

MINUTES FOR THE 62ND ISOLA EC MEETING

Date: 22nd January 2016

Venue: Banquet Hall, J W Marriott, Bangalore

ATTENDEES

Rohit Marol	- Honorary President
Ashish Patankar	- Honorary Vice President
Neelima Soni	- Treasurer
Shilpa Chandawarkar	- Secretary
Sachin Jain	- Past President
Manguesh Prabhugaonker	- Fellow member
Nupur Prothi Khanna	- Fellow member
Sreejith S	- Associate member
Harsh Mittal	- Associate member
Nidhi Madan	- Special Invitee
Suneeta Bapat	- Mumbai Chapter Chairperson
Deepa Maheshwari	- Gujarat Chapter Chairperson

Members Absent with leave:

Minesh Parikh	- Delhi Chapter Chairperson
Harsh Goel	- Associate member

1. MEMBERSHIPS

- a. Updated status of memberships (after introduction of Discounted Membership and Amnesty Scheme)

Nidhi Madan reported that there was a good response to both the schemes – Discounted membership and Amnesty and the current number of members is 640, valid memberships are 323 to date. Members who do not have valid memberships have been contacted to get them to pay up their dues.

It was decided to extend the Amnesty scheme upto 31st March 2016 and keep the Discounted membership scheme going for the current year.

- b. Identifying the merits, demerits and then, norms for Institutional and Donor memberships – to generate revenue as well as increase ISOLA outreach

Nupur Prothi Khanna and Manguesh Prabhugaonker to find out about the norms followed by other organisations (such as ICOMOS and IIA) and see if ISOLA can offer similar associations.

- c. Eligibility for membership to ISOLA (as provided on website and all documents) to be checked for clarity and remove any discrepancies/possibilities of misinterpretation

Neelima Soni reported that the criteria for membership eligibility has to be modified as per feedback received from all EC members over the past few meetings and an updated membership rules document to be uploaded on the website and distributed, since there are discrepancies that have come up. Joy (person setting up the software for online memberships) has been following the updated rules for online membership portal.

2. FINANCIAL STATUS OF ISOLA

Treasurer to update on current status in all ISOLA accounts, along with anticipated expenses and income

Neelima Soni reported that Delhi NCR Chapter had handed over the cheque of the dues to the Centre as calculated and approved by the ISOLA Auditor Rajnikant Trivedi. There are no further dues payable by the Delhi NCR Chapter to the Centre.

She also reported that Pune LOC had not transferred the balance conference funds till date. It was decided to inform the Pune LOC office bearers that they needed to transfer all balance funds to the Centre by 29th February 2016 and close the LOC account before the end of the financial year. Pune members to also decide on chapter formation by 29th February 2016. Ashish Patankar to follow up with the Pune LOC.

3. WEBSITE UPDATES/UPLOADS/REDESIGN

a. Demonstration of the 'online section' of the membership database

A link to check membership information and update contact information has been sent to all with valid memberships.

b. Discussions held with Joy

Neelima Soni and Nidhi Madan met with Joy to discuss the online membership portal and reported the following-

- A photo, date of birth and PAN card number will be included in the online application (since it is on the existing form).*
- Data entry will remain the responsibility of the ISOLA office.*
- A link for new members and renewal of expired memberships will be directed from the ISOLA website to a page on the portal. They will see a data entry screen similar to new member data. We approve the application and the same is emailed to the applicant. Such validated applicants are then allowed to pay the membership fees. On paying the fees, the applicant becomes a member. Renewing members can do so directly.*
- Emails will be sent as reminders through the portal. Emails will go to all members listed, and it is possible to segregate by chapter/ membership category etc.*
- The download to excel option allows us to print out and distribute membership lists.*
- At present, we will keep all backup, no time limit. That may change in the future.*
- We will go ahead with the payment gateway as the only payment option.*
- Archival payment information will not be part of the data entered or saved. Once the payment portal is active, payment information from that time onwards will be saved.*
- Possibility of linking member access to the website will be done in coordination with website vendor when the website is done.*
- Amnesty Scheme will lapse on March 31st, 2016, after which members will pay for all intervening years of lapsed membership.*
- Discounted membership fee to continue throughout the year. However, for the current year membership will have to be paid by April 30th, of the year, after which a penalty of 10% will apply. So if a member renews in June for membership of the current year, they will pay Fees + 10% of Fees for this year, and only the annual fee for subsequent years, even for the discounted scheme.*
- Fields to be seen by all members- Member Name, Membership No (not there now), Institution, Year of Passing, City/ State, Chapter, Photograph.*
- Online conference registration integrated with the online membership portal was discussed. It can be incorporated at this time, allowing members to pay directly through their member page, and others through a link. Decisions pending regarding data to be collected and for what purpose; possibly build up a mailing list/ opportunities for further*

