

FHC General Meeting

Minutes

11 August, 2023

Meeting opened: 6.15pm

Attendance: Som Tamang, Susan Devitt, Tim Trehearn, Mary Frances de Jourdan, Jonathan Clayton, Peter Gaudron, Doreen Gaudron, Steve Johnson, Ivan Whittle, Debra Whittle, Angus McColl, Rita Zappulla, Kurt Wagner, Phulmaya Tamang, Brendan Radke, Kay Smith

1. Welcome (Tim) and Apologies: Sue Lowth, Fiona Sewel

2. Acceptance of previous meeting minutes: Proposed by Mary Frances,
Seconded by Peter

3. Update on Batase Village (Som):

Som advised that the new FHC committee has been appointed in Batase, and Anil Tamang is the new President. Anil has had a long association with FHC, having benefited from sponsorship as a child, from the age of nine. He has been a staunch supporter of the charity, undertaking various roles and volunteering many hours over the years. Som, and the FHC Committee in Cairns, have great confidence in Anil's commitment and ability to carry out his new role well. One of his first duties was to submit documentation to the Nepalese Government for audit and re-accreditation of FHC Nepal.

There are currently 34 children living at the hostel, including two new registrations. The mother of the new arrivals is terminally ill and the father is trying to repay a large debt by working in Malaysia. 13 other children have applied for help from FHC and their needs are currently being assessed.

Kurt asked what had happened to the two children he was sponsoring, as he hadn't received any notification of their withdrawal from the hostel. Som explained that the children's circumstances had changed with Covid, and that Kurt's sponsorship money was re-directed to other children. It was generally agreed that sponsors should be notified of such changes.

4. Rotary Club update (Rita)

Rita advised that funding was available through Rotary Projects Abroad, and she is currently writing applications for 7 projects to benefit FHC and Batase School. These include funding to fit out the hostel, publication of Kirsty's book and a speaking tour (promotional benefit), a school building project and sponsorship funds. All proposals need to be approved by the Nepalese Government, for child safety reasons. The Rotary Club in Kathmandu has also offered support for FHC. Rita encouraged FHC to proceed with application for Tax Deductibility.

5. Financial Report (Mary Frances)

Sue was unable to attend tonight's meeting but submitted her report for presentation to the meeting by Mary Frances and/or perusal by interested attendees.

In regard to our new AGM, Fiona had approached an Auditor who quoted a fee of \$1800, but who also advised that we didn't need to be audited this year. Peter explained that, according to his research, we don't need to be audited this year because we didn't hold any fundraising events. The Committee will meet on 22 September to discuss what to do re Audit.

6. Upcoming Newsletter (Angus)

Angus produces a quarterly newsletter which is our main way of communicating with sponsors, donors and supporters. He asked for feedback on the content of the newsletters and requested input re stories, news items, events, etc.

Peter advised that he has a number of letters written by hostel children to sponsors that could be included in newsletters (edited to ensure confidentiality), to show, from the children's perspective, what sponsorship achieves, and to connect sponsors more closely to the children's world.

7. Fundraising dinner: Freshwater Community Hall 26th August

20 tickets have been sold out of 50. Susan is confident that the others will sell although the dinner clashes with another major event in Cairns that day. Cashless tickets have to be purchased online, although Susan is happy to take cash, if that is preferable, at the shop.

Susan will meet with Fiona to discuss details of the event and determine what help is needed. Certainly, help will be required with setting up the hall and with desserts. Rita offered to make a tiramisu, and it was suggested that Tropic Catering (see Craig at Red Ochre) might assist. The hall is available from 4pm that day.

8. Pecha Kucha presentation by Phulmaya (Mary Frances)

Phulmaya will present her life story in a Pecha Kucha presentation in Atherton on 10 November. This offers Phulmaya an opportunity to practice public speaking and to introduce FHC to the Tableland community, which already supports the charity through Containers for Change. Kay is very pleased to be helping Phulmaya with this project.

9. Containers for Change update (Jonathan/Mary Frances)

\$22,000 has been collected this year from bottles and cans. (\$4,000 of that came from Atherton.)

Kurt has organised the residents in his street to participate in collecting containers for FHC.

Their efforts now cover the sponsorship of the two children he has been sponsoring in Batase.

Som also thanked Jonathan for the donation tins that he distributes to service stations, take aways, etc and regularly collects and replaces.

10. Other business and next meeting, AGM

Mary Frances gave an overview of how Innocents Relief and Ubuntu are able to contribute to FHC's efforts in Nepal. Innocents Relief are able to fund school-related projects and have funded classroom construction, teacher salaries and a water project

In the case of major donations, IR has offered to allow FHC to use its Tax Deductibility.

Ubuntu allocates funds to IR for approved projects. \$25,000 for the classroom construction came from Ubuntu, via IR.

Steve advised that Najita is preparing to relocate from Batase to Kathmandu. Steve, Najita and the new FHC Committee in Batase are working together to find a suitable hostel facility and a more efficient care routine for Najita. Currently, she has no access to physios, and requires transport to school. (Som and Steve bought a motor bike and Sangita's husband transports her to school.) They will carefully plan for a transition to a more independent lifestyle.

The date for the AGM has been set for 18 October, 2023.

Meeting closed: 7.25pm

Minutes taken by: Kay Smith