



## The North American Mobeds Council

### Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting

Location: OZCF – Oakville, Ontario, Canada & Virtual ZOOM Meeting

Date: June 12-13, 2022

#### NAMC Executives Present:

Arda-e-Viraf Minocherhomjee - California (President)  
Tehemton Mirza - Ontario (Vice President)  
Xerxes Madan - Ontario (Treasurer)  
Mehbad Dastur - Ontario (Executive officer)

#### PARTICIPATING MEMBERS @ OZCF

Kobad Zarolia  
Khushroo Bharda  
Kerman Katrak  
Pauzash Mithaiwala  
Farhan Panthaki  
Arman Panthaki  
Kamran Panthaki  
Jal Panthaki  
Bomi Damkewala  
Nozer Kotwal  
Firdosh Bulsara  
Nekzad Illava

#### PARTICIPATING MEMBERS ON VIRTUAL ZOOM

Adi Unwalla  
Behram Panthaki  
Cawas Desai  
Pervez Patel  
Gev Karkaria  
Jamshed Dastur  
Fariborz Shahzadi  
Adi Sidhwa  
Xersis Dastur  
Zerksis Bhandara  
Ardeshir Behi  
Xerxes Bamji  
Pervez Patel

NAMC President Arda Minocherhomjee welcomed all the participants, and the meeting was called to order. The meeting was started with a prayer lead by Er. Nekzad

1. Read and adopt the minutes of the last AGM.

Proposed by Kobad Zarolia and seconded by Firdosh Bulsara and the minutes were adopted after discussion.

2. Read and adopt Financial Statements for the Year ended 2021  
Xerxes Madan, treasurer, presented the Financial Statements.

- Kobad suggested that we should have the ability for donors to deposit funds directly into NAMC's account and have Pay Pal etc. Xerxes said we will work on that.
- Behram Panthaky asked the reason for having donor restricted funds. Xerxes said the donors had given those funds for a specific purpose(s), not to the general fund. And, we must account for that appropriately.

Nozer Kotwal proposed, seconded by Kobad Zarolia, and financial statements were adopted.

### 3. Read and Adopt Presidents report

NAMC was very active over the past year despite COVID related issues.

1. Manage Dastur Library in memory of Soli Dastur
2. NAMC Zoroastrian Studies: Tehemton Mirza is the head of NAMC Institute of Zoroastrian Studies (NAMCIZS) & he has taken this to a very high level. Following things are done under NAMC Institute of Zoroastrian Studies
  - Lecture Sessions
  - Discussions
  - Podcast
  - Ramiya Karanjia Lecturers
3. Thanked Bomi Damkawala for sending out emails & all his help & support
4. Thanked Kayomars Mehta & Faramroze Patel for all their help
5. New website design is still underway & thanked Arzan Lali & Mehabad Dastur
6. New Logo is also designed & explained the changes in the new logo
7. Spoke about funds raised for all young Mobeds
8. Thanked Senior Mobeds & Executive Committee for helping NAMC

Discussion:

- Kobad put a proposal to create a donation letter by NAMC & send it out as a mass mailer.
- Jal Panthaki suggested that NAMC should charge an annual fee from all associations in NA. Currently only 5 associations financially support NAMC.
- Arda said that he has sent out such letter to all associations but no response.
- Xerxes Madan said that it's easy for him to do as he is on the OZCF Board.

### **The recipients of Youth Sponsorship Fund were invited to talk about their experience:**

1. Xerxes Bhandara
  - 2 Years
  - Thanked NAMC
  - Small Classes help
  - Ramyar has a lot of knowledge
2. Nekzad
  - Thanked NAMC & Ramyar Karanjia
  - Structure is well maintained
  - Meaning of prayers & understanding what I am praying
  - Lot of hard work to learn the language
3. Kamran Panthaki
  - Class sizes are small
  - Ramyar has a lot of knowledge
  - Textbooks are very well done
  - Getting familiarized to the language takes a very long time.

Arda mentioned that this was a NAMC Pilot Project

Pauzash suggested that there should be training type modules of all what they are learning

Kerman Katrak

- Briefly talked about Kurdistan Zoroastrian
- 12 to 15k Zoroastrian's in Kurdistan
- Ashavan Foundation is to close down this year

- 12 important Zoroastrian festivals are celebrated each year
- Ashavan foundation is doing a fabulous job
- Donations are required by Ashavan foundation
- Books have been translated in Kurdish language

After lot of discussion a resolution was put on the floor

“To Change Vandidad from its current text”

Conclusion was to keep the decision with the Mobeds, to pray what they feel is right.

Yes - 2

No - 21

Resolution was not passed

Er. Adi Unwalla’s 90th Birthday Tandarosti

Tandarosti was performed by all mobeds for Er. Adi Unwalla on his 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

First lecture on NAMC Institute of Zoroastrian Studies on “Shahnameh” was delivered by Tehemton Mirza in the presence of the members.

In the presence of the members, Ervad Tehemton Mirza delivered the first lecture on the course on “Shahnameh” given by NAMC Institute of Zoroastrian Studies.

Small presentation by Arda on Mobed Empowerment, copy to be provided by him.

- Mobeds to stick together
- To keep a standardized way of doing things
- Not letting the Humdins dictate and control the Mobeds.

Discussion on why youth is not participating on the webinars and online courses.

