

**S. THOMAS' COLLEGE, GURUTALAWA OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE 11TH (253rd) MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE(2002/2003) HELD AT S. THOMAS' PREPARATORY
SCHOOL ON JANUARY 28, 2003 AT 5.45 P.M**

<u>Present:</u>	Mr.Geethal Mendis	President
	Mr.P S Duleepkumar	Senior Vice President
	Mr. Sunil Watawala	Vice President
	Mr. S. Suraweera	Vice President
	Mr.Shervon Fernando	(Hony Secretary)
	Mr.Gamini Fernando	(Hony Treasurer)
	Mr. Bandula Wanigasekera	
	Mr. Mahen Ranasinghe	
	Mr.Don Gazara	
	Mr. Rizvi Jalill	
	Mr. Lasantha Perera	
	Mr.S P Palihawadana	
	Mr.A Lamahewa	
	Mr.Chandana de Silva	
	Mr.Ajith Pieterisz	

By Invitation

Mr. Lakshman Jayatilaka
Mr.K. Wimalaraj

Excuses:

Mr.Nihal Wanniarachchi
Mr.K Bandusena

1. **Headmaster's Comments**

At the outset the Headmaster welcomed the Members of the Ex-Co who were present. He thanked the Ex-Co and the OBA for the tremendous support he had received and the great effort made towards development of the College. He said that he had been very happy working with the Ex-Co and reiterated his desire to see this Ex-Co continue in office next year too.

Mr.P S Duleepkumar, Senior Vice President in response thanked the Headmaster for having permitted the Ex-Co and the OBA to work closely with him in the development of College and mentioned that it would not have been possible for the OBA to have done so much for College if not for the fact that the Headmaster himself had co-operated with the OBA.

2. **Minutes of the previous Meetings**

The minutes of the previous meetings of January 11 & 20, 2003 had already been circulated.

Mr.Sunil Watawala mentioned that his name was not included in those present at the Meeting of January 11,2003 at Gurutalawa. Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe mentioned that Mr.Don Gazara's excuse from attending the same meeting had not been recorded. These corrections were noted and the Minutes amended accordingly.

Subject to the above, the Minutes of the Meeting of January 11, 2003 were confirmed as correct on the proposal of Mr.Sarath Suraweera seconded by Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe.

The Minutes of the Meeting of January 20, 2003 were confirmed as correct on the proposal of Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera seconded by Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe.

3. **Matters arising from previous Meetings**

1. **Audio Visual Equipment – DVD Player**

Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera advised that he could get a Singer DVD Player for Rs.14,400/-. Major A C Lamahewa and Sqd. Ldr S P Palihawadana undertook to check on the make and price and inform Mr.Wanigasekera within 2 days if they could get one cheaper than Rs.14,400/- and with good after sales service. If they failed Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera undertook to purchase a Singer DVD Player priced at Rs.14,400/- and send it on to Gurutalawa within the next few days.

2. **Staff Provident Fund**

Mr.Duleepkumar mentioned that he had prepared a brief for the Headmaster to be distributed amongst the members of the Board of Governors for the meeting of January 29,2003. The Headmaster undertook to pursue the matter with the Board.

3. **Staff Quarters**

The Headmaster stated that quarters occupied by Mr.Ekanayake who was a Dorm Master was in a deplorable state and he requested the Ex-Co to apportion some funds for it's repair. It was agreed that Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe on his next visit to Gurutalawa (which is scheduled for early February) would look into the matter. In the meantime, the Headmaster was requested to obtain a quotation from the College contractor and forward same to Mr.Ranasinghe for his perusal. As the Headmaster

indicated that the total cost would not exceed Rs.70,000/- and also the College would bear 50% of the total cost, the Ex-Co approved the payment of the balance 50% of the cost of repairs to quarters occupied by Mr.Ekanayake.

Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe advised that according to information received from the contractor Jamail, the ceiling of Club House had been completed and that of Keble Building was in progress. All material required for partitioning etc had already been delivered to the College. Jamail had confirmed that all work on the quarters would be completed before the AGM. Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe expected to visit College after February 02 to mark the exact positions of partitioning.

