

Indian Women's Association Singapore (IWA)
Annual General Meeting – Minutes of the Meeting

Date: 14 February 2018

Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Location: The Grand Patro's Ballroom, Chinese Swimming Club, 34 Amber Road, Level 2, S439950

AGENDA

1. Registration
2. Opening Performance
3. Call to Order
4. Treasurer's Report
 - i) Audited Financial Statement
 - ii) Appointment of Auditors for next fiscal year
5. Secretary's Report
6. Game by Membership Team
7. President's address and report
8. Entertainment item by IWA Writing Enthusiasts' Club
9. Game by Membership Team
10. Musical performance
11. Nomination & Election of New Committee
12. Vote of Thanks
13. Meeting adjourned

Attendees:

IWA Committee Members present:

Garima Lalwani, Sudeepta Dasgupta, Chandan Lehal, Tejashree Datey, Anuradha Shroff, Kavita Daga, Pallavi Agarwal, Bhavani Banerjee, Gowri Aiyar, Preeti Dubey, Neeta Mirchandani, Gauri Savadi, Abhinika Mittra, Vidya Dasgupta, Seema Gupta, Rakhi Shankar, Jyoti Verma, Alka Joglekar, Rajashree Viswanathan, Ritu Kapoor, Nirupa Vasudev, Lakshmi Padmanabhan, Monica Dovedy, Mika Parekh, Padmaja Balaji, Taniya Hathiramani, Anshoo Berry, Madhu Suri, Selme Singh, Shilpa Thapliyal.

Invitees present (in alphabetical order):

- **Air India:** Sowmya Srinivasan, Country Manager
- **Beyond Social Service:**
Mr. Gerard Ee, Executive Director,
Mr. Alvin Yapp, Board Member,
Ms. Chiu Ying Yik, Manager (Volunteer Development)
- **H.O.M.E.:** Sheena Kanwar, Executive Director
- **Indian Heritage Centre:** Saravanan Sadanandom, General Manager
Another colleague
- **India Se:** Ms. Nithya Subramaniam, Deputy Editor
- **Jamiyah Singapore:** Bhavana Rao, Manager
- **People's Association:**
Ms. Junie Pang, Senior Manager (Integration)

Ms. Nor Aziean, Senior Manager (Integration)
Ms. Ethel Tan, Manager (Integration)

- **Siglap South Community Centre:** Dr. Uma Rajan, Vice Chairman
- **SINDA:**
Mr. Barathan, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Philip Royston Samy, Senior Manager, Community Engagement & Volunteer Management Division
- **Singapore Management University:** Ms. Patricia Pereira, Deputy Director (Advancement)
- **Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore):** Mr. S. Devendran, Chief Executive Officer, Ex-CEO SINDA
Another colleague
- **WINGS Counselling Centre:** Hema Gurnani, Director
- **Auditors – Sasikala Devi Associates:** Ms. Sasikala Devi

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Opening of the meeting

Tejashree Datey introduced herself as the Secretary and welcomed everyone to the IWA AGM. She then introduced the opening performance.

Opening Performance

IWA Member, Pooja Kandarpa, was invited to sing a welcome song. Pooja sang a song on women empowerment.

Call to Order

At 10:38 am, the Secretary confirmed the quorum and called the meeting to order. She read out the house rules and invited Anuradha Shroff, Treasurer IWA, to present the treasurer's report.

Treasurer's Report

Anuradha Shroff thanked the Executive Committee, the Working Committee and the Bazaar team and Pallavi Aggarwal, Assistant Treasurer. She told the meeting that the Report was sent out with the Agenda to all members as per the requirement of the Constitution. The summary of the Finance Report for the year ending 31st December, 2017 was then presented.

Membership

- Membership as on date was 316. A growth of 11% seen in membership from last year and the number of active participants also saw a healthy increasing trend.

