

Auroville Foundation Auroville

Minutes of the 65th Meeting of the Governing Board

Hybrid Mode

12.12.2023

(4:00 pm to 6:00 pm)

AUROVILLE FOUNDATION, AUROVILLE

Minutes of the 65th Governing Board meeting (hybrid mode) held on 12.12.2023 at Auroville Foundation

The following were present in the meeting:

1)	Hon'ble Shri R. N. Ravi Governor of Tamil Nadu	Chairperson
2)	Hon'ble Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan Lt. Governor of Puducherry	Member
3)	Prof. Goutam Ghosal	Member
4)	Dr. Nirima Oza	Member
5)	Prof. R. S. Sarraju	Member
6)	Smt. Neeta Prasad, Joint Secretary Ministry of Education, New Delhi (Online)	Member (Joined Online)
7)	Dr. Jayanti S. Ravi	Secretary, AVF
8)	Dr. G. Seetharaman	OSD, AVF

The following two Governing Board members did not attend the meeting.

1)	Shri Aravindan Neelakandan	Member
2)	Prof. Nandana G Basappa	Member

The following Officers of Ministry of Education were present online during the meeting:

1. Sh. Sudhira Kumar Samantaray, Dy. Secy.
2. Ms. Madhu Bala Soni, Under Secretary
3. Shri Sameer Bakshi, SO

Dr. Jayanti S. Ravi, Secretary, Auroville Foundation welcomed the Chairperson and the Members to the 65th meeting of the Governing Board.

Hon'ble Shri R. N. Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu and Chairperson, Governing Board, Auroville Foundation delivered the opening remarks of the 65th meeting of the Governing Board.

Then, the Agenda Items were taken up for discussion. The following were the decisions taken in this meeting:

Note:

Ministry of Education, New Delhi have forwarded their comments on the agenda points before commencement of the meeting and the comments were considered.

AGENDA ITEMS

Item No. 65.01: Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of the 64th Governing Board

The Minutes of the 64th meeting of the GB held on 9.8.2023 were circulated to the members. No comments have been received from the Members. The Governing Board resolved to confirm the minutes of the 64th meeting.

Item No. 65.02: Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of the 39th Finance committee

The Governing Board resolved to confirm the minutes of the 39th meeting of the Finance Committee of the Auroville Foundation held through circulation.

Item No. 65.03: Action taken report on the decisions of the present Governing Board

The action-taken report on the decisions of the 64th meeting of the Governing Board and the current status was noted by the Board.

During the meeting the results of the Short Film and Essay Competition were circulated to the Members.

As regard to the setting up an Institute for Medical Education synthesizing the Indian System of Medicine with Allopathy, the Board has approved the proposal and directed to furnish more details in the next GB meeting regarding combination of Indian System of Medicine & Allopathy by framing the syllabus and other procedures involved.

Item No. 65.04: Secretary's Report

The Secretary presented the report on the important activities and achievements since the last GB meeting. The report was also circulated among the Members. The Board noted the same.

REPORTING ITEMS

Item No. 65.05: Construction of boundary wall around the city area through CPWD (sent by circulation agenda)

The Board approved construction of boundary wall around the inner circle of outer ring road in-principle. During the discussions, the Secretary informed that Border Roads Organisation under MHA has been erecting barbed wire fencing on the international border and it costs cheaper to the tune of about 50% of the cost for prefabricated cement structure. Based on this, CPWD was requested to furnish revised quotation for the work. Accordingly, the CPWD furnished their quote for the revised design of the boundary wall which is Rs.18.69 crores. The revised quote was circulated to the members during the meeting.

The GB approved the work as per the revised estimates of the CPWD.

Item No. 65.06: Conduction of Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat in Auroville

The Board approved the estimated expenditure of Rs.15 Lakh and noted the activities proposed to be undertaken under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme initiated by the M/o. Education. The Board has also noted the revised schedule for the students' camp from 29th January 2024 to 2nd February 2024.

Item No. 65.07: Starting of Atal Community Innovation Centre in Auroville

The Board has noted the progress made on the proposal and approved the expenditure of Rs.2.5 Cr. from Auroville as a matching contribution of Rs.2.5 Cr. from the ATAL.

