

MAUK AGM MINUTES 2025

Date: 6 July 2025 | Time: 16:30 | Venue: Kerala House | Chairperson: Sreejith Sreedharan

The meeting started at 16:50. The meeting observed one minute of silence in respect of members who had passed away during the previous year.

Chairperson's Address

The Chairperson, Sreejith Sreedharan (SS), welcomed all members present at Kerala House and online. He apologised for the 20-minute delay in starting the AGM, which was caused by waiting to reach quorum.

The Chair thanked Board members, volunteers, members, sponsors and all MAUK supporters for yet another successful year. SS read out the agenda and invited everyone to participate actively. He reminded attendees that the meeting provides members with an opportunity to express their opinions, suggest priorities for the coming year, and share ideas and guidance to improve MAUK and its services.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Chairperson read out the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 September 2024. The minutes were approved, proposed by Muralee Mukundan and seconded by Praseeda Gopan.

Annual Report

The Joint Secretary, Aji Gangadharan (AG), informed the meeting that Secretary Nishar Viswanathan was en route from the airport following a delayed flight after travelling abroad for work. AG presented the Annual Report for the year 2024.

Dilip Gangadharan (DG) asked why the AGM was being held when the Secretary was not present in person. AG explained that the deadline to submit AGM-approved accounts to Companies House was 30 September, after which a fine would be issued. He also stated that missing the deadline would damage MAUK's reputation. He reminded the meeting that the CFO had to travel to Kerala for family matters and, therefore, the AGM could not be held earlier.

SS further explained that September is a very busy period within the community, with Onam celebrations taking place every weekend. The earlier the accounts were submitted, the more the Board could focus on Onam celebrations and other matters.

DG also enquired why the AGM was being held on the same day as a local third-party event which MAUK had promoted. SS replied that MAUK promotes third-party events where they offer discounts to MAUK members.

The AGM approved the Annual Report, proposed by Sheena Nair and seconded by Dilip Gangadharan.

Annual Accounts

The CFO, Aloysious Mathew (AM), reviewed the 2024 annual accounts and highlighted the major items.

DG asked why Kattankappium Kavithaam (KK) generated no income and incurred a loss. SS explained that KK is a flagship project of MAUK which promotes Malayalam literature and poetry, and that MAUK is duty-bound to promote Kerala culture and heritage.

Priyan Sathyavarithan, Director in charge of KK, explained that KK is self-financing through donations from participants, although a budget of ₹500 is allocated each year. He further explained that, on rare occasions, the accumulated fund is used to host major literary events featuring acclaimed personalities from the Malayalam literary world.

Audit and Administration Costs

Hari Bhaskaran (HB) requested clarification regarding accountancy and audit expenses and digital advertising expenditure.

AM explained that audit-related costs included professional accountancy and independent audit services, while digital marketing costs related to social media promotion and advertising for MAUK programmes.

SS further noted that social media reach is increasingly important for sponsorship applications. He added that sponsors often evaluate audience engagement and reach before committing support. SS reiterated that strong online visibility enhances MAUK's ability to attract sponsorship and partnership opportunities.

The accounts were approved.

Proposed by: Jasline Anthony

Seconded by: Jennifer Pereira

Elections

The meeting was informed that nominations were received only from currently serving directors. The number of nominations did not exceed the available positions. Therefore, no election was required and the nominated directors were elected unopposed.

It was noted that Suresh Unnithan did not submit a nomination. The AGM also discussed Biju Gopinath's position and progress towards MAUK objectives and referred to a prior request for resignation.

Membership and Eligibility Queries

Questions were raised about membership rights following divorce and the verification of membership ownership and eligibility.

SS advised that decisions would be based on legal records and membership registration details, and that membership ownership belongs to the main applicant unless otherwise decided by the courts.

Life Membership Hall Hire Benefit

Members discussed the life membership hall-hire concession introduced when life memberships were first offered in 2014.

Background:

- Approximately 70 life memberships were issued.
- The original benefit period was five years.
- This had already been extended several times, including during the COVID period.

Discussion points included:

- About 27 life members still had not used their entitlement.
- Concerns were raised about historical record-keeping and verifying hall usage.
- Some members claimed they had not used the benefit, while records suggested otherwise.
- It was noted that, in some cases, halls had been booked on behalf of others.

AM and SS acknowledged historical weaknesses in record-keeping but noted that current records are now maintained digitally.

Several members expressed the view that:

- A final extension should be granted.
- Appropriate records should be maintained.
- Priority should be given to members who have not yet used their entitlement.

After discussion, members agreed to extend the benefit until 31 December 2028.

Diversity and Inclusion

A question was raised regarding the inclusion of the LGBTQ+ logo on MAUK's promotional materials.

SS clarified that MAUK is a diverse and inclusive charitable organisation that welcomes and supports all members of the community. He explained that including the logo helps communicate MAUK's commitment to diversity and inclusion and makes this clear to the wider community.

Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked all attendees for their participation and contributions.

The meeting concluded at 18:32.