortcomings as summarized briefly below. He emphasized that the persons named are in no way responsible for non-compliance but the rather the failure of the key office holders of the MC in ensuring that the rules were complied with.

a. Allowing a non-member not just to vote but also hold office (Sukhdev Singh).

b. Allowing two non-members to vote, including making one a member after the AGM (Lall Singh Case – He voted among the 30 odd present though not a member). In 2016 elections, both he and Prem Melani voted resulting in President being appointed by a difference of 2 votes (i.e. 17 vs 15 votes) as recorded in the minutes of the AGM. Lall Singh’s application is dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 (after the elections of 5 Jun 2016) and his membership officially approved only on 25 Aug 2017, a year later.

c. Allowing a non-member to officiate the process of secret balloting in elections (Deep Singh).

d. Holding elections during a family organized Jodh Mela (Aug 2018 elections), when elections usually conducted between May to Jul on all other years. Even adjusting the starting time from 1200 hrs to 1230 hrs. As a practice Jodh Melas have been avoided during previous AGMs.

e. Allowing “Associate Member” to vote (Prem Melani) at elections, since 2012/2013 as per records of attendance at voting.

f. In one AGM, it was reported that an MC member was automatically removed for failing to attend 3 meetings, and yet we have had a Trustee absent from Singapore for long period of time, when constitution specifies absence for no more than a year.

g. Requirement for member to be present if sending in any letter or points for consideration. Several such points/resolutions raised by members were disallowed as they were absent during the AGM, notwithstanding that they were overseas. The Gurdwara Constitution has no such restriction.

h. Allowing Trustees to also hold office in MC – it is implied in the Societies Act and the Trustees Act as well as accepted practice in other Institutions, including Sikh Institutions, that Trustees and MC members (Governing Body) are two separate entities.

i. During the initial period of the COVID, the temple was kept closed for long period unnecessarily and even serving of tea was not allowed, while other Gurdwaras remained open, albeit with certain restrictions. Even the Langgar Hall doors were kept locked. When the new MC took over, the key to the door could not even be found, requiring breaking of lock and replacement with new lock.

j. The temple was also left neglected during the early COVID period, with grass growing wildly and even mosquitoes rampant. Despite being cautioned about it, the MC ignored the matter resulting in all Gianis being infected with Dengue. And sadly, no one was interested to enquire regarding their health and whether they had food or not. Some well-wishers helped the Gianis during this unfortunate period.

k. Request to do Kirtan in Sach Khand Room, as highlighted in the annual report, was disallowed. The people in charge lied that Giani disallowed it.

l. The administration of the Gurdwara also left much to be desired. As highlighted in the latest MC's Annual Report, the online filing of documents with MCCY were not done for a long period, hence preventing the Gurdwara from enjoying any Government grants. Worse still, the Gurdwara could have been easily struck off as a charitable organisation, for such wilful non-compliance.

22. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill commented that while he could rattle on with regards to the shortcomings, the time has come for all to move forward. Yishun Gurdwara was built as a community effort and used to be well regarded for its cohesiveness in the early years till some irresponsible individuals created "groups" for reasons best known to themselves, as is apparent from the state of affairs that we are in. In a humorous vein, Sardar Mejar Singh commented that the discussion on the "Code of Governance" reminded him of the proceedings going on in the Punjab Assembly currently where the badly depleted Opposition of Congress and Akali Dal was trying to hold the historically highly-voted majority elected AAP Government responsible for the deteriorating law and order situation, armed gangster groups and related issues. We all know that AAP took over only 3 months ago and whatever is going on has been a result of political patronage of Congress and Akalis over 70 years. He emphasised that we all need to introspect. The Gurdwara belongs to all. Sangat is supreme and nobody should be allowed to manipulate the rules. We kept silent when rules were being manipulated and nobody cared about the Code of Governance till now. Notwithstanding this, it's still better late than never, and time to turn the page on to a better administered Gurdwara that we can all be proud of.

## **DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE GURDWARA SAHIB YISHUN CONSTITUTION**

23. The meeting then proceeded to discuss the proposed amendments from the MC as per Annex A to the agenda as well as comments/suggestions proposed by Sardar Charanjit Singh in his letter, as summarized below:

### **a. Rule 6- Membership**

(1) Sardar Charanjit Singh had proposed that the membership be increased from 18 to 21 years of age to conform to the Code of Governance. Sardar Mejar Singh agreed with Sardar Charanjit regarding the age requirement to be in compliance with the ROS Code of Governance,

which should have been effected long ago but not done by previous MCs. He noted, however, that Charanjit had not quoted Rule 6 in full. In Sardar Charanjit's tabulation of the proposal under "Existing Rule", "Proposed Rule" as well as "Reasons for Amendment", the last sentence under Rule 6 that "Associate members shall not have the right to vote and to hold office in the Temple" had been omitted. He asked Sardar Charanjit Singh to clarify and/or explain his reasons for leaving out the critical sentence on associate members. Sardar Charanjit responded that it was an oversight on his part and that he had no intention for the sentence on associate membership to be removed.

