



S THOMAS' PREPARATORY SCHOOL

OLD BOYS' UNION - 98, Steuart Place, Colombo 03.



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Minutes of the Special General Meeting of the Old Boys' Union of S. Thomas' Preparatory School, held on 24th April 2013 at 6.30pm at the Diocesan Council Chambers, Cathedral Premises, Colombo 7

Attendance: 108 duly enrolled members of the Prep School OBU

- **Call to order** – Honorary President (*Pro-Tem*) Mr. Chrishmal Warnasuriya called the Special General Meeting to order at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting began by the President intimating to those present that as we belonged to an Anglican institution it was customary to begin with a prayer and therefore requesting the membership to observe their own faith/belief during a silence of two minutes.

- **Notice convening the meeting** – was read by Mr. Ravi Ramanathan, Hony. Secretary (*pro tem*) as follows.

In terms of Rule 9A of the OBU rules, the Executive Committee of the OBU at its meeting held on 15th March 2013 resolved to summon this SGM of the membership on April 24th at 6.30 p.m. This notice dated 4th April 2013, circulated via email, was also posted on the Prep OBU website and Facebook page, published in the Sunday Times of Sunday 14th April, and also sent by ordinary post to those with updated addresses on the OBU database.

- **Excuses** - Mr. Sujiv Fonseka recorded excuses received as at 23rd April 2013

Mr. Janaprith Fernando	Mr. Nalin Dassanaikie	Maj. Gen. Lalin Fernando	
Mr. Deepal Perera	Mr. Dushan Roberts	Mr. Nazmi Mukthar	Mr. Dilshan Jayasuriya
Mr. Lalith Dassanaikie	Mr. Rajah Abeysinghe	Mr. Lakshman	Mr. Imran Hassan

- **Future of OBU Activity in the development of Prep School**

Mr. Chrishmal Warnasuriya, Hony. President (*pro tem*) presented an overview of the discussion and how it would take place as follows; with a brief description by himself, followed by four (04) presentations by the 3 vice presidents and the treasurer under the respective heads of a) Buildings and infrastructure, b) Education & Faculty, c) Sports & Extracurricular, and d) OBU Fund & Finances, to be followed by an open-forum for questions and discussion. He stated that if any member wished to peruse any item of correspondence referred to in these presentations,

they could indicate so to the several Ex Co members on both sides of the aisle, who will bring it to them.

Thereafter, Mr. Warnasuriya proceeded to place the issues in perspective, commencing with the reasons for summoning this SGM, which he stated was to place before the membership several issues as they stood at present and to seek their views and concurrence on the proposed way forward. He stated that this meeting was finally necessitated after several years of the OBU Ex Co attempting to manage, contain and control an ever escalating situation involving the present Headmaster's (HM) manifest reluctance to work with the OBU to develop the school.

Mr. Warnasuriya elaborated that commencing in or around 2008, their predecessor office bearers of the previous Ex Co (not the ones holding present office) had faced several issues with the Headmaster in attempting to develop Prep School; towards which a formal proposal was ultimately submitted to the Board of Governors (BoG) *via* the Headmaster; however, it was later discovered that the issues had not been put forward to the BoG as the HM had assured he would. Upon this matter being questioned at a subsequent Ex Co meeting, the HM had raised his objections to being so questioned and abandoned further involvement with the OBU, thus ushering OBU activity into silence without even an AGM for almost 2 years. Several discussions to settle this matter at the time, including an intervention by the BoG, had failed as the HM had remained on his obstinate stand and not been inclined to settle matters thus displaying his usual reluctance to acknowledge the constructive presence of the OBU fraternity in the life of Prep School. It was following this long silence that a few remaining members of the then Ex Co rallied around and held another meeting, immediately proceeding to hold a long-outstanding AGM where the present Ex Co was elected. Mr. Warnasuriya stated that they began with a committed vision, identifying priorities and delegating the work to different committees; all of which could be viewed online by reading the Secretary's Report available on our Prep OBU web page. He stated, however, that it was immediately evident that the HM was reluctant to come on board with the several plans and activities, particularly coming on to our 75th Jubilee Year and that he was placing obstacles at every step, such as the attempt to "doctor" the minutes of matters already discussed and agreed at meetings; a situation that the Ex Co attempted to contain and manage for a long period of time, going ahead with the work as much as possible nevertheless. However, it finally came to a stage where it was difficult to even plan the first meeting of the Ex Co in our 75th year, as the HM appeared to be delaying setting a date, which the Ex Co felt was unacceptable as there was much work that needed to be accomplished. Therefore, the principle Office Bearers sought a meeting with the Lord Bishop of Colombo as Chairman of the BoG and having updated the BoG of their difficulties, upon the advice of His Lordship, proceeded to place the several planned activities before the HM by way of a formal communication. However, immediately upon the receipt of the same, the HM responded in the same manner as with the previous Ex Co in 2008 and refused to participate in OBU affairs any further and, in the opinion of the Ex Co, relinquished his office as President.