4. **Sports Club**

The Headmaster stated that Mr.Madawala had made numerous attempts to contact Mr.Ruwan Munasinghe regarding the registration of the Sports Club. Several messages had also been left. Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe undertook to contact Mr.Ruwan Munasinghe, in this connection.

5. **Systems and Financial controls**

- a). Report of M/s.SJMS: Mr.Duleepkumar informed that the report of SJMS Associates, Chartered Accountants had already been forwarded to the Bishop.
- b). Farm Manager: Mr.Wimalaraj who had been present at Gurutalawa on January 11,2003 on the day of the Ex-Co Meeting, handed over a Brief Report on the present status of the Farm and initial proposals for development thereof.

He had observed that the layout of the Farm had been changed from old days with cowdung dumped in an unsuitable area and the farm badly maintained.

He agreed to a salary of Rs.9000/- per month plus free accommodation with a deduction of Rs.750/- on account of food and advised that he was prepared to work without any holidays.

After some discussions, it was eventually agreed between the Headmaster and Mr.Wimalaraj that he would commence work at the College on February 15,2003 on a 6 months contract, initially, the contract to be prepared by the Headmaster for signature on February 15th.

His main task would be to improve the farm to show profits with the available funds, which he considered possible within weeks and to submit proposals for possible improvements and expansion, for the future, for consideration by the College and the OBA.

To a suggestion that Mr.Wimalaraj takes on the duties of an Agriculture Teacher the Headmaster confirmed that there were 4 agriculture teachers on his staff. In any event Mr.Wimalaraj advised that he could not teach either in Tamil or Sinhala and would assist in the practicals in English.

A sum of Rs.36,000/- was to be transmitted by the Hony. Treasurer to the Headmaster as the contribution of the OBA towards the salary of Farm Manager for these 6 months at the rate of Rs.6000/- per mensem. The Headmaster would pay a sum of Rs.3000/- per month out of College Funds.

- c.) The Accountant: The Headmaster read out from a copy of a letter sent to the Accountant who had failed to report for work to the effect that he is deemed to have vacated his post. The Headmaster mentioned that he was going to employ another Accountant for the College.

7. **Boarding House keeping**

The Headmaster stated that clothes hangers have been distributed amongst the Senior Students, and undertook to brief them on conditions of use. Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe confirmed that similar railing would be provided for Junior Students outside their toilets.

Mr.Don Gazara confirmed that the washing machines would be brought from England sometimes in March 2003, on the assurance from the Headmaster that these would be well looked after and maintained.

8. **Leadership Workshop**

It was reported that Mr.Sujeewa Godage had attended to some landscaping work in College, immediately below the Foster Dorm and in the garden of the Deputy Headmaster's bungalow. He had not had sufficient time to conduct the 2nd leadership workshop. This would be undertaken by him later on.

9. **Subodhi Institute**

The Headmaster reported that arrangements had been made to have a programme of 06 days in March. Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka mentioned that

he would keep in touch with Fr.Mervyn Fernando and Fr.Anthony but for the College to make their own arrangements with the Subodhi Institute. The financial arrangements in connection with this programme would be borne by Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka.

10. **Administrative Officer**

The Ex-Co felt very strongly that this post must be created at the earliest. The Headmaster was requested, in view of the importance of the matter the saving that would eventually accrue to the College, that the salary of Rs. 15,000/- per mensem be paid by the College. The OBA was willing to put up the short fall of Rs.180,000/- @ Rs.15,000/- per mensem, for the period of one year for Mr. Sarath Suraweera who had volunteered to take up the position to help the College,(at least for one year), and he was willing to assume duties at short notice, and produce results within weeks. It would now be left to the Board to approve the position for the betterment of the College, so that Mr.Sarath Suraweera's appointment could be confirmed on a contract for one year.

The Headmaster was requested to present the case to the Board in a strong manner as this was the most important appointment to bring the College to a reasonable standard in all aspects. Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka agreed to give him a copy of Mr.Suraweera's curriculam vitae while Mr. Duleepkumar and Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera, offered to prepare a Board Paper to outline his duties and responsibilities as an Administrative Officer, so that the Headmaster could take that to the Finance Committee and the Board Meeting to be held tomorrow.