collaborations. Fees will be deposited directly into independent bank account is set up by the Local Organizing Committee of the Chapter that is hosting the conference.

- *Online voting too was discussed. It was agreed to set up the portal to accommodate it, and for us to use it to get resolutions passed by members, to test it out, before going ahead with voting for office bearers.*

- c. Current status of website with regard to regular updates and proposed redesigning of website

Website updates are ongoing on the present platform. Newsletter, event, chapter information, images, awards and past conference information have been updated. Tribute section to be added.

The new website graphic interface to be designed by the website team, in time for a new vendor to create a new website on an updated platform in May 2016.

4. REVIEW OF ISOLA AWARDS 2015

- a. Shilpa Chandawarkar to report to the EC about the awards jury conducted on the 19th of December 2015 at Mumbai

Shilpa Chandawarkar reported that the jury for the ISOLA Awards 2015 as successfully held in Mumbai. The total number of valid entries were as follows:

One nomination for the ISOLA Gold Medal, 2 entries for the ISOLA Landmark Award, 12 entries for the ISOLA General Design Award and 12 entries for the ISOLA Students Award.

- b. Recommendations given by the jury members and the Awards Convenor Ms.Savita Punde for conducting the awards henceforth

Recommendations put forth by the Convenor Ms.Savita Punde:

- *The entries for the ISOLA Landmark Award must be called for in advance and the project under consideration must be visited by atleast one jury member to study and assess the 'landmark' potential of the project.*
- *There should be atleast one senior member on the jury (the EC felt that a member with 25 years work experience would classify as a 'senior member' of the profession)*

Recommendations put forth by the Jury members:

- *The criteria for judging and the number of awards in each category must be specified prior to the jury*
- *The number of sheets can be less, but emphasis must be given to the design concept and design development process*
- *The panel should consist of an odd number of jury members so that there is a clear decision in the event of a vote within the jury*
- *A jury visit to the projects in the Landmark Award category recommended*

Recommendations of the EC members:

- *Sreejith opined that all entries should be given a feedback on their submission by the jury*
- *Nupur Prothi Khanna felt that accepting soft copy submittals would help to increase the participation. She said that all international competitions accepted soft copy submittals*
- *All members agreed that there should be a category for young professionals where ongoing projects/just completed projects were accepted*
- *Nupur Prothi Khanna also promoted the idea of having a Research category for the awards*

5. PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE BHOPAL CONFERENCE BOOK

- a. Status of the printing of the book – *The book has been printed and distribution of the same has already commenced.*
- b. Process of sending the books to all delegates, speakers, invitees and institutions to be outlined– *Sachin Jain, Yogesh Kapoor and Brijender Dua from New Delhi have offered to help with the distribution of the conference book to all delegates and invitees. Some books were also available for purchase against donation by interested members (those who had not attended the conference)*
- c. Balance payments and work orders to the designer and printer to be approved and issued. Courier bills to be approved and issued. – *All bills were approved, Neelima Soni to make the payments accordingly*

Most EC members felt that the delegate fees did not cover the cost of the publication and as discussed in the previous EC meeting held in New Delhi on the 5th of December 2015, it was felt that free distribution of the conference proceedings book should be discontinued.

