



MEHERANA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
3946 CA-140, Mariposa CA 95338  
May 1, 2021 10:30 AM

**Board Members:** Present, by Zoom: Therese Williams, Susan Mitchell, Jim Wilson, Ellen Van Allen, Ralph Brown, Jyoti Raju, Ron Greenstein

**Membership Committee:** Present by Zoom: Greg Ennis, Susan Mitchell, Vern Stovall  
Absent: Ellie Mathay

**Others Present:** By Zoom: Kebi Brown: *Treasurer*, Meibao Nee: *Secretary*, Paul Williams: *Site Committee Chair*, Michalene Seiler, Dennis Lesea, Marianne Lesea, Fred White, at 10:45

Meeting opened at 10:31 AM with a moment of silence.

**President's Report:** Therese:

Welcome to the 2021 Annual General Meeting - The president's report highlights some of the events or news that occurred since the last AGM and gives members an idea of what to expect for the next year.

Ongoing social distancing restrictions have meant that we have been forced to hold our AGM, along with our Spring Sahavas and indeed most of our other events this calendar year, via online platforms. We appreciate this is far from ideal, but we have attempted as best we can to continue our engagement with members throughout this challenging time, and hope that those able to attend our previous online events and today's meeting have a positive experience. We look forward to future events when members can again meet in person to exchange Baba's love. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed Meher Baba at the forefront of world interest – what hand does he play in all of this? He said "No one can understand my ways. I am beyond your understanding." Avatar Meher Baba, Meher Mount, 1956. I guess that answers my question and maybe yours too.

Over the year, the board has been assessing when to open Meherana. It was decided at the last board meeting to – open up Meherana to day visitors every day from Sunrise to Sunset. The maximum number of day visitors allowed on the property at any time is 25.

The only building accessible to day visitors is the toilet building (with three toilets and an outside hand

washing sink) located in the meadow area, near the Meadow Cottage.

If you wish to visit, please request a reservation via email to [visits@meherana.org](mailto:visits@meherana.org)

When you arrive, please sign in at the Caretaker House.

Bring your own food, as no food or cooking facilities are available.

While on the Meherana property, except with your own family bubble, please observe social distancing

of at least 6 feet and wear a mask if closer than 6 feet.

Please note that Meherana is not open for overnight stays.

Please stay at home if you are unwell.

Thanks for helping us keep Meherana safe for both our visitors and our staff.

### Spring Sahavas

Zooming on May 21-23 2021, Friday - Sunday.

If you haven't signed on yet, please take a look at the roster we've got lined up and mark your calendar. If so, be sure to add your name to the sign-up sheet.

You'll find talks by Rick Chapman, Ursula Reinhart and Heather Nadel to inspire your Baba hearts. And in addition to Jamie Newell, Mark Trichka and Lisa Brande from the US, we'll have guest musicians from around the globe – India, Australia, China, Argentina, and the UK. Also, Debbie Nordeen will lead a singing workshop! Paul and I will take you on a morning walk and Raine will lead Arti.

### Site Committee

The Site Committee continues to be active with developments and repairs at Meherana to keep Meherana functioning for all His lovers to visit. I will pass it over to Paul Williams, my husband and chair of the Site Committee to talk about the updates when he presents his report.

### Community Outreach

We provided \$320 to Manner House to assist people who need food.

### Financial

The financial health of Meherana is steady. Meherana's current operational needs and financial stability continues to need your support as we move forward in implementing the current masterplan. Kebi and Ellen will provide a financial report.

### Website and communications

Lisa continues to send out communication from the board and other committees as needed and Gay continues to update the website. Gay is looking to pass the website on to another volunteer – could this be you? Gay provided a little bit about what she does and what the website volunteer would do. Gay Dunn:

“About 10 years ago I took on the job of moving the old website to a Weebly platform (with some help) and redesigned it. It was a labor of love and has gone through very little change since. The main job since its design has been to update the events page, support page (which should probably be called "donations", btw), updating and uploading forms, and adding to galleries. Weebly has its limits but is a very easy platform to build with.