Events

- 115 events were held by IWA in 2017, a 12% increase over last year

Bank Balance

- IWA had a healthy bank balance, adding SGD 36,505, approx. 12% more cash to the bank balance.
- More Fixed Deposits likely in 2018 as an increase in General fund is seen at \$33,557. This is also a 12 % increase over last year.

Income and Expenses

- The IWA Bazaars continued to be the largest income generators at SGD 102,622 which was 63 % of the total income, with membership, advertisements and events contributing the rest. There was an overall increase of 2% over last year.
- Our overall expenses increased by 4 % over the last year. This was mostly due to an increase in donations made during 2017. The largest expense was for the Bazaars which remained at the same level as last year. The publishing cost for Dhvani, the in-house magazine, was reduced by 8 % and the operational expenses came down by 38%. The club event expenses went up by 6% due to an increase in the number of events.

Donations

- IWA paid for the SMU Vidya Scholarship for 2017.
- IWA beneficiaries like Swami HOME, TWC2, HOME and BSS were supported as usual with almost 50% increase in cash and kind.
- In addition, donations were also made to two new beneficiaries: WINGS Counselling and National Gallery.

The Treasurer then went on to announce two proposals:

- 1) To change the name of the 2015 SG50 Funds which had remained unused to Fund for Integration Activities. This Fund is to be maintained at the same amount of \$5000 by a top-up. This proposal was seconded by Bindu Singh and accepted.
- 2) To retain Sasikala & Associates as IWA Auditors for 2018. This proposal was seconded by Preeti Dubey and accepted.

Secretary's Report

Tejashree Datey, Secretary invited Sudeepta Dasgupta, Vice President, to present the Secretary's Report with her.

She noted that the Vision of IWA was CARE, CONNECT and CELEBRATE.

IWA has 12 interest-based clubs and 3 I-Care programmes. Besides these, IWA also organises two very popular Bazaars a year - the Summer Bazaar and the Festive Bazaar. IWA also has an enthusiastic Membership Team, Privileges Team and a Media Team in place.

A new club, the Acts of Kindness (AOK) Club had been launched in 2017 and its purpose of providing meaningful opportunities for volunteering was highlighted. Its activities during the year were covered.

The activities and events organised by the Adda Club, Book Club, Creative Hands Club, Entrepreneur Club, Fitness Club, Gourmet Goddess Club, Mahjong & Scrabble Club, Movie Club, Music Club and the Writing Enthusiasts' Club were mentioned.

Another new Club was launched in 2017, the Travel Club and its day trip to Pulau Ubin and overseas trip to Melaka, Malaysia were highlighted.

Then, the work done with the charities supported by IWA under I-Care was covered, namely, Beyond Social Services (BSS), Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2), Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME) and SWAMI Home for the elderly.

IWA launched its first 'IWA Vidya Scholarship' with SMU in 2012. The Scholarship is to support one deserving and talented undergraduate in the degree programme at the University. For this IWA had pledged a sum of \$5500 for 2017.

IWA had again organised two successful Bazaars in 2017, the Summer Bazaar and the Festive Bazaar. The Festive Bazaar in 2017 was held at the Suntec Convention Centre.

The in-house magazine by IWA, Dhvani, aimed to be the true voice of IWA with varied, entertaining, thought-provoking and interesting articles. There were three issues of Dhvani in 2017.

The work done by the Media Team which oversees the Website, Newsletter and Media Sales was mentioned.

Through its Privilege Partners, IWA provides discounts and other benefits to all its Members.

The events organised by the Membership Team and the IWA Events Chair were mentioned.

Game by Membership Team: Know Your Committee

The Membership Team of Gauri Savadi and Abhinika Mitra conducted a 'Know Your Committee' game as part of interaction with IWA members.

President's Report

The President, Garima Lalwani, was then invited to address the meeting and present her report.

She said that IWA had completed its 20th year and is stepping into its 21st year. The organisation started as an Expat Indian Women's Club in 1997 and became the Indian Women's Association in 1998. Today, IWA is a thriving organisation. She thanked the Past Presidents, their teams and members.