Sachin Jain felt that conference proceedings must be made available to all attendees at no extra cost. Ashish Patankar felt that ISOLA could distribute an e-book version free of cost but the hard-copy book could be purchased against a donation. Nidhi Madan opined that the registration fees at the conference could offer an option of higher charges if the proceedings book was also included.

It was decided to revisit this point before taking a final decision at the next EC meeting.

6. BACKUP OF ALL ISOLA DATA

Demonstrate use of Google Drive and means of accessing this data as and when required. Harsh Goel to report on his visit to the ISOLA Office on Saturday the 16th of January 2016 regarding the status of records (hard copies and soft copies, data backups) and recommend areas of improvement.

Harsh Goel was unable to attend the EC meeting. However, he had sent the backup of all ISOLA office data on a data disk through Deepa Maheshwari – the same was handed over to Neelima Soni. Neelima Soni and Nidhi Madan have instructed Ameer Shah to scan and email all data as required by the website manager.

7. STATUS OF SUBMITTAL OF BYE-LAWS TO CHARITY COMMISSIONER

It has been decided to review the bye-laws and all rules and regulations set by ISOLA since its inception and incorporate amendments, if any, based on the Society's functioning experience for the last 12 years. Minesh Parikh (Chairperson of Delhi NCR Chapter) has offered to help with this.

Honorary Secretary to check with Minesh Parikh for a date to complete the review and then present it to the EC and to the general membership for further review and approval.

The submittal of bye-laws to the Charity Commissioner to be put on hold till such date.

Minesh Parikh had asked Shilpa Chandawarkar to inform the EC that he would be in a position to submit his feedback to the EC by the next EC meeting which is scheduled to be held on 16th April 2016 as he had received the documents for review on the 12th of January 2016.

Rohit Marol said that in the meanwhile, the process of obtaining signed declarations in the prescribed format from all ex-EC members should be completed.

8. ISOLA MERCHANDISING

Based on the inputs given by the ISOLA Auditor Rajnikant Trivedi and lawyer Jaimin Dave, the EC has decided to support the venture of distribution of ISOLA memorabilia items against receipt of donation from its members. The EC shall pay 50% of the total cost incurred and the Delhi NCR shall pay 50% of the cost. Resolution towards this to be passed.

It was resolved by the EC to support the venture of distribution of ISOLA memorabilia items against receipt of donation from its members. The costs would be shared equally by the central EC and the Delhi NCR Chapter.

Nidhi Madan also reported a very enthusiastic response to all the items by the conference delegates.

9. NEWSLETTER

The first edition of the newsletter is slated for release during the Conference. Neelima Soni to report on the progress of the same.

The first edition of the ISOLA Newsletter for 2016 has been uploaded on the website as on 21st January 2016. Comments and suggestions from members are awaited.

10. EDUCATION BOARD

- a. Sachin Jain (EC representative at the Education Board) to report on the deliberations at the EB meeting held on the 21st of January 2016 on the receipt of MOMs from Deepa Maheshwari.
- b. Request the Education Board to share the minutes of the meeting with the EC at the earliest and chart the steps to be taken to meet their objectives.

The first meeting of the Education Board for this term (2015 to 2017) was held on the 21st of January 2016. Sachin Jain and Deepa Maheshwari reported that they had a productive meeting and have identified the areas for further working and divided responsibilities. The EC has requested the EB to share the minutes of their meeting by the 15th of February 2016.

11. REVIEW OF ONGOING CONFERENCE AT BANGALORE

The Bangalore conference was extremely well-attended and the build-up to the conference has generated a lot of interest in the participants.

Rohit Marol reported that the total donation amounts received for the Bangalore conference were approximately 60 lakhs and the final figures would be known after the event. As per the norms, 20% of this amount would be transferred to the Centre once the accounting procedures are completed.

It was decided to write to the Bangalore LOC to formalise their identity as a chapter of ISOLA and hold elections at the earliest to elect their Executive Committee.