There has been very little oversight of the website -- I pretty much just did what I felt was necessary throughout the years. This past year, without the usual events, there was little to do on the website, mostly the Covid notice and event cancellations as relayed to me by different people at Meherana, and a few additions for Kebi re donations and bookstore,

probably less than 10 hours of work. Even in a busier year the required work has only averaged a couple hours per month. Any time beyond that was for my own design modifications.

Since I'm not involved in Meherana activities anymore I have mostly waited for instructions from the board. The main reason to pass the job on is that someone more locally involved would have the pulse of what is going on there -- I actually don't know who is on the BOD. Another reason is if you ever want to do more technically challenging things with the website -- such as blogs with rss feed or embedded docs. The calendar, btw, is a Google Calendar that Jeannie embedded years ago and is simply updated from Google Calendar and automatically linked to the website."

At last year's AGM I report that Dennis Lesea moved to our community. This year, I am thrilled to report that Marianne and Dennis were married a few months back. Dennis is a caretaker at Meherana, along with Marianne. We have two caretakers!!

What does Meherana look like going forward in 2021-- COVID-19 has created a new and very challenging environment for all of us. The board will continue to review the situation and update members. we all need to be vigilant because cases are spiking again. We have many people in quarantine now from a few people who thought they had allergies but in fact they had COVID-19 and it is spreading in our community. I have weekly testing to ensure I am not a spreader. Testing helps to stop spread the virus -- we do not want to go back in tiers and close down the economy once again.

We hope to be able to have Ward's study course in September. Meher Baba's Discourses during the First Flowering of the Meherabad Ashram, 1925 -- 1931 organized by Chris and Christi Pearson.

The board wants all his lovers to come to Meherana to receive a sprinkling of HIS love.

As Jim Wilson said, "The present conditions offer us a chance to retreat deeply into the "heart center" which Baba assures us is the real center where He can be found always and everywhere. Our inner connectedness in His love brings us closer to each other in the marvelous ways of the heart.

Thank you for your patience. Stay safe and well.

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!

### **Treasurer's Report -- AGM May 1<sup>st</sup> 2021**

This past fiscal year was certainly different with Meherana being closed due to the covid-19 pandemic. But, with so many supporters and their loving and generous donations, Meherana was still able to meet all its financial obligations.

On the Operating side of the Budget, expenses fell within the dollars budgeted and with so many projected expenses not happening, there was a small gain of \$3,891 of revenues over expenses.

However, for the Capital Budget there was a deficit of \$19,383 of expenses over revenues. Many of the development projects were funded by donations received in prior years so this deficit was covered by funds already in the bank.

Entering the new Fiscal Year (April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021), after subtracting designated and restricted funds, \$49,437 is in the bank and available to be used to meet the needs of the new Operating Budget and there is \$119,056 available in the bank to be used for paying the projected development expenses for this new Fiscal Year.

Meherana continues to be a fiscally sound non-profit organization operating in a prudent and frugal manner.

Jai Baba!

### **Membership Report:**

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

2021 Meherana AGM

May 1, 2021

Committee Members: Ellie Matthay, Susan Mitchell, Vern Stovall, David Greenstein, Greg Ennis

During the course of the past year, the Membership Committee has accomplished the following:

- Managed the process each quarter of gathering both new and renewal applications for Active Membership, with subsequent review, validation, and approval by the Committee. There are currently 26 Active Members.
- Managed the outreach campaign to encourage people to become Associate Members. There are currently 136 Associate Members.
- Worked with the Communications Director to develop outreach materials to the members.
- Worked with the Nominating Committee to ensure their nominees meet the Active Membership criterion.
- Managed the preparation, mailing, and counting of the 2021 AGM ballot.

The current list of Active Members, and the effective period for each AM's membership, is listed at the end of this document.

### **Nominating Committee Report:**

Nominating Committee Report – Meherana AGM May 1, 2021

As always, the Nominating Committee began its work to find eligible candidates for available elected positions in early January. Members of the committee include Doug Ross, Fred White and Michalene Seiler and David Greenstein as liaison from the Membership Committee. Billy Brown dropped out.