Item No. 65.08: Report on MoU signed between IIT Madras and Auroville

The Board has noted the MoU signed between IIT, Madras and the Auroville Foundation and approved the allocation of 105 acres of land for the said proposal.

Item No. 65.09: Appointment of Resource Person in Auroville Town Development Council (ATDC) - Ms. Maria Doloros Breton Langas alias Anandi.

The Board has approved the engagement of Ms. Maria Doloros Breton Langas alias Anandi as a Resource Person in the ATDC.

Item No. 65.10: Status of pending court cases

The Board has noted the details of the cases and their current status. The Board has approved the engagement of Shri Vaibhav, Advocate who has been appearing for the Foundation in six cases on pro-bono basis.

Item No. 65.11: Auroville Marathon event

The Board has noted and appreciated revival of the Auroville Marathon event after a gap of three years.

Item No. 65.12: Update on the programmes done for the 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo using grants received from the ministry of culture.

The Board has noted the events held under the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and the expenditure incurred thereon.

Item No. 65.13: Discussions on the Auroville Foundation proposed Regulations 2023

The Board has noted the progress made in finalization of the Regulations and advised to follow them up closely with the M/o. Education till they are notified and put into effect.

Item No. 65.14: Approval of Legal Fees paid to Counsels engaged by the Foundation

The Board has noted that senior counsels have to be engaged by the Auroville Foundation to effectively defend the cases in the overall interest of the Auroville. The Board has also approved the legal fees paid to the Legal Counsels.

Item No. 65.15: Approval to sell an apartment in Puducherry gifted by Dr. Rauf Ali to Auroville Foundation and to make use for scholarship for Biology students

The Board approved the proposal by following the due process as per the GFR norms and procedures.

Item No. 65.16: Approval of recognition of senior Sri Aurobindo Ashramites and Sri Aurobindo Society Members as Auro Mitra after screening through a committee

The Board approved the proposal and formation of a committee under for considering requests and making recommendations to the Secretary—

- (i) Secretary, AVF
- (ii) Any two among Dr. Nirima Oza, Shri Aravindan Neelakandan, and Prof. Goutam Ghosal, GB Members
- (iii) Two Senior Ashramites who studied in Ashram School and grew up in the Auroville eco system
- (iv) Two invitees as nominated by the Secretary, AVF
- (v) An Officer of the Secretary's Office nominated by the Secretary

The Board further suggested that the officers of the Auroville Foundation along with their family members and the employees working in the Auroville Foundation Office along with their family members shall be extended all facilities at Auroville including but not limited to admission of their children in the Auroville Schools, usage of Auroville's sports and medical facilities on par with Aurovilians.

Item No. 65.17: Post facto approval for the expenditure incurred in connection with the President's Visit to Auroville.

The Board accorded its ex-post facto approval for expenditure incurred in connection with the Hon'ble President's visit to the Auroville Foundation.

Item No. 65.18: Approval and conformation about CSR Projects

The Board noted the progress made in obtaining CSR grants and also approved the purposes for which the CSR grants are being obtained.

Item No. 65.19: Discussions on Housing Policy 2023

The Board has gone into the Housing Policy-2023 framed by the Funds and Assets Management Committee (FAMC). It has noted that the proposed policy will do away with the evaluation and resale of houses. All newcomers will be required to pay a basic monthly contribution and will have also to cover the maintenance and housing administration cost. This contribution will over a short time be part of prosperity. Till now, newcomers with funds were given priority in house allotment, however, in the proposed regime everyone will be treated equally, and house allocation will be based on a defined set of criteria. The housing service was earlier heavily funded by BCC

and in the proposed regime, it will soon be able to support its own operations as well as having funds for new buildings. The Housing administration has been simplified, doing away with the Housing Board and in the proposed regime there will be only one level of administration viz. Housing Service. The simplified administration will be professional. SOP and management systems will take over from an erratic, personalized and complex administration.

The Board has approved the Housing Policy-2023.