(2) This was followed by a brief discussion as to who were "associate members" and whether they should be allowed to vote. Sardar Mejar Singh highlighted that "associate member" provisions existed in Constitutions of other Gurdwaras too, in particular the Majha, Malwa and Doaba memberships only being allowed in certain Gurdwaras and other Sikhs only being permitted "associate membership" with no voting rights etc. There were also provisions for non-Sikhs to be made associate members in some Gurdwaras as was the case in our Gurdwara. He then went on to explain the background of the matter in so far as Gurdwara Sahib Yishun was concerned. He mentioned that when the Gurdwara Constitution was first prepared in 1995, it was deliberately kept brief and simple, following the rich collective Sikh Community traditions of the Naval Police and Sembawang Gurdwaras, i.e. with a single membership for all Sikhs, irrespective of regional affiliations. Sardar Darshan Singh had then proposed the inclusion of the "associate member" clause to accommodate the Sindhi community who may wish to be members but with the caveat that they not have any voting rights and hold no MC positions. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill mentioned that he personally had no issues in inclusion of Sindhis and that we could easily delete the "associate member" and indicate that membership be open to all "Sikhs and Sindhis" but this was a matter for all members to decide. He opened the matter to the members present for discussion. The unanimous consensus, however, was to keep the rule as it is.

#### **b. Rules 17 and 18 – Supreme Authority and General Meeting**

(1) Sardar Mejar Singh Gill then highlighted the proposal to amend Rule 18. He explained that Rule 17 provided for a quorum of at least 40 members as a pre-requisite for meeting to take place, failing which Rule 18 kicks in for meeting to be adjourned for half an hour and those present then considered a quorum but having no power to amend the existing rules. His proposal was to delete the words "but they should have no power to amend any of the rules" as it contradicted with Rule 39 which provides for amendments to be done subject to consent of 2/3 of the members being present at the general meeting.

(2) Sardar Charanjit Singh, in his letter, had highlighted that the proposed amendment to Rule 18 did not conform to the Code of Governance of ROS wherein paragraph 3.4, sub-paragraph f reads that "The recommended quorum for General Meeting is at least 25% of the total Voting membership or 30 voting members, whichever is lesser, to be present for the



meeting” and that in the event of no quorum, meeting to be adjourned and whatever members present deemed to be forming the quorum but with no power to amend. Sardar Mejar Singh explained that the ROS recommended quorum of minimum of 30 voting members is a lower threshold than ours set at 40, and we could in fact adopt the lower threshold given the difficulty in getting the quorum over the years. Be that as it may, he added that while the proposal to amend was merely to regularise the contradictions between Rule 18 and Rule 39, in reality ROS has previously allowed the Gurdwara to amend its Constitution based on Rule 39 which provided for amendments to be carried out based on consent of 2/3 members present regardless of Rule 18’s restrictions, and no one had raised any similar observation as raised by Sardar Charanjit Singh.

(3) Sardar Mejar Singh then went on to elaborate on the chronology of amendments done to Gurdwara Sahib Yishun’s constitution under Rule 39 over the years, as highlighted below:

(a) 1<sup>ST</sup> lot of amendments done in Feb 1998 – Mainly procedural and as suggested by Commissioner of Charities – i.e. Merely adding the words “Commissioner of Charities” to several rules, namely Rule 23 (regarding members absent from meetings); Rule 34 (regarding removing trustees; Rule 35 (addresses of immovable properties etc.); Rule 39 (additions/deletions to Constitution); and Rule 42 (b) and Rule 42 (c) (regarding dissolving of Temple etc.). This is because the Temple had been registered under the ROS in Aug 95, and in response to Temple request to be registered under the Charities Act, the IRAS had requested for the addition of the words. The temple was duly registered under the Charities Act in April 98 after the amendments duly done in Feb 1998.

(b) 2<sup>nd</sup> lot of amendments were executed in Jun 2002. At the AGM held on 5 Aug 2001, after 5 years of operation of the temple, it was recognized that there was no way to ever get a 2/3 majority to form a quorum as reflected in AGM minutes. Notwithstanding this, the AGM decided to proceed to approve the changes under Rule 39, disregarding Rule 18. In the letters to ROS and Commissioner of Charities for approval of the amendments, this was clearly highlighted (as quoted below) and the proposed amendments, namely Rule 20 (extending term of MC from 1 year to 2 years) and Rule 30(a) (Appointment of external auditors), duly approved.