Mr. Warnasuriya emphasized that it was under these very trying and at times impossible circumstances that all events over the past year were planned and executed to celebrate our 75th Jubilee, without any assistance from the HM who was supposed to be our President – *ex officio*; but the Ex Co at all times managed the situation as best as possible so as not to risk any disruption to the planned activities by publicizing these difficulties. It was having thus concluded the year and all these events successfully, as the general OBU membership was the ultimate authority upon whose mandate the Ex Co functioned, that this SGM was summoned to place all

these facts before the membership. Following this introduction Mr. Warnasuriya invited Vice President, Mr. Shiran Ambrose for the first presentation as follows:

1) Buildings & Infrastructure Development

V/P Mr. Ambrose first discussed the rapidly declining status of the buildings at Prep School, which was displayed on Power-Point. Photographs of poor health and safety hazards sent in by concerned parties and also an embarrassing publication on You-tube of a video that had been uploaded showed to everyone present the appalling state that the school management had allowed it to disintegrate were displayed. The poor condition of the school buildings, lack of ventilation in classrooms, improper storage of glass and disposed items in close contact to students' play-areas, unhygienic conditions maintained near the canteen and the perilous physical state of staircases, roofs and buildings were some of the items highlighted.

Mr. Ambrose referenced the very comprehensive overall school & building development plan proposed by the previous Ex Co during the 2007/2008 period, which had been ignored thus far; which had ultimately led to their resignation. He also touched upon several missed opportunities since the present Ex Co assumed office, some in which concerned Old Boys had come forward to fund the entire development of certain areas, like the ceiling fan project and the repair to exterior and painting project; all of which was summarily dismissed by the HM not even permitting discussions to take place at the Ex Co, claiming them to be "non-starters" even before discussion. He stated that although a separate subcommittee was installed and mandated to look into this particular area of buildings and infrastructure development, they had not been permitted to even do a walk-about to ascertain the status and observe areas needing repair; and several requests from the HM to avail such a time had been ignored. It was in these extenuating circumstances that the Ex Co was compelled to formally address the BoG to intervene in the matter and carry out its duties of supervision and management of the school, which they were bound to under the Rules; yet this correspondence remains un-replied.

2) Education & Faculty Development:

V/P Mr. Dilan Ilapperuma was then invited for his presentation on this subject.

Mr. Illapperuma addressed the needs in this area, which had been constantly brought to the attention of the HM, and he mentioned how they had been regularly impeded in their efforts; such as the proposed felicitation of staff that was suddenly cancelled by the HM a few days prior to taking place. This was a proposal to encourage and recognize all the teaching staff, which had been discussed and even agreed at the Ex Co meeting, to present them all with tokens of appreciation, gift packs and a 75th Anniversary commemorative T-shirt done free of charge by an Old Boy; all of which had to be curtailed at the direction of the HM by incorporating that into another "Library Week" celebration. He further stated that no input or assistance on the curriculum or even discussion on same was encouraged by the Headmaster, with it having taken several years of persuasion by the OBU to even present a computer for the School; and the School and its office to this day has neither an e-mail address nor an Internet connection.