In 2017, the vision for IWA was to empower women/our members, create opportunities to volunteer and integrate and keep existing relationships and build new ones.

This was encapsulated in the acronym WINS, which stands for a Welcoming place for all, Integration, Nurturing new relationships and seeking out new ones and Stepping-up member participation and volunteerism.

Welcoming Place

IWA had made efforts to increase awareness of the full spectrum of activities offered by connecting through Facebook, website, E-newsletter and the in-house Dhvani magazine. Even an Instagram and Twitter account! The Membership Lunch 'Rendezvous' also provided an opportunity for Members to hear directly from Club Chairs, sign-up for areas of interest and have a face-to-face interaction with the whole IWA Team. Committee Members and Club Chairs also continued to make efforts to connect personally with attendees.

By the end of the year, IWA had 316 members.

New Initiatives

IWA had launched several new initiatives in 2017.

Two new Clubs, the Acts of Kindness Club and the Travel Club were launched in 2017.

Acts of Kindness Club (AOK Club)

The purpose of the AOK Club was to make volunteering simple and easy and exposing Members to various volunteering opportunities in Singapore. The AOK Club connected with other organisations and celebrated special Awareness Days throughout the year. The International Women's Day was celebrated at Food From The Heart, the Earth Day at ACRES, Mother's Day with moms at Henderson CC, Children's Day with beneficiaries of the Yellow Ribbon Project and Care Community Services Society and World Kindness Day at Willing Hearts Soup Kitchen. IWA also invited other organizations, namely, the American Women's Association, the American Association of Singapore and the Kamala Club to partner with IWA for this event.

Travel Club

The other new Club was the Travel Club which initially met to figure out the kind of trips Members wanted. A day trip to Pulau Ubin with a guide saw an overwhelming response. Later in the year, the Club also undertook its maiden outstation trip to Melaka, Malaysia.

The aim of this Club is not only to travel and have fun but also to further understanding of various communities in the region.

Existing Clubs

Existing Clubs also increased their outreach and integration with some new initiatives.

- The Writing Enthusiasts' Club and the Book Club together hosted an author event with three eminent authors - Amardeep Singh, Suchen Christine Lim, Charmaine Leung where the topic of 'Legacies' was discussed. Garima thanked Tara Dhar, a long-time IWA member, who had moderated the event.
- The Book Club, Writing Enthusiasts' Club and Movie Club partnered with the Singapore Committee for UN Women to support "16 Days of Activism" to raise awareness for women's rights, gender equality and violence against women.
- The Creative Hands Club worked with residents of Jamiyah - Home for the Aged to create beautiful mandala art.
- The Music Club performed at the Eid celebration which was hosted by the Siglap South IAEC in addition to the regular participation for SWAMI Home birthday celebrations.

Talks and Engagement

In an effort to raise Awareness for women's issues, IWA supported two plays, 'Project Roop Kaur' about atrocities faced by women during the India-Pakistan partition and 'Mindless Whispers' about depression among women. IWA also hosted a talk on the topic of 'Understanding Depression' to further this awareness. A talk on women's health was organized at Raffles Hospital, our long-term privilege partner.

Nurturing and Building Relationships

SINDA

IWA has been working with SINDA for Project Give. The Creative Hands Club helped run the creative activities at the SINDA booth for several days including Fridays and Saturdays. Garima thanked Mr K. Barathan, who helped IWA volunteers to meet President Madam Halimah Yacob when she visited the SINDA booth. In 2017, IWA members also helped SINDA to distribute their festive gift vouchers to families in need, during Diwali.

Siglap South CC

Garima said that IWA was fortunate to have someone like Dr. Uma Rajan, a 'tireless volunteer herself', as a long-term partner. Under her guidance, IWA celebrated Holi with Siglap South IAEC, an event that 1,000 people attended. IWA celebrated Eid with Siglap South CC for the first time where the CC organized a lunch for about 250 members from lower income families. IWA supported the celebration by participating in the entertainment, applied henna for the guests and helped serve food.