Those whose terms ended this year were Jim Wilson and Ralph Brown on the Board, Doug Ross and Paul Williams on the Site Committee, Ellie Matthay and Vern Stovall on Membership and Doug Ross and Fred White on Nominating.

Our work was particularly easy this year since all those whose terms expired were willing to run for re-election. Only Billy's vacancy on the Nominating Committee needed a replacement and Lisa Greenstein stepped up to fill the slot.

After our annual appeal for interested parties to run for office, Vern added his name as a candidate for the Site Committee and Greg Ennis bowed out.

The final slate for today's election was presented to the Membership Committee on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

We're looking forward to the opportunities for service at Meherana in the coming year and are grateful to see the loving commitment of all.

Jai Meher Baba!

Nominating Committee

Doug, Fred and Michalene

### **Site Committee Report:**

#### **Saturday, May 1, 2021**

**SITE COMMITTEE: Paul Williams (Chairperson), Ralph Brown, Jim Wilson, Doug Ross, Greg Ennis:**

The Site Committee has continued with maintenance and improvements at Meherana during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The well project that has been ongoing for several years is now complete and working as expected. We still need to give it a good stress test at a Sahavas. As usual we have continued our fire mitigation efforts through brushing and having the goats back courtesy of Fire Grazers (the Choi family business). Most of the trees impacted by the Detweiler fire have rebounded and are looking healthy but those that died are now beginning to fall and this was exacerbated by a "Mono Wind Event" that swept through Mariposa late winter/early spring with wind gusts up to 100mph. This toppled scores of trees, living as well as dead and precipitated a Covid-safe work event to clean up the debris and clear the roads. We also had damage to both of the tent cabins which are now beginning to show their age. New replacement tent flies for both the cabins have been ordered and will be installed soon. Additional extensive brushing was done on the hill below the Meadow Cottage, along the caretaker road and around the front entrance. Baba's

cabin got a fresh coat of stain and paint and repairs were done to the concrete plinth. A subcommittee was formed to research and test the idea of staining the concrete around Baba's cabin and it was determined not to proceed at this time. The support structures to the two tent cabins were also given a fresh coat of paint as well as the bath house and the toilet building in the Meadow. A new dishwasher was installed in the caretaker house. The roads and paths got fresh gravel or chips and grading was done to repair erosion and improve drainage. The Dilruba Garden in the Sahavas area in front of the Godown has fresh plantings and a new garden in front of the Meadow Cottage was prepared and is being planted this spring. The orchard is also looking good and getting plenty of water now that we have the new well. Work on the Children's pandal was put on hold during Covid but is a priority for the future. We will also improve the trails that were started last year.

**Active and Associate Member Discussion of Reports and Ballot issues:** No discussion.

**Call for Ballots and Counting of Ballots:** Greg: Ordinarily ballots are counted in person but because this meeting is virtual all ballots were submitted by mail and counted in advance by the Nominating Committee.

**Announcement of Written Ballot Results:** The results are read out and are attached below.

**Open Forum on Meherana business:** Fundraising: Report not given earlier. Jim: We brought in \$13,000 with the year-end fundraising letter. We included information on legacy donations and a few have expressed interest. Going forward with the Children's Pandal/Activity Center may require a fundraising effort.

**AGM Adjourned at 11:10 AM**

**Annual General Meeting 05/01/2021**

Record of Election and Planning Meetings

No. of Active Members	26
No. of Ballots Rcvd	24
Meets Quorum? (need 14)	yes
2/3rds for voting	17
Majority for voting	13

Board Positions up for election: Two 3-yr terms

<u>1. Board of Directors</u>	No. of Votes	Election Term
Jim Wilson	23	3 years
Ralph Brown	22	3 years

Notes on Board Positions:

1 Ellen Van Allen	continuing 1 YR left on term
2 Ron Greenstein	continuing 1 YR left on term
3 Therese Wilson	continuing 2 YRs left on term
4 Jyoti Raju	continuing 2 YRs left on term
5 Susan Mitchell	continuing 2 YRs left on term
6 Jim Wilson	on ballot
7 Ralph Brown	on ballot