Mr. Illapperuma stressed that there appeared to be a concerted move by the HM through all this, to discourage Old Boys from admitting their sons to Prep, which was apparent when

studying the intakes of consecutive years under the present HM's tenure; he said that the HM did not appear to promote the interests of the School in any forum which was evident by several examples; that the HM is rarely seen at any sporting or extracurricular event the Prep boys participate in, he does not use the school crest on any public advertisements and has not made any endeavour to become part of the Prep School community by wearing a school tie or joining in the school song, even 18 years after assuming office. He stated that the HM had not attended any of the highly successful OBU events held in the run-up to the 75th Anniversary. Mr. Ilapperuma proceeded to highlight the very delicate yet highly threatening incident to the safety of young Prepites when he referred to the complaints received by the Ex Co of a teacher who had allegedly engaged in pedophile activity with a student or students, over which the HM's conduct was found to be wanting following several complaints by parents; as it had been reported that the HM, without immediately restricting that teacher's interaction with the students and launching an inquiry and making the relevant complaints to the authorities, had preferred to instead permit that teacher to remain in service until the end of the year and even dissuaded the parents from lodging the relevant complaints. A formal request from the HM to explain this situation under the hand of the V/P dated 2nd January 2013 remained un-replied; this issue too had been reported to the BoG in their capacity as overall trustees responsible for the duties of supervision and management of the school, which once again had not even been acknowledged, thus prompting the present SGM and action.

3) Sport & Extracurricular Activity Development:

V/P (at that particular period) Mr. Ravi Ramanathan was thereafter requested to address on this topic. Mr. Ramanathan stated that this subject had been delegated in the new subcommittee structure of the Ex Co under his purview, and that the status today could be summed up in 3 lines; a glorious past, a dismal present and a future unknown.

After a brief review of the high level of sporting achievement at Prep School which had received national and international acclaim in the past several decades, it was highlighted that the present HM does not give sports and extracurricular activities any prominence despite their importance in the student experience in the 21st century. With sports receiving the lowest priority, the School has lost all its former coaches, several of whom were of very high standard, while practice facilities too have been lost. The OBU involvement had been relegated to simply paying for certain facilities and coaches with absolutely no role in monitoring the utilization of these funds nor the opportunity to get involved in its development, which had always been discouraged by the HM; even the status of a valuable inventory that had been acquired for the School's use from OBU funds had gone missing over a period of time. He stated that there were reported instances of Prep School sports teams arriving at tournaments and being unable to play because the teacher-in-charge had not been present. The HM had taken no action and the teams had to award a walk-over to their opponents for no fault of theirs. In 2011/12, the HM had prevented the u-15 Cricket team from playing a match that would have seen the team advance to the final round in the division championships, simply refusing to make alternate arrangements for an internal school exam at the same time; he stated that ironically the team that emerged winning that tournament ultimately turned out to be a team that Prep School had beaten in an earlier round. In spite of the eagerness of students, parents and Old Boys, there appeared to be an active blocking of sports & other such extracurricular activity by this HM for no apparent reason.

Mr. Ramanathan proceeded to state that in 2011/2012, having noted these several concerns and the dismal state it had fallen to, the subcommittee including former Prep sportsmen had studied the matter in detail and after spending a great deal of time and effort, prepared a comprehensive proposal (PPT shown on the screen); the idea being to have several monitoring committees for each sport / extracurricular activity made up of the master-in-charge, captain, coach and two members of the Ex Co; which would also allow greater accountability for the use of OBU funds in sports development which had been greatly lacking up to that point. This comprehensive document was presented at the Ex Co meeting in the presence of the HM, tabled, and he was asked to give the relevant names for carrying it out; which to date remains at that stage of the document.

Mr. Ramanathan stated that his formal communication to the HM, copied to the BoG as the school management on this matter is yet even to be acknowledged or replied, and therefore there was now an urgent need to appraise the membership of the situation; before it falls to a level completely beyond redemption.

4) Status of Funds & Finances (particularly irregularities in OBU Trust Fund):

Hony. Treasurer Mr. Haroun Cader was then asked to present his report under this head.

