

Meeting minutes for Asha Chennai on 11th Apr, 2021

Minutes of the meeting held via google Meet on Sunday the 11April 2021 at 9.30 AM

Following were logged in and participated

Aruna Sankaranarayanan

Bhaskar

Kasturi Easwaran

Madan Sudarman

Rajaraman Krishnan (Coordinator)

Ramakrishnan

Sriram VSS

Sujatha

Sundaram R

Venkat Nataraj

Usha Bhaskar

0. Ratification

The minutes of the Meeting held on 7th March 2021 on Google Meet were ratified unanimously

1. Updates on Fundraising

Rajaraman filled in the details as to how Asha Chennai's Asha Kanini project will be funded and expanded as a project executed by Pravartak a Section 8 company formed by IIT Madras. The object of this project is to help spread the use of Asha Kanini application as a mainstay of teaching material resource in all the primary schools (1600 approx) in Thiruvallur District. John Crane, a sealing systems manufacturer, impressed with the objectives of the project has come forward with a grant of around Rs 50 Lakhs. Details of how the funds will cover the activities to attain the objective were discussed under a separate agenda point and are minuted later.

Rajaraman, Venkat and Madan Sudarman attended the CSR Summit held on 12 March,'21 in Saveetha College bringing together CSR Donors of companies in and around Sriperumbudur and fund seekers. Sridhar of Ishwar Foundation organised the event and some contacts established during the conference would be followed up as a part of Asha Chennai's fund raising activities..

2. Staff Loans

Teachers Nadhiya and Sheela (both Sangamam) had requested a loan of Rs 50,000 each toward house building/repairs. [Grant of loans to both Nadhiya and Sheela were unanimously approved with following provisos. Nadhiya's children should continue to study in Private Schools under RTE Quota or in Government schools during the tenure of the loan. Sheela's conveyance allowance will be restricted to 50 per cent for commuting between Tiruvellur and Placepalayam.](#)

3. Accounting Updates

Ramakrishnan briefly outlined the new streamlined processes for quick entry of cash expense vouchers into the accounting system, leave accounting, payroll input sheets, computer repair notification, repair and closure report with expenses thereof etc. Separate detailed instructions have been issued to all concerned. Project Stewards should ensure that new processes are implemented with immediate effect.

Ramakrishnan stated that FCRA for Asha India is under final stages of being approved and the accounts of Asha India will be operated through accounts held in SBI NewDelhi. Application for renewal under IT Sec 80G for exemption had been filed.

Application for addition of Authorised signatory for handling Asha Chennai Bank accounts had also been submitted.

4. Financials

Rajaram presented the report for 2020-21 and explained the details therein. In sum it can be stated, despite the pandemic and Glovis stopping its CSR contribution abruptly during the year the balance at the beginning of this year FY 21-22 is as favourably poised as it was at the beginning of the year FY 20-21 at around Rs 2.5 crores. However, to maintain and improve this position to cover expanded activities in the coming years sustained efforts are needed to raise funds..

5. Asha Kanini Pravartak

Rajaraman presented the details of activities, time lines and financials of the proposed participation of Asha Chennai in the project PARIVARTAK of IIT Madras. Prima facie the funds provided under this project would cover Asha Chennai staff such as software developers, data analyst, hardware engineer, lead teachers who would spearhead the training of teachers of government schools in Tiruvallur and field trainers. [This project, with a total budget of Rs 46.80 Lakhs for 2021-2022, was approved unanimously.](#)

Note that the project will be executed by IIT Madras' Pravartak,

6. Teacher's salary

It was recalled due to the pandemic, last year annual increases were withheld. It was noted that teachers had to work harder to run mini schools during the academic session 2020-21 even sacrificing their personal space in their homes and were striving to cover maximum number of children by running two shifts. The pandemic situation is in fact worse this time and presents a grim picture for resuming regular schools in the foreseeable future. At the same time cost of living, particularly food inflation and fuel prices, are on a steady rise. The bulk of Asha Chennai expenditure is on staff salary at about Rs.1.1 Crores

It was unanimously decided to adopt the following formula, (based on similar lines adopted in the past,) for the salary rise due to be paid from 1 June 2021.

a) Base Increase Rs 600 Per head plus

b) Performance based increase of not exceeding 8% of current basic salary subject to an average of not exceeding 4% in each project.

7. PR Updates

Madan Sudarman stated that Asha Chennai was doing tremendous work in the field of primary education but is largely going unnoticed. He said he would soon come up with proposals to revamp publicity materials and channels to propagate among other suggestions.

LEELAVATHI Award for Women's Empowerment. A team from St Joseph's College of Engineering with Asha Chennai (represented by Rajaraman Krishnan) as one of the team members was awarded a prize under the aegis of AICTE in the category relating to Sanitation and Hygiene. The team won the First runner up prize at the function held later that evening on the 11th of April. This was made possible by Ms Hemapriya, a student of St Joseph's College of Engineering, who had worked with Asha Chennai and had projected the good work done by Asha Chennai in her project report. Thanks also to our volunteer Kasturi Easwaran, with whose effort, this was made possible.

It was recalled that a draft Quarterly Report to donors was circulated by Venkataraman for stewards to fill in reports relating to their respective projects in order to finalise the periodic communication to donors.

8. Mini schools

Due to the advent of summer Mini Schools are winding down and will be closed for 6 Weeks from April 24th. till they reopen on 31st May 2021.

A Training camp for teachers for 3 days 6th May to 8th May has been planned to be held in Chennai at Ragasudha Hall. Meena Suresh, Purva Bhattar among others are scheduled to participate as trainers. However this is subject to evolving Covid situation and related restrictions that may come into force.