

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

02 March 2023

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called By	Executive committee
Type of Meeting	Executive committee meeting, bylaw modifications, and introduction of new members to the executive committee.
Facilitator	Mr. Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayantha, Sasanka, Udaya, Pubudu, Yasmin, Sanath, Sujeewa, Saranath, Ananda, Channa, Iffaaz, Ravi, Viranga

The meeting commenced at 9.05 pm eastern time.

Opening the meeting, Mr. Gamini said the meeting minutes had been emailed to everyone in the executive committee and requested to propose and second the minutes. Ravi proposed the meeting minutes to be accurate. Channa second it.

Agenda Topic	Tax filing for the organization
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Udaya updated the committee about the tax preparation for 2022.• Mr. Viranga and Mr. Udaya shared the acknowledgement letter they had drafted to the association members who had made monetary contributions to UPAA-USA.

Agenda Topic	Nomination of new EC members
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Jayantha explained that we have positions for 25 EC committee members according to the association bylaws, and why it is unnecessary to have spouses of EC members also in the EC.• Mr. Ravi introduced Mr. Ananda De Silva from Phoenix AZ as the first new addition to the executive committee. Mr. Gamini seconded this proposal.• Mr. Saranath nominated Mr. Channa Bambaradeniya from MD. Mr. Ravi seconded the nomination.• Mr. Jayantha nominated Mr. Siva Nataraja. Mr. Saranath seconded the nomination. As Mr. Siva was traveling, he was unable to participate this meeting. Mr. Jayantha volunteered to call him and update the discussions during this meeting.

Agenda Topic	To discuss proposed updates to bylaws
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amended bylaws so that the inaugural executive committee could serve two years. This was implemented to introduce stability and momentum to the organization at the initiation.

- President can only serve one year. Committee discussed what would be the best time to have the organization president and office bearers' election. Committee agreed that the 2024 committee will have to be finalized by August 2023. Committee agreed that the nominations will have to be called before Aug 2023 and ratification of the committee need to happen before the in person gathering during a general meeting. The Committee also decided to have another general meeting before this to update the changes to the bylaws.
- Mr. Iffaaz proposed that the bylaws need to be amended in a way that the president must come from the current executive committee. Committee discussed pros and cons of this and decided to keep the presidency open for anyone who is a member of our organization.
- Committee also agreed that we need more female and minority representation in the executive committee.
- Establishment of ad-hoc committees was discussed by the committee. Following members were appointed to each ad-hoc committee.
 - Ananda/Vincent to project evaluation committee
 - Sujeewa/Pramuditha to communications committee
 - Vincent to financial committee
 - Channa to mentoring committee
 - Channa and Sujeewa to social committee

Agenda Topic
Discussion

UoP events update

- Mr. Udaya said UPAA-USA made a wire transfer to AAUoP of the amount Rs. 540000 (~\$1600) for the financial aids/student scholarships. Mr. Jayantha stressed that the names of the students should be kept confidential.
- Mr. Ravi gave an update about the Wi-Fi project. Given the high cost associated with the project, Mr. Udaya and Mr. Ravi are thoroughly investigating the cost breakdowns given by the AAUoP. Committee had several questions regarding the project and Mr. Udaya clarified some of the points. This involved buying equipment from USA, having UoP to bare some of the costs of this project, additional fundraising, and maintenance of the Wi-Fi system.

Agenda Topic
Discussion

Tasks needs to be done for the in-person get-together

- Mr. Jayantha pointed out all the tasks needed to be done in preparation to the next in person get together.
- Mr. Jayantha suggested that we should check if Sigiri has the licenses to serve foods in MD. Mr. Saranath also suggested that we should have separate meetings to appoint responsible people for individual tasks. The committee also agreed that we should look into other food vendors locally.
- The venue will have Wifi and will also provide soft drinks. Liquor will be having to be bought from the venue. Committee appointed Mr. Ravi to oversee the arrangements for liquor for the event.
- Committee decided that we should include regional participation for entertainment events and use an alumni band.