Item No. 65.20: Donation Channeling Processes

The Board has gone into the Donation Channeling Process framed by the Funds and Assets Management Committee (FAMC) which provides for an online portal for registration of projects for which donations are to be raised, processes involved in disbursement of donated funds to the projects, furnishing quarterly reports to the donors and the checks to monitor the projects continuously. The Board has also formed a committee to monitor the donation channeling processes with the composition as under—

- (i) Secretary, AVF
- (ii) Any two among Dr. Nirima Oza, Shri Goutam Ghosal, and Prof. R.S. Sarraju, GB Members
- (iii) An Officer of the Secretary's Office nominated by the Secretary

The Board has approved the Donation Channeling Process and it also authorized FAMC to make amendments to the process as may be needed based on feedback and experience and such amendments should be informed to the GB immediately.

Item No. 65.21: Approval for Making Capital available for growth of Income Generating Units and start-ups

The Board has approved the proposal for making Capital available for to spur the growth of the economy of Auroville. It is proposed to provide support to the existing units and startups by providing loan from the capital available with the Auroville which are at present in the Fixed Deposit in banks. The Board has also noted that the loans will be processed by a Loan Management Team and on its recommendations, loans will be approved by a Loan Approval Team.

The Board has approved the proposal of the FAMC. The Board has also approved the composition of Loan Management Committee and Loan Approval Committee as under—

Loan Management Committee	(i) Prof. Goutam Ghosal, Member, GB (ii) Prof. R. S. Sarraju (iii) Secretary, AVF (iv) Two external experts from Banking and Fund Management background nominated by the Secretary, AVF
Loan Approval Committee	Two external experts from Banking and Fund Management background nominated by the Secretary, AVF

Item No. 65.22: Auroville Budget 2023-24 and long-term projections

The Board has noted the concept note prepared by the FAMC on the Auroville Budget 2023-24 and the long-term projections up to 2033-34.

LAND MATTERS

Item No. 65.23: Status on purchase/exchange of land

A Note on the status of purchase/exchange of land by Auroville Foundation was circulated to the Members during the meeting. The Board has noted that Ministry of Education vide their Office Memorandum dated 6.11.2023, gave their general approval for land consolidation and stated that approval of the Governing Board for such proposals would be considered final, provided that necessary financial prudence and due diligence is exercised by the GB as per the following checklist/principles:

- (i) No Govt. funds or grants in aid should have been used in procuring or improving the land being exchanged by the AF.
- (ii) All provisions of applicable statutes, at Central and State level, and safeguards against land alienation as also due process for securing clearances should be followed during land acquisition.
- (iii) The GB should be satisfied that (a) the acquisition is critical for realizing the Master Plan (b) the land being exchanged could not have been put to better use to further the objective of Mother's Charter and (c) the potential benefits outweigh the costs and adverse impacts of the acquisition

The Board was apprised of the elaborate procedures followed in acquiring lands and the institutional mechanisms in vetting land acquisition viz. Land Board and Land Committee prior to submitting proposals to the GB. The GB has noted that since July 2021, the Auroville Foundation has acquired following extent of land:

	Acres
City	78.65*
Green Belt	12.79
Total	91.44

* **Includes 18 acres** through gift deed (from Mrs. Shyamala Devi) and another **27.91 acres** from the State Govt. (poromboke land) through exchange. The Board has appreciated the efforts and desired that the remaining lands for the city which is only 69 acres be consolidated at the earliest.

Item No. 65.24: Earmarking of a land parcel for development of (i) Urban Haat; and (ii) Youth Project

The Governing Board has approved allotment of the following parcel of Auroville land at Irumbai Village lying outside the Master Plan area for the proposed setting up of Urban Haat—

IR 110/7A	-	1.94 acres	Patta No.11
IR 111/4A	-	1.27 acres	Patta No.11
Total 3.21 acres			

The GB has also approved the proposal to allot Auroville Land admeasuring **1.20 acres in R. S. No. 110, Irumbai Village** for the Start Up project ‘**Youth Project**’. The GB noted that for the Youth Project only land is given by the Auroville and the Youth Project team will raise the funds.