- Arda asked for suggestions from Youth.
- Encouraged them to participate more and show up for online lectures.
- Youth suggested smaller and shorter courses and also self-study courses due to the time constraint with youth.

4 people committee will be formed (same 4 people from the previous board).

## Soli Dastur scholarship.

1. Higher Education for younger mobeds. What is young? what is higher education?
  - e.g. PHD in religious studies.
  - Executive committee to draft a writeup to explain how the funds will be used.
  - What age group are we looking at?
  - What part of the funds may be used? Principle or interest?
  - Different from the Young Mobeds education fund. That is for basic training.

Kerman Katrak updated on the ongoing Gathas translation courses led by Dina McIntyre and Dr Er Ramiyar Karanjia.

Discussion on the various translations present of our Gathas. Kobad Zarolia recommended Taraporewala’s translation as the best one there is.

Next Lecture topic ideas were discussed:

- Nirang Din
- Meaning of very basic everyday prayers like Kusti prayers and Atash Nyaish etc.

Tehemton Mirza suggested some new courses to be introduced by the IZS.

IZS mission: to train and educate Mobeds firstly and general public as well.

Sessions are in forms of lectures; proven to be successful with attendance and show of interest.

Discussion groups - talking about subjects that people are not comfortable to talk about (Controversial topics). Want more people to propose topics. Discussion should be harmonious and civil. The idea is to bring out the topic and let the people decide what they want to believe.

Kobad trying to reach out to Khojasteh Mistry to speak on some topics and more people from India.

Podcasts: 1 per month. Planning to create a podcast on Ghambhar. Looking for someone to write the podcast. Scholars and senior mobeds to analyze content. Bomi then checks grammar and look for young mobeds to record the podcast. Creates a sense of pride in young mobeds. Podcasts are 5-10 mins long.

Requirements for podcasts:

no scholastic language.

has to have multiple aspects to it.

needs to be related to nature, t

here should be a takeaway at the end.

Aim is to spark an interest in people so they get the urge to research more on said topic.

Podcasts are shared on Spotify.

Looking for 4 people in total to record podcasts.

3 courses coming out in fall;

Zoroastrian prayers and refreshers course by Er. Adi Unwalla

Translation of prayers by Er. Dr. Ramyar Karanjia

Ecology in Zoroastrianism (new course)

Recognition for courses:

Bomi handling registrations; people uncomfortable to fill out certain fields in the registration forms like age, address, gender, phone number etc. suggestion given by Nowzar to implement multiple age groups in the registrations. Suggestion given by Kobad to only take country instead of address.

Bomi sends out notifications for upcoming classes. Kobad suggests local mobeds to be ambassadors for their locality to take up tasks.

Mehbad: always up to help for any and everything specially tech support. His work is greatly valued.

Ardaviraf for giving birth to this educational side of NAMC.

Need help in advertising.

Need youth participation. to come up with something they can lecture on.

Looking for a new software like Canvas as a platform to host these courses. Open to suggestions.

Drawback of canvas is that users need gmail email accounts specifically.

Cawasji question: since most people are not writing assignments why have a course structure? Tehmeton after speaking to people in education industry was advised to hold quizzes.

Arda suggests to engage more youth in more courses of the IZS.

Byramji suggests to hold a survey to find out what topics people want to learn about.

(Courses are based on a preliminary study with the younger crowd) Ardaviraf suggests starting from scratch is a good way to spark an interest in people.

Another challenge is that IZS is not able to get friction from Irani zarthustris. Kerman Katrak working towards resolving it.

Joint sessions with other zoroastrian associations is a good idea - Xerxes.

(Byramji suggests there should be assignments involved with every course. Some people don't send back assignments. What should be done about that ?) Replace assignments with quizzes to make it more interesting.

A point brought up about women in North America who want to become Mobeds (not mobedyars). Kobad suggests go to India and get it done due to lack of facilities to create mobeds in North America. Ardaviraf suggests best thing is to not engage until we have the means to act on it.

Tehmeton suggests that mobeds getting certificates from Iran should be subject to jurisdiction.

Rules and regulations of mobeds council of Iran to become Mobedyars: pass exams with multiple committees on Rituals, prayers; certificate expires in 3 years need to renew. Corruption has taken over this and people don't have to go through the exams. If you become a Mobed in Iran there is no obligation to renew that certificate. Kerman suggests NAMC is not known to many people and take a representative to the Zoroastrian congress in New York this July to promote NAMC. NAMC reached out to the congress about this but there was no response. Arzan from FEZANA has given his word to Ardaviraf to stand up in the meeting and say they support NAMC for all their religious interests.

### **Election for next Executive Committee:**

- Tehemton Mirza for President:  
Proposed by Arda, seconded by Firdosh – elected.
- Jamshed Dastur for Vice President:  
Proposed by Tehemton, seconded Parvez Patel – elected.
- Adi Sidhwa for Treasurer:  
Proposed by Xerxes, seconded by Jal Panthaki – elected.
- Puzash for secretary:  
Proposed by Khushroo Bharda, seconded by Mehbod – elected.
- Mehbod for Executive Officer: Acclaimed.

Meeting was adjourned with a vote of thanks to the outgoing executive committee for their excellent contribution to NAMC.

### **Election results:**

President	- Tehemton Mirza - Ontario
Vice President	- Jamshed Dastur - New York
Treasurer	- Adi Sidhwa – New York
Secretary	- Puzash Mithaiwala - Ontario
Executive Office	- Mehbod Dastur - Ontario