- Committee discussed more names and included some for the task list (task was shared by Mr. Jayantha and is not attached with the minutes). Mr. Viranga and Mrs. Yasmine was put in charge of entertainment, Mr. Udaya on ticket printing, Mr. Gamini and Mr. Udaya on ticket sales, Mr. Iffaaz and local members to get more local participation, Communication team to spread the word about the event across the USA.
- Mr. Jayantha proposed that we should establish a fund and encourage our established alumni to support younger participants to the event with lodging and travel.
- Stage decorations transportation needs to be done prior to the event. T-shirts, caps and university of Peradeniya picture books will have to be brought from Sri Lanka. Since Mr. Viranga is in Sri Lanka, he was appointed to oversee shipping and purchasing these items.

Agenda Topic

Events for this year by UPAA-USA

Discussion

- Sasanka gave an update about the preparations for the workshop on how to apply to US universities. It was pointed out that this needs to be a general overview about how the application process will occur and what the know how should be for students in all the faculties. Sasanka requested help in identifying key resource people for this task. Committee agreed that this is something the mentorship committee can have a separate meeting about. It was decided that we should plan to do this event in April.
- Mr. Jayantha updated about the entrepreneur gathering. He mentioned several names and said it would be useful for them to get to know each other and strengthen the network within the alumni community.

Next meeting date

06 April 2023

Other notes

- It was suggested that we should organize a general meeting in early April. The budget needs to be presented by the treasurer along with other key activities of the organization by committee members.
- Mr. Jayantha inquired about the needs to audit organizational finances. Replying to this, Mr. Udaya said anything less than \$50000 do not need to be audited according to the IRS.
- Mr. Gamini proposed that we should have the EC meeting first Thursday every month
- Mr. Jayantha encouraged executive committee members residing in DC, Arizona, and Oregon to take initiative to organizing regional meetings.

The meeting concluded at 11.10 pm Eastern time.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

24th January 2023

Executive Committee (limited) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called By	Executive committee (Limited) + Members in DC area
Type of Meeting	2023 Annual Get Together Discussion – 2 nd meeting
Facilitator	Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayanta, Udaya, Ravi, Saranath, Iffaaz, Sujeewa and Members in DC area

The meeting commenced at 9.00 pm eastern time.

Agenda Topic	2023 Annual get-together in DC
Discussion	Committee discussed about possible venues in the DC area
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DC area member Gune presented information about one possible venue with the terms that we need to comply; approximate cost per person is \$70 with food, \$40 without food and some more details• Iffaaz suggested that we should get quotes for 200 people so that it is easier to compare.• DC area member Dharmapriya mentioned that he looked at 3 venues but none of those places are available for Sept 2nd Saturday; Sunday is a possible day for this location and the cost would be around \$50 per person• DC area member Sumith also discussed about another venue, but it will not be available on Sept 2nd, the second place he looked is not suitable for our gathering.• EC member Saranath discussed about the possible venue in Rockville area with great logistics (metro rail and hotels nearby). The total cost for 200 people is about \$9000 including drinks. Outside catering is allowed• Gamini discussed about Sigiri (in NJ) catering the food and requires kitchen facilities needed. Iffaaz emphasized Sigiri having insurance accepted by the state of Maryland• DC area member Bandula Somari discussed about logistics and possible catering services in the DC area. He suggested that the Rockville location seems a good place and we need to finalize the locations ASAP• All the participants agreed that we need to finalize the location and make the reservation so that other logistics can be started• Jayantha proposed that we should reserve the Rockville location and all participants agreed.• Bandula suggested that more members should go see this location but other agreed that it is not necessary as Saranath has already verified• Gamini suggested that nonprofit status might gain some discount• Saranath will make the reservation by making a \$1000 deposit and Udaya will workout the transaction. Also Saranath will look into other details like getting the hall much earlier for our prep work