The GB Noted that the aforesaid land parcels are barren and not in use and lie outside the Master Plan area.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Item No. 65.25: Extension of timeline for implementation of the Master Plan

The Governing Board considered the proposal for seeking extension of time for implementation of the Master Plan for Auroville. The Auroville Master Plan (Perspective 2025) was notified on the 16th of August 2001. However, the systematic implementation of the Master Plan has been absent due to several reasons. Building the desired city in the next two years (before 2025) may not be possible and in view of this, the Board approved seeking extension of time for implementation of the approved Master plan **until 2035**.

Item No. 65.26: HUDCO Project – construction of 1000 dwelling units – status updation

The GB in its 64th meeting held on 09.08.2023 approved the proposal to build a 1000 bed residential complex to provide accommodation to volunteers and newcomers to spur the growth of Auroville.

It is now proposed to engage HUDCO as a Consultant for the project. HUDCO is a PSU under the Min. of Urban Development, and it is a Mini-ratna company. Auroville Foundation is proposing to avail Rs.100 Crore loan from HUDCO for the project. The agency has been involved in inspecting land parcels and providing inputs to Auroville for a long time in an informal manner.

The Board has noted that a proposal has been sent to the Ministry of Education to engage HUDCO as a Consultant for the project.

Item No. 65.27: Minor infrastructure projects undertaken—

- (i) **Construction of office block and toilet block at the residence of the Secretary**
- (ii) **Construction of compound wall for the residence of Dy. Secy.**

The Governing Board approved the minor infrastructure projects as above.

Item No. 65.28: Creation of 03 posts of DS to facilitate appointment of Officers to handle Administration, Accounts and Security related matters

The Governing Board considered the proposal. It appreciated the fact that the Foundation is thinly staffed and noted that the Foundation does not have sanctioned posts at senior levels to provide an effective assistance to the Secretary. The Foundation has been in the cusp of change in the recent past and posts at senior levels are functionally needed to speed up the development of Auroville as per the Master Plan.

The Governing Board approved to create three posts at DS level to (i) handle Security related matters; (ii) Accounts & Audit related matters and for (iii) General Administration of the Office of the Foundation. Appointment of officers at senior levels will facilitate delegation of work to these officers to provide sufficient time for the Secretary to concentrate on policy issues and development of the Auroville as per the Master Plan to make it a vibrant city with spiritual and economic wellbeing of all the residents.

During the meeting the proposed Recruitment Rules for the three posts have also been circulated to the Members. As per the proposed Recruitment Rules, the posts are to be filled up on deputation basis from among the regular Govt. servants.

The Governing Board approved the proposal.

Item No. 65.29: Consultants engaged since the last GB meeting and the duties assigned to them.

The Board noted the engagement of consultants/contractual employees since the last GB meeting. During the meeting, the details of Officers/consultants engaged, and the broad duties assigned to them have also been circulated to the Members.

Item No. 65.30: Appointment of an ICAS Officer to handle Accounts related matters and FAMC matters.

The Board considered the proposal and appreciated the functional justification for engaging an Officer from Accounts Service has already been brought out in Agenda Item No.65.28. The Governing Board therefore approved the proposal to avail the services of an officer from Indian Civil Accounts Service on deputation basis for few years to streamline the Accounts Department in the Office of the Secretary and to establish a robust centralized accounting system which is compliant with the laws of the land. The Board noted that this will enable timely completion of accounts and submission of annual report to the Ministry within the stipulated timelines. The Board has endorsed the approval of the Chairperson to engage Dr. Renuka Mani, ICAS (2013 batch) on deputation basis, while creation of posts is separately taken up with the Ministry of Education.

Item No. 65.31: Engagement of a Consultant to handle intelligence and security related issues

Keeping in view national security issues, the Board agreed that there needs to be a strong security mechanism to ensure that foreign nationals on Auroville visa adhere to the laid down visa conditions. It also agreed that feedback is needed at the time of recommendation of extension of or curtailment of visa for valid reasons. Accordingly, the Board has endorsed the approval of the Chairperson for the engagement of Shri Koshy Varghese, retired Assistant Director in the IB as a Consultant and the remuneration will be payable as per GoI norms.

