

# Meeting Minutes for Asha Chennai on 3rd May, 2020

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 3rd May 2020 at 9.30 AM by videoconferencing courtesy Google Meet.

Decisions are highlighted in blue.

The following were present

1. Bhaskar
2. Kasturi Easwaran\*
3. Paripoornam K
4. Rajaram Krishnan Coordinator.
5. Ramakrishnan C
6. Shriram V
7. Sundaram R
8. Venkat Natraj
9. Venkataraman M
10. Usha Bhaskar

\*Kasturi's audio did not function, however she could hear the proceedings in full and conveyed her votes on WhatsApp Message in the Volunteers of Asha Chennai Group..

## 1 Ratification of Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on March 22nd were ratified.

Rajaram presented the outcome of the poll held for Covid relief work. The poll was for authorising disbursing Rs 1000 per scholarship student as Covid relief. This was approved unanimously by the following members: Paripoornam, Venkataraman, Sriram, Venkat, Bhaskar, Saraswathi, Rajaram, Sundaram, Kasturi, Usha, and Ramakrishnan. This was also ratified.

The decisions taken during the teleconference 23 April 2020 regarding payment of salaries with or without conveyance as the case may be were approved.

## 2 Covid Relief in Thulasi

Paripoornam reported that 25 families in Kattusittamur and 45 families in Nallanpetrapillai were provided relief after due diligence of their dire circumstances by way of groceries in a planned manner. The estimated expenditure was at the rate of Rs 1400 per family totalling Rs 84,000

## 3 Request for Covid Relief Manigal project

Usha Bahskar proposed on behalf of Manigal project that Asha Chennai should provide relief to 64 families of the Narikuravas who are in great financial distress in Indiranagar . This proposal was agreed to entailing an expenditure of Rs 38,400 . However Usha Bhaskar was requested to verify the status on the ground before actually expending the relief amount. If required we will setup an online poll for the same.

## 4 General review of Financials

At the outset Rajaraman gave the good news of allocation of the highest sum of USD 75K to Asha Chennai from Asha worldwide . He then presented the projected annual financial Report for 2019-20 At the end of the year it was expected that Asha Chennai will have about Rs 2.35 crores. Impact of covid on the economy and consequent possibility of restricted fund flow was generally discussed while agreeing with the projections . It was noted that our chief benefactor viz Hyundai Glovis was yet to remit the last tranche for the year and all indications were that impact, if any, might be felt in the year 2020-21.

## 5. Salaries for 2020-2021

### 5.1 Teachers' salaries

In view of the current status of school closure for an indefinite period, serious economic downturn prevailing in the country with government finances in a perilous position and private sector taking a beating due to closures of offices and factories there was a lengthy discussion on the approaches to determine the compensation for Asha Chennai teachers during 2020-21.

Following Proposals were put to vote.

- a). The practice has been to grant a base salary increase of Rs 600 to compensate for cost of living and continuity in service etc and an additional discretionary increase of up to a maximum of 8 percent ( generally averaging at about 4 percent) of the basic salary , not including conveyance to be given based on performance . The proposal to continue the same formula for 2020-21 with a base increase of Rs 600 and a discretionary increase pegged at 8 percent maximum (4% average) was put to vote. **The proposal was accepted unanimously.**

b) In view of apprehension about the fund flow from Hyundai Glovis it was proposed to postpone giving effect to teachers' salary increase decided upon in a) above deferred till August'20 or we are certain about the funding from them.

This was approved with 7 voting in favour and 3 against

c) Whether such increase decided as above should be given retrospective effect from 1 June 2020 was voted upon, 6 voted in favour of giving effect retrospectively from 1 June 2020 while 4 voted against.

## 5.2 Staff salaries.

Srinivasan Field Coordinator His present salary is Rs 24000 PM, It was recalled that he was not given an increase last year on disciplinary grounds and further his workload in so far as dealing with monitoring of teachers and their attendance had been hived off to lead teachers. However it was felt that he played an important role in garnering materials organizing logistics in toilet construction and other civil works in addition to talking to the HM where it became necessary, Considering all the above and his pivotal role as a go to man in the field, a) salary increase of Rs Rs 3000 taking it to Rs 27000 or b) an increase of Rs 4000 taking it to Rs 28000 was put to vote. Option b) Raising it by Rs 4000 taking it to Rs 28,000 was approved with 8 voting for it and one voting for option a).

Muthu Hardware engineer Muthu's exemplary services during the distribution of about 200 laptops donated recently by Ford and Glovis and securing them in the event of schools being taken over as shelters etc by the government were put on record. A salary of Rs 26000 was unanimously approved raising it from Rs 23000.

Moothy Accountant It was noted that his present salary is Rs 17200. In view of the lockdown he has been Working From Home. It was observed that he had reached his limits in terms of taking up new tasks and says he is incapable of doing even simple accounting work like Bank Reconciliation. His residence being far away (Guduvancheri) too is an impediment. His tardy work in clearing the imprest amounts during the last year has also come to adverse notice during an earlier meeting. In view of the above circumstances a proposal for giving an increase of Rs 300 per month or maintaining the salary at the present level of Rs 17,200 was put to vote, Option of retaining the salary at the current level was carried by a majority of 8 votes to 2 ( due to transient transmission glitches while the exact number of votes given here may not be right, it's confirmed that the majority decision was as recorded above)

Malliga Project Assistant -- Her present salary is Rs 12,800. She stays in Guduvancheri and she has not been coming for work since lockdown. She too is handicapped in taking more tasks other than lending support to Scholarship project where she keeps in touch with the beneficiaries. In view of the above circumstances a proposal for giving an increase of Rs 200 per month or maintaining the salary at the present level of Rs 12,800 was put to vote, Option of retaining the salary at the current level was carried by a majority of 8 votes to 2 ( due to transient transmission glitches while the exact number of votes given here may not be right, it is confirmed that the majority decision was as recorded above)

Durairaj In respect of salary increase of Aruptha Durairaj, this will be covered by Poorna Vidhya proposal and Kasturi and Sriram will propose this salary and role in the project proposal.