Another event was the painting of 200 planks. IWA participated in Siglap South CC's plank art painting for PAssionarts for a community engagement project called 'Resilient Singapore, One Nation'. The CC was very generous in returning the plank work to the artists and the artists in return were generous in donating them to various non-profit organizations like SINDA, the Jamiyah Nursing Home garden, ACRES, Sree Narayan Mission and even the gardens at Siglap CC itself. One of these art works has been made into a scarf and sales go to ACRES.

People's Association

The People's Association facilitated a visit by IWA members to the NEWater plant with residents of Nee Soon CC.

This year, for the very first time, IWA was invited by PA to participate in the Chingay Parade with an entire IWA contingent of forty-four women and children.

Stepping up participation

In 2017, IWA organised orientation sessions with the I-Care partners to help members understand the unique need of each organization. This understanding also led to stepping up of member participation.

SWAMI Home

Once a month volunteering with SWAMI Home was introduced and IWA continued organising the quarterly birthday celebrations.

Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2)

TWC2 wanted more ad hoc support. IWA helped volunteers to connect with their beneficiaries for translation and interpretation. IWA members also donated computers which TWC2 needed. IWA also hosted a Diwali party for the Migrant Workers of TWC2 and gifted TransitLink cards to the attendees.

Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME)

IWA ran a skills-oriented workshop where the residents were taught to make necklaces out of recycled material. IWA also hosted a Bollywood dance session and a henna workshop and Members donated groceries and guitars as per their requirements. IWA members also helped translate works written by the residents of HOME which have now been compiled into a book.

Beyond Social Services (BSS)

In 2017, IWA started regular volunteering with BSS where volunteers helped pack and sort hundreds of garments being donated. IWA also conducted a bread-making workshop for their beneficiaries, to provide a lifelong skill that could be used to support the participant's family.

Garima thanked all the IWA community partners for welcoming IWA and for their trust and for giving IWA the opportunity to volunteer.

Another event to step-up participation was the *Music Gala*. The IWA Music Gala in 2017 showcased the talents of IWA Members and provided an opportunity for working women and families to be part of IWA activities.

Supporting Charities

The IWA Festive Bazaar was held at a new venue, the Suntec Convention Centre, a more central location with better accessibility which resulted in an increase in footfall. In addition to providing a platform for women entrepreneurs, the funds raised through both the Bazaars were used to support local charities.

IWA fulfilled its annual donation commitments to regular partners SWAMI Home, BSS, HOME and TWC2.

In addition, IWA raised the scholarship amount for the SMU Vidya Scholarship by \$500 to \$6000 for 2018. IWA also donated to two new partners, the National Gallery Singapore and the WINGS Counselling Centre. This newly created fund with Wings Counselling will help people of Indian origin, men, women and children, who need counselling but cannot afford it. Garima shared that this fund is already being used to serve the purpose for which it was created.

Garima read out a heartfelt thankyou card written by the SMU student S. Jonas Nevin, who had won the SMU Vidya Scholarship.

Closing Remarks by the President

With all the efforts, IWA managed to Step-up member participation. IWA held about 115 events till December where more than 2000 registrants were Members.

Garima congratulated the IWA Team, all volunteers, for their hard work and dedication.

In summary, IWA has gone from strength to strength each year. In 2017, IWA membership saw a steady increase, the number of clubs and activities on offer went up, and the integration efforts, volunteering opportunities and donation support for partner organizations increased, leading to a larger community footprint.

Presentation by the Writing Enthusiasts' Club (WEC)

Members of the Writing Enthusiasts' Club, Dreamy Shah, Sudeepta Dasgupta, Rama Madhavi and Aruna Shahani recited their limericks and poems. The WEC Chair, Shilpa Thapliyal also presented her poem 'Chai – A love story'.