Item No. 65.32: Proposal to engage retired CPWD Officer to handle infrastructure matters and ATDC matters

The Board has appreciated the functional need and approved the proposal to engage a retired CPWD Officer to handle infrastructure matters and ATDC related issues as a consultant on payment of remuneration as per GoI norms.

Item No. 65.33: Proposal to engage a retired Delhi Development Authority Officer for an initial period of six months to frame, finalize and notify Green Space Regulations.

The Board has noted that as per the Master Plan, Auroville has 1,260 acres of city area and 3,588 acres of green belt totaling about 20 sq. km. of area. For the vast tract of green belt, the Board appreciated the need for Regulations to ensure proper management and development. Accordingly, the Board approved the proposal to engage Dr. K. Srirangan, who retired as Commissioner (Planning) on 30.06.2023 as a consultant for an initial period of six months.

Item No. 65.34: Payment of increment and bonus to contractual/regular staff

The Board noted the grant of increment to the contractual staff and approved the same.

As regard to grant of bonus paid to the regular employees of the Foundation Office, the Board directed to review the same keeping in view latest instructions issued by the Government.

Item No. 65.35: Approval to pay the pending salary to the UDC staff (Retd.)

The Board approved the recommendations dated 8.11.2022 of the three-member committee consisting of Shri Aravindan Neelakandan & Dr. Nirima Oza, GB Members and Dr. G. Seetharaman, OSD to release five months' salary to Shri Swaminathan, UDC who was pre-maturely retired to cover the period till normal date of his retirement.

Item No. 65.36: Approval for modification to the Land Committee formed in the 61st Meeting of the GB

Keeping in view the request of the Ministry of Education, the Board has approved to exclude the representative of the Ministry from the Land Committee and accordingly, the revised composition of the Committee is as under—

S.No.	Name	Designation in the Committee
1.	Dr. Jayanti S. Ravi	Convenor and Secretary of AVF
2.	Prof. Goutam Ghosal	Member, GB
3.	Shri Aravindan Neelakandan	Member, GB
4.	Prof. R.S. Sarraju	Member, GB
5.	Dr. G. Seetharaman	OSD, AVF
6.	Land Expert/Valuer approved by the Government for Land Exchange	Member

ANY OTHER ITEM WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, GB

Item No. 65.37: Framing of Regulations to implement Township Area, GreenBelt Area and for the constitution of Town Development Council

This item was circulated during the meeting.

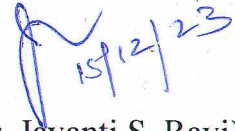
As per the Master Plan of Auroville, city area has an extent of 1,260 acres and green belt has an area of 3,588 acres. Considering the vast tract of land earmarked for city and green belt, the Governing Board agreed that Regulations are to be framed for controlling non-conforming/unplanned developments in Auroville Township area and Green Belt Area so that development is regulated only in terms of Master Plan (Perspective 2025).

The Board noted that Regulations will encourage the general and ‘green development’, which shall be characterized by prescribed Zoning & Development promotion Regulations including FAR, Maximum Ground Coverage, permissible land use and use activities to foster sustainable development & green living and to combat the threat of intensive non-conforming unauthorized developments in and around the universal town and envisaged green belt around the universal township area.

The Board agreed that the Regulations should also provide for creation of an organizational set up for implementing the provisions of Master Plan.

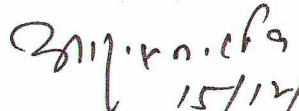
Accordingly, the Board gave its in-principle approval for the draft Regulations titled “Auroville Universal Township Area, Green Belt Area and constitution of Town Development Council Regulations” for taking up further with the Ministry of Education for their consideration.

The Meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Hon'ble. Shri R. N. Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu and Chairperson and other Members proposed by the Secretary.


15/12/23

(Dr. Jayanti S. Ravi)
Secretary
Auroville Foundation

//APPROVED//


15/12/2023
(R. N. Ravi)

Governor of Tamil Nadu
&
Chairperson
Auroville Foundation