

## **FHC General Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**16<sup>th</sup> September, 2020**

**Meeting opened: 6.05pm**

**Attendance:** Som Tamang, Tim Trehearn, Mary Frances de Jourdan, Sue Lowth, Kay Smith, Jonathan Clayton, Rosalind Pulley, Georgia Smith, Peter Gaudron, Angus McColl, Steve Johnson, Kurt Wagner, Christiane Wagner, Ellen Tupait, Pascale Clayton

**Apologies:** none

**1. Welcome** (Tim) especially to new Friends, Kurt and Christian. Thanks to Jonathan and Pascale for offering their home as venue for meeting. Condolences to Ellen on the passing of her partner, Prince and an acknowledgement of his valued contribution to FHC.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting:** Accepted (Proposed MF, seconded Kay)

**3. Update on Batase** (Som)

Nepal is in full Covid lockdown and no schools are open.

Families in Batase are isolating from each other and farming their land.

The hostel is a social bubble, including Som's family and hostel staff.

Paru and Bijay are supervising learning activities for the children in the hostel, from 8.30am - 10.30am each day. (Bijay posted a video on FB this morning of one of the girls giving a speech on Children's Rights and Parents' Responsibilities.) They also organise games and fun activities for them.

Tokmaya has the role of "house Mum", attending to children's needs as well as looking after the buffalo and the vegetable garden.

Staff and children spend time each afternoon weeding the garden.

Saili, Urmila and Gori are cooking for the children.

Paru and Saili stay at the hostel at night.

Vehicular movement in Nepal is by police permit only. (Sujan was caught by police, trying to go to Kathmandu by bike. His bike was confiscated for a week.)

No salaries have been paid to TON/FHC staff, as there is no possibility to bank or spend any money.

Lack of access to any health facility in walking distance is a concern.

**4. Financial report** (Sue)

Sue tabled Profit and Loss statement for last financial year and summarised as follows:

FHC took in \$66,500, but spent slightly more. The main costs were medical, education and food.

Funds in the three FHC bank accounts total \$65,800. One of those accounts is a Term Deposit account, with a balance of \$35,000, earning 1% interest.

In the months of July and August, 2020, FHC has taken in \$4,500 in sponsorships, \$210 in Memberships (21), \$440 in donations, and \$1600 from Containers for Cash. There have been few outgoings due to suspension of FHC salary payments, and limited banking/purchasing possibilities during Covid lockdown.

## **5. Upcoming newsletter (Angus)**

Angus expects to have the newsletter finalised and ready for mailing in the next few days. This issue will feature staff in Batase, and aim to give supporters an idea of FHC's work on the ground in Batase. Som was able to provide some information about staff roles to Angus.

## **6. New development project for Batase (Steve)**

In response to the ongoing issue of fuel supply in Batase, Steve has designed and built a small, portable brickette maker, and experimented with making some dense but light-weight brickettes. At the meeting, he demonstrated the simplicity of the machine, showed us the brickettes he has made, and summarised his findings.

The brickettes were made from a mix of 60% sawdust and 40% paper. He reported a plentiful supply of sawdust in Batase and waste paper from the school (when open).

Brickettes could also be made using corn husks, twigs, etc.

Brickettes have been found to be second only to gas in terms of fuel efficiency.

It takes about 20 brickettes to cook a meal for 6 people.

About 100 brickettes can be made in an hour.

Once formed, brickettes are dried for six days in the sun.

Brickette makers are available for purchase in Nepal, but Steve envisages a modified design, made on site in Batase.

He also proposes building a suitable oven for the hostel. Existing ovens in Batase do not have sufficient draught for burning brickettes.

Steve plans to return to Batase as soon as travel is possible, to implement this project and train staff to make both brickette-makers and brickettes.

## **7. Containers for Change update (Jonathan, Mary Frances)**

While fundraising events are restricted here in Cairns, it is generally felt that Containers for Cash should be a focus of fundraising efforts.

Mary Frances and Jonathan have designed personalised flyers, introducing themselves and the FHC cause, that can be distributed by supporters locally. Angus can personalise the flyers for anyone interested in collecting locally.

\$1600 has been raised in the past two months and, with more supporters on board, this could be a significant source of revenue.

Kurt and Christiane have begun collecting in their street in Trinity Beach. They hope to sponsor a child with some the proceeds.

Mary Frances has established a collection point at TAFE for cans and bottles. She has also approached several businesses asking if they would collect on FHC's behalf. (No response yet).

## **8. Offer of storage space in Smithfield (Kurt)**

Kurt asked whether FHC would be interested in securing storage space in a Smithfield facility, if owner was agreeable to donating it for a year. Roz, Pascale and Jonathan, who offer collection points at their homes as, expressed concerns re 1) losing touch with goods that needed to be managed and sent on (forgetting what was there) 2) transport of goods to and from the facility 3) becoming less mindful of the appropriacy of donations.

It was decided not to pursue this idea at this stage.

## **9. AGM date**

Tim proposed Wednesday 9 December for AGM.

Peter reminded meeting that audit had to be carried out first. The last audit, for two financial

years, cost \$2800.

Sue said she knew of an accountant (Margot Richardson), experienced in audits, who might do it for FHC, and she would make enquiries as to her availability and fee. Som will send Sue the list of requirements of an auditor, to ensure that Margot complies.

Som also has a form, relevant to the AGM, which needs to be signed by the auditor and new committee members.

#### **10. General Business**

Christiane wondered if FHC might be interested in a donation of shoes from a friend's shoe stores. Due to the problem of transporting any donations to Nepal under these Covid circumstances, the idea was rejected at this stage.

In relation to forthcoming audit and selection of a new committee, Som advised that FHC no longer has Public Liability Insurance. Shane Tibbs was insurer, but the policy expired in March. It wasn't renewed as public events were no longer a possibility due to Covid.

Christiane expressed interest in visiting Batase, when possible, and running Family Constellation workshops for the hostel children. These, she believes, would be helpful to children who have suffered trauma. Som is keen to offer the children this experience.

Kay suggested that the next newsletter include an item about Kurt and Christiane's Containers for Cash project.

**Meeting closed: 7.30pm**

(Minutes recorded by Kay Smith)