“Our observations for the past 5 years has been that we are unable to muster a quorum at AGMs despite early notification to members. In fact, we had always delayed the time of commencement of our proceedings. The lack of quorum has inhibited our ability to amend our constitution, in particular the need to incorporate relevant matters that will facilitate better management of the Temple” and “In conformance with paragraph 39 we ask ROS/ Commissioner of Charities to sanction the proposed amendments”.

**PS:** In the MC minutes of 15 Aug 2001, first meeting of new MC headed by Ranjit Singh after the AGM of 5 Aug 2001, it is reflected that for the proposed amendments to the Constitution, “Manminder Singh and Charanjit Singh would follow up the changes to the Constitution as agreed during the AGM and write to Registrar of Societies”.

(c) The 3<sup>rd</sup> lot of amendments were done in 2008, namely Rule 27 (increasing the MC’s authorized expenditure from \$2000 to \$5000). Again Rule 39 was quoted to get the formal approval from ROS and Commissioner of Charities. As per the AGM minutes, there were only 29 members present, way below the quorum of 40 members. The AGM minutes were attached together with the request to approve the proposed amendment. The MC was headed by Sardar Jagdev Singh with Charanjit as Vice President and Jaspreet Singh Chhabra as Secretary. Sardar Jaspreet was the one who liaised with ROS to effect the amendments.

(4) Sardar Mejar Singh emphasized that Gurdwara Sahib Yishun has always been having problems in securing the minimal quorum of 40 at onset of annual meetings. According to records available, the only times that there was a quorum of more than 40 was in 1997 (at first AGM of Gurdwara Sahib Yishun), and in subsequent Sep 2002, 2004 and 2006 AGMs. Another exception was in Aug 2018 AGM when a high turnout of 63 is recorded due to special family Jodh Mela being organized that day to coincide with the AGM. This being the case, we need to be practical regarding our expectations of a large turnout, unless of course we go out of the way to mobilize “supporters” for the purpose, as was done in Aug 2018, which only serves to create divisiveness in the community. In the true spirit of Sewa, we need therefore to build consensus and collectiveness than to create divisiveness.

(5) Sardar Mejar Singh concluded that he personally had no issues with leaving both rules 18 and 39 as they were, notwithstanding the contradictions, and subsequent MCs could revisit the rules at some other appropriate time, i.e. to amend the quorum requirement and/or to amend either of the two rules with a lower threshold of voter attendance as per ROS Rules of Governance, and hence resolve the contradiction. In the meantime, we could still submit the revised rules to ROS approval based on rule 39 as has been the case so far. All members agreed unanimously to the suggested approach.

### **c. Rule 21 – Conduct of Elections**

(1) Sardar Mejar Singh brought to members’ attention that Sardar Charanjit Singh in his letter had also proposed amending rule 21. While the present rule provided for elections to be conducted by show of hands, or subject to agreement of majority of voting members present, by secret ballot, he was proposing it be done by secret ballot. His justification for the proposed amendment was that the membership of the Gurdwara has grown exponentially over the years and that the show of hands makes it difficult to determine if member had voted twice and also that it was logistically challenging to conduct a secret ballot on the day of voting itself. Sardar Mejar Singh commented that our current rule is not inconsistent with the Code of Governance

and also added that, as discussed earlier, we have rarely been able to even obtain the minimal quorum at AGMs. We should therefore give serious thought to giving away the option of doing it by show of hands or by secret ballot as so decided by members present at AGMs. He then opened the floor for discussion. The general consensus was that the option to choose should be retained and it is the responsibility of the MC of the day to be prepared to adopt either of the two options, as appropriate, and so decided by members present at the relevant AGM.

24. Sardar Mejar Singh then went on to explain the reasons/justifications for the other proposed amendments, namely that of AGMs being held between March and June every year; increasing the MC's power to authorize expenditure from \$5,000 to \$10,000; and empowering the trustees to be entrusted with lease renewal funds. In so far as the trustees were concerned, the intention was to create a special account under the trustees to ensure that the funds for lease renewal are kept separate from the Gurdwara "operations" funds and that the trustees be responsible for investing them as appropriate, so as to avoid the situation where no attention was given to this matter by the previous MCs. The following other proposed amendments, as elaborated in Annex A, were approved unanimously:

- a. Rule 11 – AGMs to be held between March and June every year instead of in March
- b. Rule 19 – Inclusion of Immediate Past President and Chairman, Board of Trustees as Ex-Officio members of the Management Committee
- c. Rule 27 – MCs power to authorise expenditure increased from \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 per month.
- d. Rule 29 (e) – Duties of Office Bearers – Honorary Treasurer authorized to maintain a "Petty Cash Account" not exceeding \$1,000 at any one time for petty expenses.
- e. Rule 31 to 35 – Trustees – The proposed new Rule 19 proposing the Chairman, Board of Trustees, and the proposed amendments at Rules 31 to 34 as well as additions to Rules 35 to 43 serve to entrust more responsibilities on the Trustees, who should serve as a separate entity from the MC, responsible for managing the trust funds.
- f. Rule 36 (e) – General/Disciplinary Matters – Rule 36 to be renumbered to Rule 45 under new heading of General/Disciplinary Matters.