Mr. Cader began by stating that he had taken over from Mr. Maninda Wickramasinghe in 2012, however, the transition had not been smooth, having taken several months to ascertain to any degree the overall picture of accounts and funds; with several communications to the former Treasurer requesting for further information not receiving a conclusive response, with only vague indications as to the location of funds. He also stated that the audited accounts presented at the last AGM in 2012 were for a period ending as at the previous AGM in 2011; and the situation was further compounded by the OBU Trust Fund monies, believed to consist of around Rs. Six (6) million at the inception, reports for which were unavailable although expressly required by the Trust Deed.

Mr. Cader explained that these monies had been so placed in trust by the OBU by a mandate given at the AGM in 2004 to the then Ex Co to operate such a Trust and subsequently the fund had been set up by the HM, then Secretary & Treasurer. However it had operated even during the time of the previous absence and non-communication by the HM with the then Ex Co, where monies had continued to be transacted beyond the monitoring of the OBU, and that the HM had continued to utilize these Trust Fund monies with two others appointed as Trustees from outside of the Ex Co at the time. As such the Hon. Secretary & Hon. Treasurer elected thereafter (Mr. Warnasuriya & Mr. Cader) whilst being Trustees *ex officio* in terms of the Trust Deed, had no idea of how these funds were being utilized or where they were, as neither of them had been invited to a single meeting of the Trustees, although they had requested the HM on several occasions and they were even unsure as to whether such a meeting had been held at all; or if the regular payments were being disbursed were even accounted for. There was no indication of the details of the trust fund monies and the investments in which they were held, with the only record the present Ex Co had being an interest account held at Commercial Bank. Attempts to garner further information from the HM had failed. It further appeared that this interest account was still being operated by the HM beyond the mandate of the Ex Co, and

therefore the OBU, with cheques totaling to over LKR 300,000 being issued without the knowledge or approval of the Ex Co in the past 9 months alone. This was despite the Bank having been instructed by the Secretary and Treasurer, whom the bank recognized as Ex Officio Trustees, not to honour any cheques that did not bear one of their signatures, as the other three parties did not attend Ex Co meetings and were therefore not accountable to the membership on the use of OBU monies; he said that he had tried his best to obtain the necessary information on the Trust Fund but had failed to do so due to the lack of cooperation of the HM and the non-availability of necessary records. In the circumstances the Hony. Treasurer reported to the membership that neither he nor Mr. Warnasuriya could be held responsible for these funds although they had been mandated to be the *ex officio* trustees on behalf of the OBU.

Mr. Cader giving an overview of the situation of general funds stated that having commenced with the modest bank balance of LKR 17,000 in 2011, the new Ex Co during the tenure of Mr. Chrismal Warnasuriya as Hony. Secretary had held several fund raising events and the bank balances were now at over LKR 2.5 million after this short period. However, the Ex Co was now at a standstill in their ability to utilize this money for the School's development. In addition, the Treasurer stated that the present Ex Co will not be able to remain responsible or accountable for the status of the Trust Fund unless the OBU revokes its previous mandate originally given in 2004 to begin this Trust and authorize the present Ex Co to investigate, trace and recover these funds and account for them to the general membership.

Open Forum – Questions & Responses

At the conclusion of the above presentations, the Chair invited brief questions to the presenters to be directed at the Chair for reference to the relevant Office Bearer, with a polite request to briefly identify themselves and maximize on the time so that as many members as possible may have an opportunity to speak:

Q1) Unnamed Old Boy - wished to understand the reason for the HM's continuous negative stance towards the OBU.

A1) - The Chair responded that one can only make a calculated assumption as to the HM's intentions as they are best known to him only; however he referred to the HM's reply to the Ex Co relinquishing his position dated 26th July 2012, where the HM had found the tenor and tone of the matters raised by the Ex Co relating to the several events planned for the 75th Anniversary as unacceptable. The Chair clarified however that the pattern of this HM's interactions with the OBU over the last few years, with two separate sets of Ex Co members with whom he had found it difficult to work, even following the resignation of the previous set of Office Bearers; displayed a reluctance to work with or recognize the importance of the OBU as a partner in developing the school.

