

Australian Council of Hindu Clergy

Monthly Meeting

28/03/2017

Venue:— 20 Bernard Street, Westmead

Present: Pts' Athreiya, Venkatraman, Sivan, Ranjith Gurukkal, Nathan Gurukkal, Bhattar, Davendra.

Time opened 15:10 Meeting closed at 17:10

Matters arising

1. Secretary's opening address and statement of achievement for the past year - Celebrant OPD was successfully undergone at Auburn Temple. The Lotus Mandap is now under construction - foundation completed and pillars are in place. There was a meeting between Invocare and Pts Athreiya and Sivan to discuss the needs of the Hindu community. Suggestions for a mandap, similar to the Lotus Mandap at Macquarie crematorium was tabled. Further discussions will take place.
2. The topic of consecration of the completed mandap was raised by Athreiya and after some brief discussion Ranjith suggested we do pravesha bali and vastu shanti. All agreed and motion carried.
3. Once again the topic of application for Recognised Denomination was raised and the need for collecting signatures was stressed. Deadline for signature collection was posited as 30th September.
4. Membership Drive — Nathan & Ranjith Gurukkals were tasked with collecting membership from all the Sivacharya community. Davendra Sharma agreed to enrol the Fijian Pandits.
5. Consultative Body — we discussed the matter of inviting senior and learned members of the Pandit community overseas and locally to be on our panel of consultants for the resolution of Dharma matters. A letter has already been given to Chinna Jeeyar swami and Rishikesh will follow up on this. Davendra suggested Mahant Anand Giri and will forward his details. Nathan agreed to follow up on a Sivacharya from adhina peethas. A letter will be drafted for the members to send to prospective Dharma Consultants. Venkatraman said he would take a letter of introduction of Kanchi and Sringeri acharyas.
6. The matter of OPD for priests was raised. We have already done one on weddings and funerals - further discussion is needed and most are in agreement.
7. Dates of future meetings — members will be informed of future meetings minimum 2 weeks in advance followed by a reminder a week before.
8. Discussion was held regarding standardization of weddings and funerals. Wedding issue was not resolved after heated discussion. Sharma and Sivan will work on a funeral format.
9. The matter of divorce was raised. Divorce is a real time issue in the Hindu community and needs to be addressed. Legal divorce is obtained by the usual channels but we need to address the issue of the religious aspect. Some people have approached us about annulment of the Vedic marriage after legal divorce has been obtained. Members discussed elaborately the provisions for divorce

given in Manu and the other Smritis and members will do their own research and we'll make a formative decision at the next meeting.

10. Fund raising for the Pandits' Welfare Trust was discussed. Unanimous agreement to hold a maha yajña in the future which will be orchestrated by Rishikesh Bhattar - details to be worked out by a select committee.

11. The issue of the delays in the Coroners report was raised. Further research must be done to discover ways in which the process can be expedited. Sivan will undertake this task.

Matters adjourned for next meeting:-

- a. Officers work sharing responsibility and attendance at meetings.
- b. All future forums, seminars and yearly functions.
- c. Matters for website - guidelines for setting up member's page etc.
- d. Treasurer's Report