Game by Membership Team

The Membership Team conducted another game with the Members and guests present.

Musical Performance

IWA member, Monica Bhagwat, was then invited to sing a Hindi song.

Nominations and Election

Tejashree Datey updated the Members on the Nomination for President for 2018. At the last Committee Meeting, Garima had expressed her intention of continuing for a 2nd term. The Nomination Forms were returned in support of Garima Lalwani with no other name being proposed for the post. Tejashree Datey proposed the name of Garima Lalwani for the post of the IWA President 2018. This was seconded by Shilpa Thapliyal. Garima Lalwani was unanimously elected to be the President for a second term.

President's Acceptance Speech

Garima thanked all the Members for the nomination. Before announcing the new Committee for 2018, she thanked three Committee Members, Richa Joshi-Kaul, Tejashree Datey and Taniya Hathiramani, who would be stepping down, for their contribution to IWA.

Garima said she and her Team would continue to work towards her WINS vision for IWA as IWA steps into its 21st year.

Garima then mentioned some of the coming year's exciting plans:

- Holi with Siglap South CC is on March 4th, for which tickets were on sale;
- Members' Lunch mid-March;
- Bazaar on April 17th; and
- Chingay on the 23rd and 24th of February!

Garima then proposed the names of the Committee 2018 as follows:

IWA Committee 2018:

- **Vice-President 1:** Sudeepta Dasgupta, seconded by Selme Singh
- **Vice-President 2:** Chandan Lehal, seconded by Lakshmi Padmanabhan
- **Secretary:** Rakhi Shankar, seconded by Rama Madhavi
- **Treasurer:** Anuradha Shroff, seconded by Ritu Kapoor
- **Media Director:** Kavita Daga, seconded by Dreamy Shah
- **Assistant Secretary:** Pallavi Agarwal, seconded by Alka Joglekar
- **Assistant Treasurer:** Pavani Scinde, seconded by Bindu Singh
- **Legal Affairs:** Bhavani Bannerjee, seconded by Tara Hasnain
- **Advisor:** Gowri Aiyar, seconded by Lakshmi Padmanabhan

- **Advisor:** Preeti Dubey, seconded by Deepa Agarwal
- **Advisor:** Sukanya Pushkarna, seconded by Aarti Bartake
- **Membership:** Abhinika Mitra, seconded by Mansi Shroff
- **Membership:** Gauri Savadi, seconded by Anita Goenka

The Rest of the Committee was then announced:

- **Events** - Neeta Mirchandani
- **Membership Privileges** – Vidya Dasgupta
- **Media sales** - Seema Gupta
- **Website** – Jyoti Verma
- **Newsletter** – Tejali Sarangdhar
- **Social Media** – Bhargavi Rathi
- **Dhwani Editor** – Alka Joglekar
- **Bazaar** – Priya Aditya
- **BSS** – Bhanu Ramchandran
- **SWAMI Home** - Raji Viswanathan
- **Migrant Workers' Relief Team** - Neeta Kapoor & Ruchita Chheda

Clubs

- **Acts of Kindness Club** – Ritu Kapoor
- **Adda Club** - Nirupa Vasudev
- **Book Club** - Lakshmi Padmanabhan
- **Entrepreneur Club** – Mika Parekh
- **Fitness Club** - Padmaja Balaji
- **Creative Hands Club** – Monica Dovedy
- **Games Club** (Mahjong & Scrabble Club renamed) – Anshoo Berry
- **Gourmet Goddess Club** – Gurpreet Kaur
- **Movie Club** - Selme Singh
- **Music Club** - Madhu Suri
- **Travel Club** – Sukanya Pushkarna
- **Writing Enthusiasts' Club** - Shilpa Dikshit Thapliyal

Vote of Thanks & Meeting Adjourned

With all items on the Agenda being transacted, Garima Lalwani, IWA President, thanked the Members and invited guests for attending the AGM. The meeting was adjourned and the attendees were invited for lunch.