Q2) Nirosh (surname not clear) - stated that he had attended an AGM at the time the HM assumed office in the mid 1990's and at that first AGM of his tenure, the then Secretary had stated (he was unsure whether this had been recorded in the minutes) that education should encompass fast developing technology and in response some old boys had proposed acquiring a few computers for the School. At this point the HM had stated that he does not want Old Boys interfering with the School curriculum and that he does

not think that IT education is a requirement for a school. He stated that this was an early indication of the HM's complete indifference to the needs of the school, in comparison with his predecessor. He wished to know whether the BoG endorsed this stance of the Headmaster as his employer.

- A2) -** The Chair responded that he could well understand the concerns raised as he had been serving on the Ex Co for quite some time now. He clarified under the *STC Ordinance* and the *Rules of the BoG* framed under that, there was a positive duty cast upon the BoG to supervise and manage the School and that if they were found wanting in such obligations they could be questioned as to why and dealt with for such inaction.

The Chair stated that all of the above issues raised had been brought to the notice of the BoG with over six items of separate correspondence, with copies also the School Manager who was also Secretary of the BoG; none of which had been replied to date. He however clarified that as an Old Boy community, we should be thankful to the Lord Bishop who, as Chairman of the BoG had been extremely supportive of all our activities; who had in fact attended our 75th anniversary dinner where the HM was absent, and in his address had specifically commented that His Lordship was present that evening to encourage the OBU not to be disheartened; that the Lord Bishop was always with them in their efforts to develop the school.

- Q3)** Mr. R. Gulasekaram - stated that he had served on the OBU Ex Co in the past for many years and was very disappointed to note the depths to which the HM's management including the administration by the BoG appeared to have sunk. He mentioned one occasion where the Ex Co had expressed their desire to develop the school buildings, where the HM had stated that the OBU should not "*come in to his house and tell him what to do.*" Mr. Gulasekaram found the term "my house" to be offensive and stated that this comment alone should have been cause enough for the Old Boys at that time to take serious action, but he was disappointed that the matter had been laid by. However, he stated that the time had now come to act in the best interest of the School to ensure that the strongest possible action was taken, even if it meant seeking the termination of employment of the HM and replacing him with someone more suited.

- A3) -** The Chair thanked Mr. Gulasekaram and stated that his advice would be recorded.

At this point as several concerns were raised on the Trust Fund monies, there was a reference from the Chair to Mr. Viran Corea, whom he said was an Old Boy of equal vintage and a colleague at the Bar in the same profession, of whom he had requested a favour on behalf of the Ex Co to study the Trust Deed and give a brief insight to the members on the issues raised.

Mr. Corea – thanked the Chair and upon his request, referred to several provisions of the Trust Deed itself and the implications arising from the *Trusts Ordinance* as follows. He first referred to some glaring inaccuracies on the Trust Deed itself, which, he said may result in an erroneous mandate that led to a technical impediment, where the Trustees had no authority to disburse any of the funds in the Prep School OBU Trust. He further stated that leaving aside those obvious errors, the Trust Deed was very clear that the fund was set up specifically for objects of School development with strict accountability to the Old Boys Union. Therefore if the Ex Co was unable to obtain the necessary information from the School, it owed a duty to those Old Boys

who had given of their hard-earned money to the Trust Fund with the intention it was to be used for development activities of the School spearheaded by the OBU; to take necessary action to assess the situation and recover what funds are available and ensure they are applied towards the ends for which the Trust was originally envisioned.

The Chair thanked Mr. Corea and reiterated what the Hony. Treasurer had mentioned earlier- that out of the five Trustees, three including the HM were not members of the present Ex Co and therefore not before the membership to be accountable for the monies.

Q4) Mr. Godfrey Yogarajah - requested to know whether there is anything in the Trust Deed that indicated that the Trustees should report on the status of Funds to the Old Boys.

A4) – Upon a request by the Chair, Mr. Corea responded – that these were OBU funds, set up under the mandate of the OBU. It was clearly spelt out that there was a requirement to submit accounts to the Old Boys Union up to Dec 31st of each year. Mr. Yogarajah stated that if this was the case legal remedies should be sought to rectify the situation.