#### **TO DECIDE ON ANY OTHER RESOLUTION(S) AND/OR MATTER(S) RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS**

25. Sardar Charanjit Singh in his letter had also raised the matter of the MC, in its fund raising drive, deciding that those who contributed \$2,100 or more for the Gurdwara Lease Renewal/Upgrading Works will be "deemed" to become life members. He commented, that while the intention behind this may be

good, doing so would not conform to Rule 7 of Gurdwara Constitution given that decisions of this matter are clearly vested with the AGM. Sardar Mejar Singh clarified that that in no way whatsoever had the MC contravened Rule 7, which clearly states that "Subscriptions payable by members shall be determined by members from time to time at the AGM or any other General Meeting of the members". The MC had not changed the rates of subscriptions, i.e. \$250.00 for life membership. He also clarified that not all donors are "deemed" to become life members as it was not an automatic entitlement. Only those who expressed desire to be members were granted membership as it would be unfair to deny them membership. The MC had been completely transparent in its intention of granting such membership to donors or their family members as this was openly announced during congregations. As a matter of fact, only 41 of the 200 donors had applied to be members. Sardar Mejar Singh expressed surprise that this issue was being raised as such a practice of granting membership had been earlier adopted by our Gurdwara at time of its construction and is an ongoing practice in other Sikh Institutions today too.

**TO CONSIDER AND DECIDE ON EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS: (1) TO EXTEND THE TERM OF SERVING MC TILL 30 JUN 2023, OR (2) TO ELECT THE MC FOR THE PERIOD 1 JUL 2022 TO 30 JUN 2024.**

26. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill explained the reasons for the optional resolutions, namely that the current MC had taken over in Dec 2020 and hence required to hold its AGM in Dec 2022, but given that the accounts are usually only audited between Mar to Jun, it was would be improper to hold the AGM in Dec 2022 with the accounts still outstanding. Hence, a better option would be to extend the term by 6 months or to hold fresh elections now to allow the incoming MC to serve between Jun to Jun over a two year term. Sardar Jasbir Singh Minhas proposed that the present MC carry on for another 2 year term from July 2022 to Jun 2024. All members agreed unanimously that the present MC carry on for another 2 years. Sardar Mejar Singh thanked members for their faith in the current MC but requested that it be allowed to reconfigure itself for the new term. This was unanimously agreed to by members present. Sardar Mejar Singh informed all that once the reconfiguration was done, members will be notified accordingly.

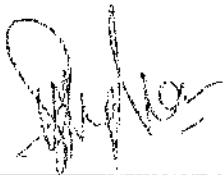
27. As there were no other resolutions and/or matters received by the Secretary in accordance with the Gurdwara Sahib Constitution, Sardar Mejar Singh called the meeting to a close at 2.30 pm. This was followed by Ardas by Giani Satnam Singh Ji.

**Afternote:** In line with the unanimous decision of the AGM to extend the term of the MC for another 2 years, the MC members met subsequently on 2 Jul 2022 to discuss the formation of the new Management Committee for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 Jun 2024. Sardar Mejar Singh Gill informed the MC that, as announced by him previously that he will hold position of President for only one term, he wished to step down accordingly. He proposed that Sardar Jaspreet Singh Chhabra take over and steer the new MC with Harbhajan Singh Ghosal as Vice President. He will, however, continue to fulfill his

obligations in overseeing the renovation project till its completion. The full composition of the MC, as unanimously agreed by the current MC is as follows:

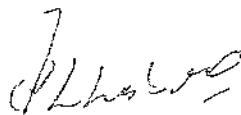
- |                  |   |                        |
|------------------|---|------------------------|
| President        | - | Jaspreet Singh Chhabra |
| Vice President   | - | Harbhajan Singh Ghosal |
| Secretary        | - | Piara Singh            |
| Asst Secretary   | - | Tara Singh             |
| Treasurer        | - | Manminder Singh        |
| Asst Treasurer   | - | Iqbal Singh            |
| Members          | - | Gordev Singh           |
|                  | - | Balaur Singh           |
|                  | - | Sukhdew Singh          |
|                  | - | Jaswinder Singh        |
|                  | - | Mejar Singh Gill       |
| Co-opted Members | - | Avtar Singh            |
|                  | - | Daljit Singh           |
|                  | - | Harinder Singh         |
|                  | - | Parmjit Singh          |

Recorded By:



Harbhajan Singh Ghosal  
Secretary

Vetted By:



Jaspreet Singh Chhabra  
Vice President

Approved By:



Mejar Singh Gill  
President