

# HMEC 2017 – Program Committee Meeting – June 7, 2017

**Attendees:** Chandra Reddy, Arun Jain, Surendra Pandey, Kumar Dave, Hansa Dave, Ami Patel, Fred Stella, Sri Muktananda, Nina Jain, Preya Dave, Ravi Joshi, Ram Sahadeo, Divya Selvakumar, Ramesh Gosyne, Sanjay Mehta, Bhakti Mehta, Anita Gupta

**9:00 PM – 10:00 PM**

Prayer by Sri Muktananda

## Program Draft Review

- Walk through of the revised draft and additions from last week's meeting by Arun J.

## Brainstorm on Theme and Topics

### Public Relations

- Outside media has engaged the temple
- Without a designated spokesperson, it may not reflect the views of the temple and board – risky and incorrect way to deal with formal inquiries and media
- **Fred S.**
  - Pracharak – Outreach minister at his local temple
  - Deal with media, write press release
  - At HAF, strict policy on who speaks to media on specific topic
  - Discussion in panel of professionals – how to do that, how to work with media
  - Honest story vs spice and controversy
  - PR business expertise – best practices from various media channels
  - Experiences and examples to share
  - Issue releases by HAF – it would be a challenge to get more unity from Hindu community
- **Sri Muktananda**
  - Have a discussion on Hindu temple media network among all the temples
  - Speak with the same voice
  - How to communicate and collaborate with each other for join voice and representation
  - Ties into Hindu Activism
  - Rajiv Malhotra – had a think tank with others related to this topic
  - Simple Playbook
- **Ram S.**
  - Recourse or legal advise
  - Team of lawyers – services can be used for these purposes
  - 100+ temples stood up to the gov't about ad in paper
- **Sanjay M.**
  - We have to keep in mind that Hindu temples in America and their executives are not very active – they are interested in a 2 year term and are not in broader community

- Outreach to our own people first
- Do and Don't handout or brochure on what to answer – need baby steps – get it as an action item before HMEC and present at HMEC for input and refinement, produce something tangible
- **Arun J.**
  - We can't speak on behalf of Hinduism, but we can speak on behalf of constituency

### **Priest and Technology**

- Priests are walking around with mobile devices and tablets
- Electronic archanas are being booking
- Member database
- Different temples have come up with various solutions
- Computer savvy vs non computer savvy – support priest in gaining
- Ami
  - Is this an HMPC related discussion and topic?
- Sanjay
  - Get it from the priest conference
  - Provide synopsis to Sant Gupta

### **Temples as Learning Centers**

- We had this as a session with various speakers last year, but what deeper dive do we need to do this time?
- **Sri Muktananda**
  - Extended campuses
  - Provide a vision on what that would look like
  - Learning for youth and young is part of purpose
  - Counselling is more like a service, but learning is imparting knowledge
- **Ramesh G.**
  - Financial advise and counselling
  - Managing one's credit
  - Is there room for other forms of counselling such as sports, etc?
- **Arun J.**
  - Doesn't necessary have to be related to Hindu dharma only
  - Have to see value in temple
- **Ramesh G.**
  - Choosing careers
  - Job search
- **Bhakti M.**
  - What do we want to include or exclude?
  - There are children and youth programs that are relevant but where do they fit in?
  - Temple Big Picture of what we as a community need from our organizations
- **Ami P.**
  - We need to distinguish between learning and community services
  - We need to paint a visions of the future
    - What does this include?

- What does this look like?
- **Surendra P.**
  - We should expand our service in many areas
  - Make the mandir more relevant that only for rituals and Pooja
  - Ex. Language classes, library
  - Combined purpose – Community and Mandir
  - Many things that temples can do by getting volunteers to do it
    - Ex. teach driver safety course
- **Anita G.**
  - Volunteer program – registered
  - Get our volunteer to get volunteer hours
  - Unpaid volunteers – not consistent commitment as compared to paid employees
  - Creates an incentive for youngsters to volunteer and be recognized

Prayer by Kumar Dave

Next Meeting June 14, 2017