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## INDO-CANADIAN COMMUNITY CENTER (ICCC)

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE AGM - 22 April 2017 Meeting

#### **OPENING REMARKS:**

ICCC recognizes that its key mandate is to build a community centre. Please rest assured that the Board is exploring options. Important considerations foremost in our mind include the following:

- The Community Centre/India Heritage House will exhibit India's Heritage and showcase India's culture, traditions, values and contributions to the world;
- The property should be large enough to provide a banquet facility, theatre for performing arts and culture, meeting rooms and offices for the Indo-Canadian community organizations;
- The new community centre will be professionally managed and its operations financially self-sustaining on a fee for use basis—*this will call for a commitment of the entire community to utilize the facility on a contributory basis;*
- It will be a joint Indo-Canadian Community Project—A capital-intensive project, this property shall be acquired/built with the collaboration, co-operation and contribution of community partners (individuals and organizations), patrons, sponsors, members and donors.

It is, therefore, essential that this project be carefully planned and executed. We will be seeking the input and collaboration of the community at large. More about that later.

ICCC also has the mandate to promote Indian cultural heritage and organize activities for the family and special interest groups like seniors, women, adults and youth to encourage involvement of the Indo-Canadian Community at large in Ottawa. I am delighted to report to our membership that ICCC has had a successful year in this regard. You will get all the details in this presentation.

#### **YEAR IN REVIEW & UPDATES:**

ICCC Board nominated me as the President on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016 when Mr. Biju George resigned and felt beneficial to serve ICCC from outside due to his involvement in a potential large project. During the year since the last AGM, your Board has been engaged in several initiatives – some not so successful, several very successful.

#### **Summary of successful initiatives:**

1. Highly recognized and well-received Seniors Programs – Over 300 seniors were engaged in a variety of activities. Indu Gambhir will provide a report with details.
2. Well-attended events for women by the Social Network of Women (S.N.O.W) group – Raised \$ 8000 Funds for the Interval House – Rekha Dogra will provide a report with details.



3. Memory Project – “A history of Indo-Canadians in Ottawa” -- culminated in a soon-to-be-published book – An initiative by Indu Gambhir, Prabir Neogi, and Nand Tandan.
4. Speakers’ Forum – A speakers’ club sharing personal knowledge and insights on specific topics in a monthly lecture/lunch meeting – Organized by Beant Barewal.
5. Participation in the annual 4-day Festival of India program with a booth to promote ICCC and its Programs, and focus on youth scholarship and children activities.
6. Participation in the Deepawali Festival on Parliament.
7. A Musical Concert.
8. Personal Development Life Skills Workshops by Anil Agrawal.
9. Technology training by Piyush Gupta and Puneet Aggarwal.

### **Community Centre Property Exploration:**

You will find in the Minutes of the 2016 AGM that the Board was given a direction and a 6-month target (till October 31<sup>st</sup>) to explore a couple of options for the Community Center Building Property:

1. Kanwal Talwar was asked a) to explore the purchase of a 5-acre land on Barnsdale Road for approximately \$350,000; and b) to confirm whether the 10-acre property (offered by Dr. Jindal family — conditional donation) could be rezoned for a community center — an amount of \$ 10,000 was authorized for the purpose of rezoning costs.
2. Nitya Varma was asked to explore the option of coming into a co-operative agreement with the City of Ottawa to build a Community Center on a parcel of land on Conroy road where ICCC would provide much of the upfront costs.

Briefly, Barnsdale Land, initially available for \$350,000 became too expensive due to the Future Waterpark Development Announcement. Dr. Jindal’s Land rezoning preliminary study became more expensive. We got an expert opinion to wait for the Provincial LEAR Study report, which finally quashed near term chances of modifying existing Agricultural Land rezoning.

Nitya Varma explored the Conroy Road land with the City of Ottawa, but it did not pan out. But he continued to explore collaboration with the City on other fronts. For details of his findings on other fronts, please refer to his report entitled “Community Centre Property Report,” duly circulated to all members.

Regrettably, we could not achieve desired results in all areas but I am glad to report that no ICCC money was wasted, and Mr. Nitya Varma has maintained his optimism to find an avenue.

**Vision for the future:** In 2017, Board initiated a newer Vision for ICCC (2 visuals) — planning & implementing specific business policies, guidelines and practices, and developing collaborative working relationships with individuals, groups and other Indo-Canadian associations as well as the mainstream organizations.



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ICCC aims to position itself as the hub of the Indo-Canadian community by connecting with people and organizations community-wide. We will reach out to the entire community and promote, get involved and take part in their projects & activities as well. **“Collaboration, Connectivity, Creativity and Empowerment” will be our key operational principles.**

The process of redefining new Business Plan priorities for the new Board is under way.

**Insurance Policy:** \$ 2 million D&O Insurance Policy (Policy Number: 5D8003466) from Intact Insurance Company covering all those working on ICCB Board, committees, initiatives and activities effective 31 January 2017. This policy was purchased for the 1<sup>st</sup> time ever by your Board.

**ICCC Funds:** All GIC funds were transferred upon maturity on 10 March 2017 to Dual Purpose Account yielding 0.8 %, pending future action by the new ICCB Board (6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 e-mail).