11. **Funds from the Board**

Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera requested the Headmaster to make available to him the balance information called for in order that he could communicate with the Board and look into the question of recovering any balance money due.

Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka pointed out that as an Old Boy who had donated funds through the Board of Governors for College Development work he felt unhappy that the Board had delayed in transmitting monies remitted by the Old Boys to the College and also the fact that undue deductions had been made by the Board before remitting the money.

Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera pointed out that there appeared to be a lack of records and information on both sides, i.e the Board of Governors and the OBA. This was the reason for the delay in resolving this matter, and of course the unnecessary lapse of time had clouded the transactions.

12. **Police Post**

Mr.Sarath Suraweera read out from a note, the position with regard to the Police Post. The DIG Uva has confirmed that they have recommended the opening of a police post at Boralanda. Mr.Suraweera also tabled a letter dated January 21,2003 addressed by the Hony. Secretary to the Inspector General of Police, with copy to DIG Uva range which he said he was pursuing.

Mr.Palihawadena undertook to speak to Mr.S B Dissanayake, the Minister of Agriculture with regard to the release of a building owned by the Agriculture Ministry at Boralanda, for the use of the Police Department. Mr.Suraweera confirmed that the Police Post would be a reality within 2 weeks, subject to availability of the premises.

13. **Bio-Gas Project**

Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe who was monitoring the progress of the project informed the Ex-Co that it appeared that the project had been delayed due to various unforeseen circumstances experienced by Mr.Tharumaratnam. It seemed unlikely that sufficient progress would be made on the project according to the time frame envisaged.

He would therefore recommend that the sum of Rs.100,000/- earlier pledged as the OBA's contribution be diverted to other identified projects where tangible results would be shown, and that Mr.Tharumaratnam could then proceed at his own pace when funds were available to complete the construction of at least one digester in the first instance. This was accepted.

14. **Bank Overdraft of the College.**

The Headmaster profusely thanked the Ex-Co and in particular Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera for his commitment in this matter and for having succeeded in getting the interest rate presently paid, i.e 24% reduced to 8% p.a. This would bring about a saving of more than Rs. 115,000/- per annum. Mr.Wanigasekera requested the Headmaster to get the Board of Governors to give the required letter to the HNB, so that the interest on the excess overdraft of Rs. 1,350,000/- could also be adjusted to 8% to get a saving of about another Rs. 215,000/- per annum.

15. **Dr.R L Hayman and Fr.A J Foster Scholarship Funds**

Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera tabled a note explaining the position with regard to this matter which reads as follows:-

“At present these two show Rs.125,625/- and Rs.137,625/- in the Books of the OBA but in reality, the Funds are Rs.124,710/78 each in cash comprising the two deposits after allowing for interest earned till January 30,2003. In the meantime, Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka had donated Rs.10,000/- each to these funds (total Rs.20,000/-).

Thus the full amount for both these funds together is Rs.269,421/56 after including the donation.

Since we have decided to give Scholarships to two students for Rs.15,000/- each for one year from February 01,2003, the expenditure of this amount will leave Rs.239,421/56. In order to make these into round figures, I recommend that a sum of Rs.10578/44 from the Development Fund be transferred to these two accounts to show Rs.125,000/- each, after paying the two Scholarships for this year. The books of account are due to be duly corrected accordingly. Further in these circumstances, it is recommended that one fixed deposit of Rs.250,000/- be made in the National Savings Bank at 9% p.a which is the current rate and is the highest of all Banks for one year deposits.”

If the above is agreed to, the following Resolution is required to give effect it:

“It is hereby Resolved and approved that the OBA invests Rs.250,000/- in a affixed Deposit for one year from 01 February 2003 and the Bank be so informed and a deposit made accordingly.

As per the Rules the signatories will give the necessary specimen signatures. Any two signatories of the following are authorized to sign for withdrawals or otherwise operate the account: President/Senior vice President/Any Vice President/Treasurer/Secretary.”

The recommendation and the Resolution were approved by the Ex-Co.