12. IDENTIFYING AND ESTABLISHING THE WAY FORWARD FOR ALL THE COMMITTEES DISCUSSED THROUGH VARIOUS EMAILS, MESSAGES AND CONFERENCE CALLS IN THE LAST 5 MONTHS

It was decided to send out a call for volunteers to all members via email (with a deadline of 5th February 2016 for members to respond) and formulate a plan by the 29th of February.

13. VENUES FOR THE 2017 AND 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- a. Review the feasibility of Jaipur as a venue for the 2017 annual conference (consider formation of a Content Committee and Organising Committee)

Harsh Mittal expressed his reluctance to host the conference in Jaipur in 2017 as he felt that a preparation time of a year and a half would be needed. It was decided to consider Jaipur as a venue for 2018 after a decision on the 2017 conference was taken.

- b. Invite suggestions from members for hosting of the 2017 and 2018 conferences
There were no responses to the email sent out by the Honorary Secretary to all members in October 2016, except for a solitary personal response from a Chennai member.

Suneeta Bapat, chairperson of the Mumbai chapter said they would check the feasibility of hosting the conference in Mumbai. Manguesh Prabhugaonker said he would examine the possibility of hosting an EC-driven conference in Goa. It was decided to defer the announcement of the next conference and it would be announced after a final decision is taken within 2 weeks.

14. OPENING OF KERALA CHAPTER OF ISOLA (as per request received by ISOLA members in Kerala)

Sreejith S., associate member of the EC, formally submitted a request for Kerala ISOLA chapter formation signed by 9 members in good standing. The request was approved by the EC. The rules of Chapter formation and necessary documentation shall be forwarded to the chapter members.

15. EXAMINING THE POSSIBILITIES OF INTRODUCING ONLINE VOTING IN ISOLA (judging by the preparedness of the online database)

Manguesh Prabhugaonker (based on his experience with online voting in the Indian Institute of Architects' elections) once again reiterated the need for an accurate database and member access to their account to ensure successful execution of an online voting process. Sachin Jain expressed his reluctance towards the use of online voting for the central EC elections. It was however decided to factor online voting into the development of the website and then have trial runs of the process for smaller resolutions to gain member confidence in the procedure and judge its correctness.

16. DERIVING A POLICY OF EVALUATING REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT/ASSOCIATION WITH ISOLA BY ORGANISATIONS (commercial/governmental/institutional/private/event management firms, etc)

It was unanimously agreed that ISOLA needs to increase its outreach to other institutions and governmental organisations that share the key objectives of ISOLA. It was also agreed that ISOLA would not like to participate in any ventures that are purely for commercial reasons. NupurProthi Khanna and RohitMarol opined that we should talk to established organisations such as INTACH, IIA, AKTC, etc. which may be willing to partner with ISOLA and may also have some norms for such associations.

Proposal for Association of ISOLA with Municipalika was considered and EC will take further decision on it. The event is scheduled in Mumbai in November. Sachin Jain reported that Mr. Ramaninder Singh, representative of Municipalika had sent documents of their past event at Jaipur for ISOLA EC review and were willing to let ISOLA hold an independent session at the event. Terms of engagement could be discussed.

17. ANY OTHER ITEMS WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

Nupur Prothi Khanna strongly advocated that the ISOLA website should have a section that clearly defines the SCOPE OF WORK of a landscape architect. The scope of work could be further detailed based on project scales and categories. Rohit Marol offered to work on this and upload it by the 29th of February 2016.

Past Vice-President of ISOLA, Yogesh Kapoor had informed the EC that IIT Gandhinagar is willing to host the ISOLA office in their new campus. It was felt that existing with an educational institution would be in the interest of ISOLA. Deepa Maheshwari, Chairperson of Gujarat chapter also offered the paid services of her interested students in helping with the administrative work for ISOLA. It was decided to evaluate the financial benefits and working efficiency of such a move and then take an informed decision on the matter.

Prepared by:

Shilpa Chandawarkar
Honorary Secretary
ISOLA