**Summer Students:** A formal decision on \$ 18,000 Grant for 3 summer students is expected soon. They will primarily work on technology issues (Membership Database, website, SLACK Communication System, digitization of documents, etc., and creation/expansion of various mailing lists and directories (e.g. Seniors, SNOW, NewGen Leaders, Youth, etc.)

#### **Grants:**

ICCC submitted an application (initiated by Anil Agrawal) for the **Ontario Seniors Community Grant** (3rd March 2017 e-mail) — awaiting funding decision by June 2017.

**New Horizon for Seniors Program (NHSP) Grant Application for 2017-18:** ICCB funding was not approved. Deshantari received the NHSP grant; they will collaborate with ICCB on their Grant activities.

#### **GOING FORWARD:**

1. Review/highlight 42 years History – 2017- Possibilities Galore & Hubs Visuals
2. Review P3 Chart for ICCB Initiatives & Activities (2016 -17) and then
3. Review P3 Chart for Future Planning - 2017 & beyond to raise ICCB Profile.
4. **Highlighted priorities** are:
  - a. Continue to explore avenues for the physical **Community Centre**.
  - b. **Strengthen and Expand Program Initiatives:**
    - i. ICCB Seniors, S.N.O.W., Festival of India, Deepawali, Holi and other national Festivals on Parliament.
    - ii. **Initiate Adult/Youth Programs:** Sports (Field Hockey, Soccer, Cricket), NGL Projects, Academic Scholarships
    - iii. Launch **Fund-Raising Drives** to collect funds for various ICCB initiatives – Seniors, SNOW, NewGen & Youth and Spiritual Hub



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- c. **Expand Membership Base:**
- i. Update the **Members Database**, and collect more information about the members.
  - ii. **Promote Membership:**
    - Promote the value of the ICCC initiatives to the community and launch membership drives.
    - Encourage people to donate what they can to accumulate towards membership.
5. **Communication Program:** Develop an Indo-Canadian Directory for Ottawa in liaison with the community organizations — We'll reach out to various organizations requesting them to forward our ICC Directory Form to their members — Those wishing to receive ongoing communications from ICCC may register in the Directory.
6. **Collaborations** with individuals, groups, associations (including local India-friendly Canadian organizations e.g. Jewish Community Center, Child Haven International, etc.) in Arts & Culture, Music, Dance.
7. **Create ICCC Signature Events:** Annual Gala; Regional Cultural Festival, Festival of India.
8. **Awards & Recognition** Program for ICCC members, community leaders & volunteers in various fields.
9. **Spiritual, Yoga & Meditation, Personal Development, Intellectual Engagements projects**
10. **Charitable Activities**

## ISSUES & CHALLENGES:

These include:

- Aging Membership and disinterest by Newer Generation; New Membership, particularly from the next generation.
- Limited Financial Resources
- Strongly held Divergence of Views
- Defining what form should the “Community Center” take for today’s and tomorrow’s needs; location and accessibility; raising funds from the community, etc.
- Maintaining Updated ICCC Membership List;
- Community news on significant accomplishments, recognition, etc.
- Use and Investment of available Funds. Options: Land/Building investment; provide Community Services at multiple locations – easily accessible & cheaper City/other Facilities at various locations (Kanata, Orleans, Merivale Road, Riverside, Barrhaven); develop a Virtual Community Center; Donations to other charities; Scholarship Programs, etc.



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## GENERAL:

1. Seek AGM views on By-Laws Amendments:
  - AGM in May
  - Membership: Accumulate donations and grant Voting rights to a member upon reaching total \$1000.00 to encourage entrance of young members
  - Board Structure: 3 year term for a Board member; each year elect 3 new members to ensure stability & continuity
  - Proxies: Usage limited for Quorum only and/or allow a limitation of maximum 5 per member?
  - Creating various Advisory Positions: Legal, Constitution & By-laws, ICCC Corporate History, Financial & Audit, Taxation, Health, Technology, HR, etc.
  
2. **Annual Budget:** AGM Approval for Insurance requirement, seed /start- up funds for new initiatives (Goal: Self-supporting activities & events eventually).

Finally, special thanks to:

- Indu Gambhir for leading the Seniors initiative and building a thriving seniors community.
- Rekha Dogra for leading the Women’s program to foster social interaction among women and charity initiative for Interval House.
- Anil Agrawal for full time job contributions with commitment and dedication to giving shape and direction to the Seniors program and enhancing overall ICCC image: maintain ICCC Website, Seniors Directory, Event Management and Communications, starting SLACK Communication System, PAYPAL & Mail chimp migration of ICCC Membership List, Grants Applications, etc. and guidance & assistance on a variety of issues.
- Biju George for Summer Student Grants Application and seeking Sponsorships from various sources for ICCC activities (e.g. Regional Cultural Festival, Musical event)
- Many other committed individuals and volunteers who work behind the scenes, and have dedicated innumerable hours in the service of the community.
- Last but not the least, East India Company (Anish Mehra) for providing EIC facilities and for being the hub of the ICCC Board activities.

Respectfully submitted by

K.Talwar,  
President, ICCC  
613-866-5623

17 April, 2017