- DC area member Charitha Yattogoda discussed about a possible Sri Lankan chef in the area and suggested we should talk to him
- Jayantha approved Saranath to make the deposit and reserve the Rockville venue and requested the DC members to look for a catering service to offer Sri Lankan food and keep Sigir as a backup
- Iffaaz offered himself to go with Saranath to the venue to reserve the location
- All participants discussed how to handle liquor for the event
- Bandula and Iffaaz will lead finding a suitable catering service within a month
- Saranath will try to fine tune the contract before signing and will email the draft among the EC members
- Jayantha discussed about the entertainment element; discussed about bringing Arjuna' band (Yasmin and Udaya will follow up with Arjuna)
- Iffaaz mentioned about a local artist Ajith (alumni) and EC members suggested that he can be given a solo item
- Gune proposed getting sound system locally so that Arjuna's band can use easily.
- DC area member Channa Bambaradeniya mentioned about the local drumming group (Pera alumni) who could participate in the event; they have their own equipment etc. Jayantha proposed that we will keep this band as a backup in case Arjuna's band is not available
- Gamini reminded the participants that there is a program manager who would be in charge in creating the best program for the event
- Jayantha emphasized the importance of having Tamil/ Muslim artists performing at the event
- Ravi reminded about finding a suitable DJ
- Jayantha requested DC area members to spread the word as we need to increase the headcount more than the last year event; also find sponsors
- Jayantha suggested that we should create sub-committees for the event soon and assign responsibilities.
- Saranath suggested to appoint some of the DC area members in the meeting today as EC members in near future
- Next follow up meeting will be in 3 weeks – by that time we have all sub-committees created

The meeting concluded at 9.50 pm eastern time.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

19 Jan 2023

Executive Committee Meeting with UoPAA

Meeting Called By	Executive committee
Type of Meeting	Meeting with AAUOP members to allocate funding for the benefit of University of Peradeniya
Facilitator	Mr. Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayantha, Ravi, Udaya, Sasanka representing the UPAA-USA executive committee Pradeepa Bandaranayake, Swarna Wimalasiri, Samanthika Jagoda, Roshan Ragel, Suneth Namal representing University of Peradeniya Alumni Association.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 pm eastern time.

The meeting begun by the officials of the two organizations giving a brief self-introduction. Mr. Jayantha addressed the gathering by introducing UPAA-USA and the scope of the association. Professor Pradeepa Bandaranayake

Agenda Topic Discussion	Allocation of funds to the benefit of the UoP in providing WiFi to residential halls Dr. Suneth Namal provided a brief update about the current situation. Since none of the residential halls have internet access, students face a lot of hardships accessing online material and virtual lectures. The previous estimation to fully Wi-Fi all residential halls was estimated to be Rs. 190 million. Given the higher cost, university administration refused to fund this proposal. Prof Roshan Ragel also provided his input and stated that students bear the cost and for internet as of now. Further, he stated that the bandwidth provided for the university is idle during the nighttime and this could be something that the residential halls can use, but this option is limited due to infrastructure limitations. Prof. Ragel and Dr. Namal stated that this can be done with proper cabling, modems, and switches while using the existing connection to the university.
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Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof Ragel suggested that a good place to test this network would be Akbar Nell hall given most of the users there are science/engineering students with better technical knowledge.• Prof Pradeepa provided costs from the previous estimations for Akbar Nell hall was around Rs 7 Million (done in 2020)• UPAA-USA suggested that we be provided with a budget analysis for the project (only for Akbar Nell hall and Wijewardhana hall).• Mr. Jayantha and Udaya asked whether the routers can be bought from the USA.• Answering to Mr. Gamini's question, Professor Bandaranayake said the donations can be made to the alumni association of University of Peradeniya and the funds will be assured to be handled with highest transparency.
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- Answering Mr. Gamini's question, Dr. Namal said the university will be taking care of the maintenance aspect once the installation is completed.
- The committee agreed once the budget is proposed by the technical evaluation committee, the quotations can be called in, and in addition, we can explore options to see if the purchasing some of the equipment is cheaper if we try to buy them from the USA.

Agenda Topic

Allocation of funding to the benefit of the UoP in providing scholarships for students with financial needs

Discussion

Mr. Jayantha expressed that UPAA-USA is interested in providing one scholarship to one of the faculties (a total of 9). Prof. Bandaranayake said the wellness committee from each faculty identifies students who are in financial needs who provides a list of students as they have identified. She said the nominations has been called for this year. She also said some organizations maintains fixed deposits and divide the interest generated within the faculties while other organizations provide a set number of scholarships per year depending on fund allocations for that year based on their fund raising activities.