Q5) Mr. Kishan Karunaratne (a former Vice President of the OBU) - stated that he was one of those Office Bearers who had stepped down in 2008 due to the HM's inactivity towards the development proposal they had spent a great deal of time in formulating. He stated that it was very clear from the outset that the HM did not want to have anything to do with this and had attempted to thwart the presentation of the proposal to the BoG, and had been annoyed when the presentation had been made directly to the then Lord Bishop. The then Bishop had instructed the HM to work with the Old Boys on enacting the plan which the HM did not. The HM had then created a drama himself and refused to attend any further meetings. As the HM had indicated thereafter that the situation arose as a result of a personality clash, all three VPs at the time had stepped down for the benefit of the School; however it was now very evident, through the enacting of the same drama with the new Ex Co that the problem did not lie with the Old Boys.

Mr. Karunaratne commented on the School's present trajectory, warning that if action is not taken immediately, it would soon be left without any useable buildings and with students who were not sons of Old Boys; hence with no sense of continuity or tradition and that eventually the land too would be acquired due to its poor utilization. As such, Mr. Karunaratne said we were looking at a catastrophe, which had been raised by the then Ex Co to the then Lord Bishop almost 10 years ago and the problem remained to date; and the only option therefore was to remove the problem – which was the present HM.

A5) - The Chair thanked Mr. Karunaratne for his comments and contribution.

Q6) Old Boy (name unclear) - queried whether any of the present Office Bearers were Trustees

A6) The Chair responded that the Hony. Secretary and Hony. Treasurer were Trustees Ex-Officio as recognized by the Bank holding the interest bearing account; however upon a recent demand by the HM to the bank not to receive instructions from these two Trustees (Office Bearers) they had in turn written to the Bank querying over the cheques

that had been issued in recent past without Ex Co sanction. He stated that appropriate action may very well be taken against the bank in the event of further non-compliance.

Q7) Mr. Chandana De Silva – i) the names of the Trustees

ii) Whether HM enjoyed the confidence of the BoG and

iii) if he does not, why they do not take strict action?

A7) The Chair responded -

i) Mr. Chrishmal Warnasuriya, Mr. Haroun Cader, the HM (*Ex-Officio*) with Mr. Kavinda Dias Abeysinghe & Mr. Priyantha Serasinghe were Trustees, of whom the last three had no connection with the Ex Co at present and were not accountable to it for the disbursement of funds.

ii) He could not comment for certain, however the indications were that the BoG may consider these matters seriously in view of the several complaints before them.

iii) all of the above matters had been reported to the BoG. As Mr. Kishan Karunaratne had indicated these matters had also been raised with them as far back as 10 years ago. Therefore it was up to us now to evaluate whether the BoG were properly exercising their duty under the *STC ordinance*

Q8) Mr. Chrishan Fernando – moved that this and the previous Ex Co deserved the thanks of the Old Boy community for having put up with all of this resistance, but continued to carry on their mandate for the past several years. He stated that he had attended a career guidance session at the School as guest speaker on Mr. Warnasuriya's invitation a few years ago, and had been shocked by the lackadaisical attitude shown by the HM as well as the appalling condition of the School buildings. However, he stated that the Ex Co should exercise some degree of caution on the steps to be taken in future, as it would not augur well for the School if the media picked up these issues.

Mr. Fernando also commented that with all due respect to the Lord Bishop, he could not simply say that he agrees with the Old Boys but not take immediate action on the matter. He stated that the Ex Co must address the Lord Bishop in the standing committee of the Church and inform him that the School is in a precarious position. In addition, he stated that some legal aspects must be pursued against those who are violating the mandates of the Trust Fund.

A8) The Chair thanked Mr. Fernando for expressing his views.

Q9) Mr. Rajind Perera wished to know whether the HM had been given notice of the SGM. He said he fully endorsed the previous speaker's statement on exercising caution in the way forward. He stated that STC ML had had issues where the Old Boys had taken issue with the appointment of a Warden in the past. He said that options other than direct conflict should be looked at, as the HM had steered the School for the past 18 years and products turned out were good and could wear the college tie with pride.