16. **Davidson Dorm**

The Headmaster mentioned that he was now short of space for the new students being admitted and he required the Davidson Dorm repaired sufficiently well so as to accommodate the new intake. It was agreed that Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe would on his next visit in early February would examine this matter with the contractor to effect necessary repairs.

Mr.Ranasinghe explain that a quotation has been received from Mr.Jamail for replacement of all the tiles with galvanised sheets in the sum of Rs.204,675/-, which was very expensive

Mr.Lamahewa offered to check the prices of asbestos sheets, which he thought could be bought much cheaper with a good discount and advised Mr.Ranasinghe.

The Headmaster considered that it would be possible to effect these necessary repairs well within Rs.60,000/-. In the circumstances, the Headmaster agreed to bear Rs.30,000/- or 50% towards this repair. It was agreed that Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe would look at all options available to repair the roof within this budget.

17. **Dining Hall Furniture**

Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka mentioned that he had received the quotation from the College carpenter and making of 01 dining table to the satisfaction of the Headmaster. The number of tables, very likely 6 or 7, would then be turned out. He was agreeable to meet the cost on the lines discussed previously with the carpenter.

The Headmaster was of the opinion that the Boarders of the entire Middle and Senior Schools would be able to have their meals at one sitting and even extend this practice to Prep.

This would ease matters where supervision was concerned and give some relief to the dining hall, pantry and kitchen staff. The Headmaster agreed that the objective of this exercise must be achieved and he had checked with the Senior Supervisor who had confirmed the time table could be adjusted accordingly.

18. **Score Board in the main grounds**

Mr.Sarath Suraweera mentioned that he had undertaken the construction of the Score Board directly opposite the pavilion on the main grounds of the College. He would find the sponsors and supervise the work. Necessary arrangements were already in place. He would also be visiting College in early February to see the progress. He mentioned that the score board would be ready for the cricket match between the Old Boys and the present boys during the Re-Union celebrations on February 22,2003 and that he expected to take a group photograph before the event.

19. **Treasurer's Report**

Mr.Gamini Fernando explained the position with regard to the status of the Bank Accounts etc. Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera submitted a Resolution for the consideration of the Ex-Co. The Resolution was passed. It reads as follows:-

“As you would recall, a separate account called No.2 account was opened for the specific purpose of ensuring the funds collected after March 2002 will not be used to defray cheques issued in February 2002, in excess of funds in the No.1 account.

Since the purpose has now been served, and since each account has to have a minimum of Rs.25,000/- in order to avoid payment of Bank charges, it is to our disadvantage to have two accounts and even for accounting, there is much unnecessary work.

It is therefore recommended that the No.2 account be closed by about February 15,2003, and Mr.Yatawara who has a standing order be requested to issue new instructions to send his standing order to No.1 account. There are four other standing orders going in to No.1 account and they present no problems.”

20. **Audited Accounts**

The audited accounts of the Association prepared by SJMS Associates were tabled by the Treasurer for consideration and approval. Mr.Wanigasekera explained that in this exercise an effort had been made to prepare and submit to the membership a clean set of accounts as representing the true affairs of the Association as at date.

Mr.P S Duleepkumar complemented the efforts made and said that the accounts were perfectly in order.

The audited accounts which were tabled were approved and the Secretary was directed to transmit same to the Membership together with the notice of meeting and his report etc.

21. **Secretary’s Report**

The Report of the Secretary was tabled. It was approved and resolved to transmit same to the membership.

4. **To Discuss Progress of the Sub Committees**

Report of the Sub-Committee for Projects

A detailed explanation with regard to the work that had been completed as well as the work in progress was submitted at the last meeting of the Ex-Co held on January 20,2003. It was hoped that all work undertaken could be completed well before the AGM.

Report of the Sub-Committee for Newsletters

College Magazine:

The proof of the College Magazine was available for perusal of the members. It was decided to print 450 copies. The headmaster undertook to sell 430 copies amongst students and the staff at Gurutalawa. The balance copies would be available for sale amongst old boys.

The report was submitted.