**Planning Meeting - Board**

Officers & Liaisons	Name
1. President	Therese Williams
2. Vice President	Ron Greenstein
3. CFO	Ellen VanAllen
4. Treasurer - appointed	Kebi Brown
5. Secretary - appointed	Meibao Nee
6. Site Comm Member	Ralph Brown
7. M'ship Comm Member	Susan Mitchell
8. Community Outreach	not filled
9. Fundraising	Jim Wilson
10. Programs	Ralph Brown
11. Communications	Therese Williams
12. IT	Jyoti Raju

**Board Calendar - Meetings**

6/26/2021
9/18/2021
11/6/2021
1/15/2022
3/26/2022

**2. Site Committee** Two 2-year terms and one 1-year term  
(1 year term is to fill the remainder of Greg Ennis's term following his resignation)

**Planning Meeting - Site**

	No. of Votes	Election Term	Chairperson	Name
Vern Stovall	23	2 years	Chairperson	Paul Williams
Doug Ross	22	2 years	Board Member - Liaison	Ralph Brown
Paul Williams	21	1 year		

Notes on Site Committee Positions

Jim Wilson	continuing 1 YR left on term
Vern Stovall	on ballot
Doug Ross	on ballot
Paul Williams	on ballot

**3. Membership** Two 2-year terms

**Planning Meeting - Membership**

	No. of Votes	Election Term	Chairperson	Name
Vern Stovall	24	2 years	Chairperson	Greg Ennis
Ellie Matthay	23	2 years	Board Member - Liaison	Susan Mitchell
			Nominating Representative	Ellie Matthay

Notes on Membership Committee Positions

Greg Ennis continuing 1 YR left on term  
 Vern Stovall on ballot  
 Ellie Matthay on ballot  
 David Greenstein no longer an Active Member  
 replacement to be appointed to serve out remainder of his term (1 year left on term)

**4. Nominating**

Two 2-year terms and one 1-year term  
 (1 year term is to fill the remainder of Billy Brown's term following his resignation)

	No. of Votes	Election Term	Planning Meeting - Nominating	Name
Lisa Greenstein	24	2 years	Chairperson	Michalene Seiler
Fred White	23	2 years		
Doug Ross	22	1 year		

Notes on Nominating Committee Positions

Michalene Seiler continuing 1 year left on term  
 Fred White on ballot  
 Lisa Greenstein on ballot  
 Doug Ross on ballot

**5. Motion to Approve Minutes of the 2020 AGM**

Approve	23
Disapprove	0
Abstain	3

Signed by Membership Committee:  
  
 Date: 05/02/21 Place: Membership Committee via Zoom

Meherana Active Members as of April 2021

Total number of Active Members: 26

Chris Pearson  
 Christi Pearson  
 Dennis Lesea  
 Doug Ross  
 Ellen Van Allen  
 Ellie Matthay  
 Fred White  
 Greg Ennis

Jack Caraco  
 Jim Wilson  
 John Giusto  
 John Van Slyke  
 Jyoti Raju  
 Kebi Brown  
 Lisa Greenstein  
 Marianne Ashelman

Meibao Nee  
Michalene Seiler  
Mike Comerford  
Paul Williams  
Ralph Brown

Ron Greenstein  
Susan Mitchell  
Therese Williams  
Vern Stovall  
Will David

Applications approved in July 2020, effective July 1 2020 through June 30 2021:

Ellie Matthay
Chris Pearson
Christi Pearson
Lisa Greenstein
Susan Mitchell
John Van Slyke

Applications approved October 2020, effective October 1 2020 through September 30 2021:

Doug Ross
Marianne Ashelman
Ron Greenstein
Vern Stovall
Will David
John Giusto

Applications approved in January 2021, effective January 1 2021 through December 31 2022

Jim Wilson
Paul Williams
Therese Williams
Ralph Brown
Kebi Brown
Michalene Seiler
Greg Ennis
Ellen Van Allen
Mike Comerford

Applications approved April 2021, effective April 1 2021 through March 31 2022

Jack Caraco
Fred White
Meibao Nee
Jyoti Raju
Dennis Lesea