A9) The Chair – responded that the HM was *ex officio* President of the Ex Co and even this SGM would not have been necessary had he not relinquished his office. He stated that all of the above matters had been brought to the attention of the HM at meetings and thereafter in separate items of correspondence at various intervals, and therefore none of these facts remained undisclosed from the HM; that he has had over a year to respond to all of this but had preferred not to, offering the only response of having no further role in OBU activity.

He thanked the Old Boys for advocating caution and said that he agreed that whatever steps taken must be with extreme care, so as not to damage the good name of our school. He further commented that although this Ex Co and the previous had been facing these difficulties with the HM for years, this was the first occasion in which they were being highlighted at an OBU forum; as they had always tried to manage and contain the situations without troubling the membership as much as possible. However, this SGM was necessitated as there was an AGM due in terms of the Rules very shortly and this Ex Co was not willing to allow the HM to stall the process as he had done in the past, and therefore this present scenario raised several issues with regard to same.

Q10) An Old Boy (un-named) - stated that this appeared to be precisely what the incumbent HM seemed to be parlaying for, as he had managed to stave off the Old Boy community for the past 18 years. He stated that there was no longer time to keep these issues out of the notice of the membership, as, after 18 years, it was now time to exert the right kinds of pressure to bring about a right resolution.

A10) - Mr. Warnasuriya thanked the old boy for his contribution.

As there were no further queries Mr. Warnasuriya put the following questions before the membership as decided by the Ex Co, explaining to the membership that based upon their response, the necessary resolutions will be drafted and presented at an AGM for ratification. He stated that the method of voting (as permitted by the *Rules of the Ex Co*) would be by a show of hands, counted by several members of the Ex Co monitoring on both aisles, a member could vote for, or against or simply abstain from voting.

1) *Are you satisfied that this Ex Co has carried out your mandate to the best of their ability, to ensure the well-being & continuity of STPS?*

102 – Yes; 6 - Abstaining; 0 - No

2) *Are you concerned of an immediate danger to STPS, its prestige and image by the failure to properly manage its affairs by the Headmaster and/or the Board of Governors?*

101 – Yes; 7 - Abstaining; 0 – No

3) *Do you express an urgent need for the Ex Co to proceed to further steps to formally investigate and recover the monies that you have mandated at the AGM on 8th Dec'04 to be placed in a Trust Fund for the benefit of the OBU?*

106 – Yes; 1 - Abstaining; 1- No

- 4) *Do you wish for an amendment to the Rules of the OBU to be presented at the next AGM providing for an Old Boy to be elected as President, for the serving Headmaster / Lord Bishop to hold position/s as Patron/s?*

82 – Yes; 14- Abstaining; 12 – No

Any other business

Mr. Nirmalan Dhas sought clarification as to the ownership of the land on which the Prep School stands, and how that land can be used or disposed of. Mr. Warnasuriya stated that this could not be answered without some research, as although the property was administered by the Anglican Church, one would need to look in to actual titles to consider whether it was a freehold or on some form of lease. Mr. Dhas in response stated that, if the Church did hold ownership rights to the land, it must make note of the fact that there was a massive development plan for the Colombo area in the next 15 years and that Prep School stood in the heart of the land marked for this metro-plan. He said that unless the property is turned in to a heritage site, it was not possible to continue with a school in this area in the present state. He stated that any plan of the OBU has of resuscitating the School should take this fact in to account, as there would need to be a long-term development plan to turn S. Thomas' Prep into a modern city School, befitting its location and status.

The Chair thanked Mr. Dhas for expressing his views.

Adjournment

There being no other business, Mr. Warnasuriya in the Chair thanked all those concerned Old Boys who attended and permitted the carrying out of a constructive meeting and dialogue, as well as the many others who had emailed and/or contacted them, and all members of the Executive Committee for all their hard work.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.50 p.m. with the singing of the School Song with refreshments being served to those present after the meeting.

Signed:

Mr. Chrishmal Warnasuriya
(Hony. President – pro tem)
(Elected Hony. Secretary)

Mr. Ravi Ramanathan
(Hony. Secretary – pro tem)
(Elected Vice President)

“... The Lord is my shepherd...”