Report of the Sub-Committee for Membership

It was hoped that a few more members could be enrolled for the year to make up 100 enrolled since March 2002. 83 Members have been enrolled to date and 09 more applications are being processed.

Members Directory

The printer has assured the delivery within 10 days. College amendments and adjustments received had been incorporated. The composition of the Ex-Co has also been included. A new cover page with recent photographs/images will be available.

The Report was tabled.

Report of the Sub-Committee for Rules

Mr.Bandula Wangiasekera tabled the draft of the proposed new set of rules, which were to be adopted at the AGM on February 23,2003.

He explained the salient features of the new rules and the reasons for the changes. He thanked the Senior Vice President and Mr. Lakshman Jayatilake and all members who had helped him in the work of the Sub-Committee.

A copy of the proposed new rules was tabled. A copy will be enclosed with the notice of the meeting that would be sent out by Hony. Secretary.

Report of the Sub-Committee for Dinner Dance

Mr.Sunil Watawala mentioned that only a sum of about Rs.80,000/- or so was due from the advertisements in the souvenir of the dinner dance. Mr.Bandula Wanigasekera confirmed that a sum in excess of Rs.1,000,000/- had been realized from the Dinner Dance effort.

Report of the Sub-Committee for Re-Union

Acting on the recommendations made by the Senior vice President, arrangements are being made to have the AGM as well as the Old Boys Annual Re-Union celebrations on a grand scale. Every effort will be made to co-ordinate activities

with the Headmaster and OBA will be encouraged to fall in line with the main arrangements being made by the Ex-Co. Discussions are going on with the Headmaster and his staff with regard to arrangements relating to security, accommodation, catering, sports activities, fellowship the formal dinner, the Holly Communion Service and the AGM. It is hoped that it will be possible to demonstrate to the Headmaster that he could revert to the previous practice and tradition of involving all present students in these celebrations at least in the near future.

5. Any Other Business

- a. Mr.Lakshman Jayatilaka tabled 2 letters he had received from Old Boys of the 1st batch of 1942, namely Mr.Roy Abeysekera and Mr.Upananda Karunatileke both of whom had complemented the work being done by the Ex-Co and who had themselves made financial contributions towards the College development fund. Mr.Jayatilake referred to the fact that Mr.Roy Abeysekera had remitted the membership fees to join the Association at the age of 78. Mr. Upananda Karunatilake had expressed concern with regard to maintaining the same character and architectural features as prevailed before in handling development work or construction of any new buildings.
- b. It was decided to publish a notice with regard to the AGM in the English as well as the Sinhala Newspapers.
- c. Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe mentioned that information had been received that water was not available in the staff toilet despite this problem having been resolved to the satisfaction of the staff. The Headmaster promised to look in to this matter.
- d. In reply to Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe the Headmaster advised that he required an additional room in the new building for his Secretary and Clerk and for safe keeping of confidential documents . The Ex-Co approved the provision of such a room and Mr.Mahen Ranasinghe agreed to attend to it during his next visit to College around February 4 or 5 2003.
- e. Mr. Sarath Suraweera submitted a letter dated January 21,2003 to be addressed to Mr. Manilal Fernando, Chairman of the Football Association of Sri Lanka by the Headmaster and counter-signed by the Prefect of Games and the Master in Charge of Football in College. Mr. Suraweera mentioned that he was endeavouring to obtain assistance and coaching with regard to Football. The Headmaster undertook to have the letter perfected and returned to Mr. Suraweera. A copy of the letter was tabled.
- f. Mr. Mahen Ranasinghe raised the question of the English Teachers who were expected from the British Council in March/April and tabled the

formal letter of invitation which had been sent by the Headmaster to the British Council at the instance of the OBA. It was necessary to find out the exact date when these teachers were expected and to draw up a list of furniture, fittings and equipment which would be required by the teachers.

- g. The Headmaster had agreed to make the accommodation available to Old boys and their families (when not required by College) on payment of reasonable charges, particularly when Old Boys visit College in connection with development work. They were free to obtain their meals from the College kitchen on payment of the usual charges.

There being no other business the Meeting was adjourned.

Confirmed as correct

Chairman.