Conclusions

- This year a student in need will be provided with Rs. 5000 per month for 12 months (Rs. 60000).
- Mr. Jayantha expressed our interest to provide scholarships for 9 students representing each faculty. He said UPAA-USA will need the names of the scholarship recipients for IRS audit needs.
- Prof. Bandaranayake said that the alumni association treasure can provide UPAA-USA the account details the funds needs to be transferred.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 pm Eastern time.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

14 Jan 2023

Executive Committee with DC Members Regarding DC Regional Meeting

Meeting Called By	Executive committee
Type of Meeting	Meeting with DC members regarding the DC regional meeting
Facilitator	Mr. Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayantha, Sasanka, Udaya, Vincent, Iffass, Ravi, Saranath, Sujeewa, Yasmin representing the executive committee with members participated from DC area.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm eastern time.

Mr. Gamini welcomed all the participants. Mr. Jayantha and the rest of the EC members introduced themselves. Afterwards, the remaining members from DC area also gave a small self-introduction.

Agenda Topic	Discuss event details (positives and negatives) of the NJ event, discuss framework of the get-together, and delegation of tasks for the DC event.
Discussion	The executive committee wanted to get the feedback from the participants about the NJ event and what modifications needs to be done for the coming DC event. Further, the tasks for the DC event were lined up and distributed among the DC members.
Conclusions	

- The executive committee wanted to know what went well and what we could have done differently during the last meeting from the DC participant. They pointed out that the event was well organized and had a good time and was able to mingle with other Peradeniya alumni, with plenty of good food and minor technical issues with sounds/lights systems.
- DC members suggested that we could appoint individuals from different regions to spread the news about the DC event so that they would not miss the information. Addressing this, Mr. Jayantha briefly discussed our ongoing efforts about forming regional chapters. DC members pointed out that it would be nice to have more opportunity for the alumni to chat with each other and deliver essential messages before the food/drinks.
- Mr. Jayantha also discussed why the EC picked the Labor Day weekend. The points included DC being a good attraction during Labor Day weekend, high density of Peradeniya alumni, and a 3-day weekend will be better for those who are traveling from far.
- Mr. Jayantha also provided a high-level overview about the event structure, stating that this is a Peradeniya event, and all alumni/staff/students will be treated equally, and will have to buy a ticket. Foo will be served Sri Lankan style with some soft/alcoholic drinks with some Peradeniya style entertainment.

- Mr. Maharroof raised a question asking whether we can find sponsors for the event.
- Mr. Sujeewa pointed out that we planned but unable to complete a suaneer for the last event due to budget reasons.
- Mr. Saranath informed the gathering about the places he had visited with larger conference halls/ballrooms that are potential venues for the DC event. Several other suggestions came from Mr. Iffass and Mr. Gunasinghe. Mr. Gamini said we paid \$5000 for the venue during NJ event and looking to stay around that price point.
- Mr. Jayantha said we need to look in to both Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend before finalizing the venue. The committee decided that we need to finalize the event date by Jan 28th
- The committee agreed that we should stick to Sri Lankan food. Committee suggested looking into caterers in the area. Mr. Gamini mentioned that Sigiri (NJ event caterers) is also willing to come to DC and cater our event. Sigiri will need a 3-hour kitchen time if they are to come to DC.
- For the entertainment part, the committee decided that we need a band, and people who can perform both Sinhalese and Tamil items. Mr. Jayantha said he would like to see more Tamil participation for the events.
- Mr. Jayantha also pointed out that it would be nice to organize tours by the locals to the arriving visitors.
- Mr. Jayantha said that it would be nice if the locals can volunteer to provide accommodation for those who cannot afford to stay in a hotel.
- Mrs. Yasmine pointed out that we need to have an idea about the size of the stage to plan the entertainment items accordingly.

The meeting concluded at 3.20 pm Eastern time.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

09 Feb 2023

Executive Committee Meeting with UoPAA

Meeting Called By	Executive committee
Type of Meeting	Meeting with UoPAA members to discuss residential hall Wi-Fi project for University of Peradeniya
Facilitator	Mr. Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayantha, Ravi, Udaya, Sasanka representing the UPAA-USA executive committee Suneth Namal and Suranga Rathnayake, Pradeepa Bandaranayake representing University of Peradeniya Alumni Association and technical team.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 pm eastern time.

