

Minutes of SAEP AGM held on Saturday 30 May 10am via Zoom

1. **Present:** Approximately 45 people
2. **Welcome:** Isabel Essen (chairperson) extended a welcome to all supporters, volunteers, board members and others to share highs and lows of past year and to celebrate where SAEP is today. SAEP always puts beneficiaries first, and is continuing to support under-resourced communities during time of Covid 19. Big thanks to Jane and her team for putting the presentation together.

Nosisa Mhlathi, as co-chair of the meeting then provided a translation into isiXhosa and added her welcome.

Isabel explained how Zoom works and invited everyone to add comments, and vote or ask questions as per the agenda. Nosisa then translated and confirmed that it was not necessary to provide further translation throughout the meeting.

3. **Opening Prayer:** Masithembe Mqoto then led everyone in an opening prayer, remembering Eric Nduna (one of the ECD team) who passed away on 28 May.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 2019 AGM:** Jane Keen (director) thanked Isabel and Nosisa and asked for approval of 2019 AGM minutes which had been reviewed and signed by the board last year. Approval of minutes was proposed by Isabel Essen and seconded by Gemma Oberth. There were no objections. The minutes were thus approved.
5. **Presentation of Annual Report:** Jane passed on to Tara Appalraju (programme manager), to introduce the programme coordinators and the annual report (which had been circulated electronically):

Early Childhood Development: Mejury Mushanguri took everyone through the work that ECD programme does as outlined in the annual report, and showed a short video depicting the developments at one of the ECD centres. Tara thanked the ECD team for magnificent work.

Siyakhathala Primary Programme: Lerato Lehlathathe explained the after-school reading programme for grade 3s and 4s and the hikes and excursions. Special thanks was given to Susie Alston Taylor (manager of the programme) and Anne Witt (volunteer). A CPUT research project using art as the medium was also discussed and thanks given to the partners. Tara thanked Lerato and the team for their excellent work.

Hope Scholars Programme: Andile Nqoko described that HSP had shifted towards excursions and experiences and described the various outings including visits to Kirstenbosch, Green Point Park, Hikes including one with SACS boys. A visit to the Science Centre was a highlight as presentations were made by people from the HSP scholars' own communities which was inspiring for the students. A two-night camp was also a highlight as social issues such as gender based violence were discussed. HSP has partnered with Tshilidzi in Samora Machel which was founded by ex-HSP students. Another highlight was a coding workshop enjoyed by all. Tara thanked Andile for running Hope Scholars in addition to his other work in IT and BY.

Bridging Year Programme: Nosisa Mhlathi described the purpose of the BY programme which assists post-matrics in many ways to prepare for tertiary studies, including;

- helping improve matric results (via CPUT Second Chance Programme)
- encouraging resilience and independence
- social skills and psycho-social support
- career guidance
- critical thinking and academic literacy
- applications for grants and bursaries
- exam techniques
- computer literacy

An inspirational video by a BY student was shared.

Tertiary Support Programme: Nosisa Mhlathi explained that this programme was for students who have graduated from BY and are now at tertiary institutions and provides psycho-social and financial support to these students as well as a personal adviser.

Tara thanked Nosisa for great work in running two programmes.

- 6. Finances:** Nicola Lloyd (treasurer) reported on the financial position in 2019 and said the organisation had ended the year in a much better financial position than 2018. A R7 million income is a wonderful achievement by the fundraising team in a very tough climate. FR team congratulated for all donations received and to all for keeping for keeping expenditure down.
- 7. Questions on report:** There were no questions at this stage.
- 8. Approval of Annual Report:** Approval of the Annual Report was proposed by Debbie Stewart and seconded by a member of the audience (unfortunately we cannot catch the name on audio). There were no objections and so the 2019 Annual Report was approved.
- 9. Approval of Financial Report:** The Financial Report was proposed by Lauren Medcalf, seconded by Isabel Essen, and there being no objections the audited Financial Report was approved.
- 10. Approval of Auditor:** Jane asked for approval for the Auditor, Mike Schreiber of Low and Schreiber to continue into 2020/2021. This was proposed by Nicola Lloyd, and seconded by Susie Alston Taylor, with no objections.
- 11. Election of The Board of Directors:** Jane introduced the current board members who have all served for some time: Isabel Essen, Mogie Dass, Nicola Lloyd, Gina Leinberger, Gemma Oberth, Helena Duk, Kayin Scholtz, and welcomed Fundiswa Yuba as a recent addition to the board. All members have agreed to stay on for the coming year. Debbie Stewart proposed that the board be elected as a group. This was seconded by Lauren. There were no objections. Jane then expressed her gratitude for the many hours that the Board Members give to SAEP on a voluntary basis.
- 12. SAEP during COVID-19 lockdown:** Jane introduced how the organisation is trying to adapt to the current situation under lockdown with schools and ECD centres closed, where no hikes, face-to-face meetings, or visits to ECD centres were possible. The focus has been on keeping in contact with beneficiaries via SMS, phone calls etc. and responding to the need for food and stimulation at home.

Mumba Soko (fund raising officer) reported that over the past two months the teams had worked very hard raising funds to meet new needs and had distributed 815 food parcels, 524 vouchers, 362 masks, 222 learning material packs, and conducted 571 COVID screenings in partnership with the Department of Health. She also spoke about support for staff, parents and children and information about free learning websites which was distributed.

13. Questions and comments from participants:

i. **What is the current financial situation?** Jane anticipated that COVID would seriously affect funding and that finances were tight. SAEP is in a better financial situation than this time last year but still struggling to meet targets and budgets. Looking for new contacts to raise funds. Nicola reported that income and donations have been enough to cover projects thus far but that the organisation would be revising the budget to shortly to adapt to the new situation and new needs.

ii. (Nick Wood from London) **How has COVID impacted on mental health of beneficiaries?** Tara and Jane responded that all BY students have been assessed telephonically and those who need counselling will be supported by the social worker. Same process is planned with tertiary students. Mejury reported that most beneficiaries have been impacted by loss of income and were initially in shock and denial but there appears to be more acceptance now. Much information has been shared by SAEP about the virus. There is an ongoing need for psycho-social support. Susie mentioned the negative impact of fake news being circulated.

iii. **Athenkosi Mashicila** from Tshilidzi thanked everyone for the support they have given to this new organisation which is now working in partnership with SAEP on the Hope Scholars Programme.

14. **Tribute to Eric Nduna by Nokwanela Dlomo:** Mam Kwane gave a beautiful tribute to Eric, describing him as a gentle giant, who gave much motivation and encouragement to his colleagues and beneficiaries. He was further likened to a tree that gave shade to many. He was an activist at heart and will be sorely missed by all the SAEP, and in particular by the ECD team and programme beneficiaries.

15. **National Anthem:** The national anthem was played.

16. **Thanks:** Jane concluded the meeting by thanking all who had attended and participated, with special thanks to everyone who put the meeting together especially Andile and Tracey. She also thanked all staff, volunteers, funders, partners and beneficiaries for their part in enabling SAEP to do the work it does.

17. **Closure:** The meeting ended at 11.20am

A video and sound recording of the meeting is available on the SAEP website www.saep.org, together with the comments and questions from the chat box during the meeting.