Raj and Ponkumar Junior Software Developers. They were hired nearly a year ago as a part of the Asha Kanini project. Their current salary is Rs 18000 each. It was observed that they were both doing very useful work and have found their feet here. Raj is a good visual graphics resource while Pon Kumar is found to be good at coding. Asha Chennai may not be able to give such high first year increases as is the practice in the IT Sector. However, it would be necessary to retain them giving reasonable increases. It was decided unanimously to grant an increase of Rs 4000 to Raj and Rs 5000 to Pon Kumar taking their salaries to Rs 22,000 and Rs 23000 respectively.

Anand Hardware Engineer It was noted that he had joined only in January'20 this year. Venkat felt that he could be given a pro rata increase during this current annual salary review. After some discussions a vote was taken to fix his salary at either Rs 14,500 or Rs 15,000. Anand's salary was decided unanimously as Rs 14500.

## 6. Salaries for May 2020 especially for those who are not receiving explicit conveyance allowance 2020-21

During April, since the teachers did not travel to work, they were paid a salary minus conveyance. However coordinating staff who are paid a lumpsum salary without breaking out the conveyance received their full salary. After discussing this we unanimously decided to not deduct this in May and we will continue to pay their full salary in May as well.

Whether the teachers are paid their full salary in May or salary minus their conveyance will depend on whether their conveyance is paid in full during the working months or they are specifically paid conveyance just for 20 days (whereas usual no of working days in those months would be 22 days). We unanimously agreed to allow the project stewards to make that decision for their project teachers.

In the case of Rajatalab Ramakrishnan informed that conveyance was not paid in April salary.

## 7. Assignments to Teachers during Summer Break

After some discussion it was decided that Venkat Nataraj would a take call after consulting the mentors in the matter of asking Teachers to do assignments during the three weeks break in May.

## 8 .Projectwise Budgets

### 8.1 Glovis sangamam

Note that a four year budget for Glovis Sangamam has been approved by Asha Chennai as well as Hyundai Glovis back in April 2018. We are still operating as per the same budget for most part. It was noted that the actuals of 2019-20 were about Rs 6 Lakhs less than the budgeted amount. This is in addition to another excess of Rs 3 Lakhs in 2018-19.

For the year 2020-21 the originally proposed budget was around Rs 1.237 Crores. We have submitted a modified proposal with a budget of Rs 1.197 Crores with changes from the originally planned amounts. After perusal of the line items this was unanimously accepted.

Important It was decided as a general rule that in all the project budget proposals this time a provision to repurpose some proposed expenditures upto 10 percent to expend on hygiene and sanitary items in various schools and our offices, Example, sanitisers, masks setting up handwashing arrangements. It may be restricted to 5 percent in case of expenditure only on consumables like sanitisers and masks and 10 percent in case infrastructure for hand washing is provided.

### **8.2 Asha Kanini**

It was noted that Asha Chennai had been able to get two good junior developers but it has not been successful in recruiting a Senior developer. After some discussions it was decided to provide for one more Junior developer while continuing to pursue efforts to fill the Senior Developer vacancy, The budget projections may be modified suitably. [The budget with the above modifications was approved unanimously.](#)

### **8.3 Rajatalab**

Proposals presented by Ramakrishnan for Rajatalab were noted. It was also noted that Asha Austin has already approved the project and would fund it. However because of current situation it is uncertain if interchange of visits between Chennai and Varanasi as planned will fructify. [The proposal was also unanimously approved by Asha Chennai.](#)

### **8.4 Project Sangamam**

Venkat presented the budget proposals for project Sangamam. He pointed out the difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers in remote schools in Sriperumbudur/Kadambathur block. Actuals for 19-20 are therefore far below budgeted figures. Redoubled efforts would be made this year to hire teachers . [Budget figures were accepted with following changes 1\) item line 10 Re School Day etc the figure to be rounded off to Rs 45,000 and 2\) Line Item 16 to be reduced to Rs 60,000 as Excursions are included in Glovis Sangamam proposal for all teachers. The modified budget is for a total Rs 15,15,400.](#)

### **8.5 Thulasi**

Paripoornam presented the Budget figures for Project Thulasi for 20-21. After some discussions it was decided to drop the hiring of an additional computer teacher and also scaledown the expenditure on lime Item 2 ( Co-Ordinator, Rmesh, Gnanasoundari, anjali) by Rs 2000 Per month. [A total projection of expenditure with these changes at Rs 19,00,800 was unanimously approved by all volunteers.](#)

### **8.6 Asha scholarship**

As Venkataraman started to present it appeared he was logged out with a notification that the "meeting ended" Therefore it was decided to take this up in the next meeting.

9. Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the coordinator.