Agenda Topic	Discuss and address the questions the UPAA-USA committee has regarding the proposed quotations for the Wi-Fi project
Discussion	Mr. Gamini and Mr. Jayantha with the rest of the UPAA-USA EC members participated raised questions about the quotations received from the UoP-AA technical team.
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The executive committee members raised technical questions for the UoP-AA technical team. The discussion went on about required equipment, cabling cost, and trenching/labor.• Mr. Gamini pointed out that it would be useful for us to have the model numbers and other specifications for the Wi-Fi equipment required for this project so that we can start investigating the cost for those in the USA.• Mr. Ravi pointed out that the proposed total budget is a large cost for the UPAA-USA that comes to over \$50000 to bare at this time. Ravi further added whether the university is willing to bare the cost for the trenching and cabling while UPAA-USA provide the equipment. Answering this question, Dr. Namal said he can try his best to get the university involved to do the trenching and fiber cable laying part, and further, there is a large student push for better internet connection as well which the university will consider.• To utilize the limited available funds, Dr. Namal suggested that we could establish one connection to the common area (canteen area) of the Akbar Hall.• Dr. Pradeepa commented that this is a good start and this needs to have happened even at a smaller level. She further suggested that providing connection to one of the wings will ensure the student push encouraging the university to involve bearing some of the expenses.• Mr. Udaya requested the UoP-AA technical team to provide another breakdown to facilitate Wi-Fi just for the Akbar common area and the nearest wing assuming the university will bear the cabling cost.

The meeting concluded at 10.15 pm Eastern time. The two parties agreed to have another meeting once UPAA-USA had received the requested new quotations and completed an evaluation on the new documents.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION – USA

05 Jan 2023

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called By	Executive committee
Type of Meeting	Kick off meeting for 2023
Facilitator	Mr. Gamini Dharmasena
Next meeting	TBD
Attendees	Gamini, Jayantha, Sasanka, Udaya, Pubudu, Pramuditha, Ravi, Yasmin, Sanath, Sujeewa, Saranath, Viranga, Vincent

The meeting commenced at 9.00 pm eastern time.

President extended gratitude towards the committee for an outstanding year with lots of accomplishments. He outlined the initial thoughts for the coming year briefly mentioning about next in person gathering, how to allocate funding, forming a new committee in October 2023, and organizing other activities.

Agenda Topic	Allocation of funding to the benefit of the UoP
Discussion	Mr. Gamini briefed about the meeting he had with the UoP alumni association president Dr. Pradeepa Goonathilaka in Sri Lanka during his last visit. He explained the most pressing needs of the university and how we can help.
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing scholarships for the university students. This is a 5000 Rs per month over a year commitment per student (60000 Rs per student per year)• Wi-Fi connections to the resident halls The estimated budget per two resident holes was around 6 million Rs. Committee decided that more detailed information is needed about this project, but presumably can facilitate Wi-Fi to two resident halls• Mr. Gamini was asked to contact Dr. Pradeepa and ask for a quotation for the Wi-Fi project and send word to her about providing scholarships to at least one student from each faculty (about 10 in total).• Mr. Gamini also informed about other needs including instruments to physics and chemistry laboratories.

Agenda Topic	In person gathering in Washington DC
Discussion	In person gathering for the year 2023 was planned to be held in Washington DC or in one of the nearby states
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Jayantha proposed Labor Day weekend would be a good date for the 2023 in person gathering• Committee decided that the event can be held in Washington DC, Maryland, OR Virginia, depending on the accessibility and cost.• Committee also shared names of the potential members who are in the region and will be able to help with the organizing this event.

- Gamini and Jayantha to organize a meeting with potential members who can help organize the next event on Saturday, 21 Jan 2023.

Agenda Topic

Expanding executive committee

Discussion

- Mr. Jayantha emphasized that we could have up to 25 members in the executive committee.
- Committee proposed more female representation and young member representation.

Agenda Topic

Organizing other events

Discussion

- Sasanka and Pramuditha was asked about organizing an event to help UoP undergrads in regard to applying universities in the USA. Potential dates for this event were discussed to be in April, tentatively. Committee agreed that they will reach out to helpful resources in USA to help this session.
- Committee also decided that organizing regional meetings would help the organization growth.

Next meeting date

TBD

Other notes

- Committee decide on sending a newsletter with all accomplishments of the association
- Committee decided to send an acknowledgement letter for the donations from members
- Mr. Jayantha also emphasized that we will have to file taxes for the year 2022.

The meeting concluded at 10.15 pm Eastern time.