

MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE TONGAN STAGE

Date: 19th February 2015

Time: 4:30 pm

Venue: Northcote College –staffroom

Attendance: 30 adults

: 20 students

Apology: None

Chairman: Tevita Kaufusi

The meeting opened with a prayer by Tofi'a Taufalele.

Tofi'a Taufalele (Northcote College) welcomed the audience on behalf of the Northcote College principal Vicki Barrie, staff and the students and expressed how excited we are to be the host school again this year for the Tongan stage , but more significantly that this year is the 40th anniversary of the Polyfest.

Tofi'a in his role handed over the administrative part of the meeting to Fane Ketu'u and Tevita Kaufusi. Tevita welcomed teachers, students and tutors (kau punake) to the meeting, and acknowledged the presence of the Mele Mataitonga the Schools Liaison for the Polyfest and Vicki Barrie the principal of Northcote College and the eagerness, zeal and hospitality shown by the host school in the past and present.

The Tongan stage coordinator (Fane Ketu'u) explained the purpose of this second meeting of the Tongan stage and outlined some of the essential things that all the schools should aware of and understand before the festival on the 18th – 21st of March.

These are the points were made:

- That this second meeting is more of an information sharing and to clarify some of the issues from the first meeting last year 21st of November 2014. It is too late to change anything now for this year's festival especially the specific rules for the faiva. Thus, the November meeting is so important for all the school representatives to attend, however, we will take note of your ideas and suggestions for the next meeting.
- There is no agenda for this meeting since all the information, minutes, specific rules and anything that you need to know are all in our website. The website is our main point of contact.
- The profile sheet is done on line now. The profile sheet and the composition (ta'anga) are due today according to our last minutes.

The reasons for requiring your profile sheet and composition in advance is so that the Events Company has enough time to organize the printing of the tickets for student performers, supporters, buses and vans for all stages in the festival. I need to start working early on the schedule for our Tongan stage programme when I know the two dances of your school etc.

As you all know I have a full time teaching job too and for me to work efficiently I need necessary items in advance. The judges require all compositions early so that they can start categorising and analysing them.

- At this stage I am trying hard to confirm the service and availability of all the judges from last year as agreed by in the last meeting.
- I want to conduct this meeting mostly in English for the benefit of the non-Tongan speakers, and in particular to those who are the Teacher in charge of the Tongan group in each school because in the past they had a genuine argument that they did not fully understand what was discussed in the meeting hence they were unable to convey the correct information to the parents and students.
- Speech contest topics were up on the website two weeks ago and this year's contest is sponsored by the Health Department.
- The Tongan Teacher festival committee was attempting to organise a workshop for the judges and the tutors before the end of school last year but it did not materialise due to time limitations and work related factors.
- When the first draft of the programme for the Tongan stage is out and if two schools are willing to swap the scheduled time they must write to the director of the Polyfest and the two principals sign the email. Mele Mataitonga will receive the letter from the director of the Polyfest first before she sends it to me.
- As mentioned previously that this year's festival is the 40th anniversary, it is my hope that it will be a successful one. We need to pray and hope that the weather will be fine during the Polyfest week because there is no money to supplement another delay of the festival like last year.
- I will be available after this meeting for anyone who would like to discuss a specific matter that you need to know or consult about in relation to the coming festival.

Ideas, Questions and recommendations from the audience:

1/Atelaite Puafolau (Mt.Roskill Grammer School)

- i/ The appointment of the judges should be done earlier because it was not fair last year to other schools that one of the judges was already tutoring a Tongan group before the appointment.
- ii/ The co-ed schools that have more than 60 performers should have the opportunity to perform a Maulu'ulu rather than performing Lakalaka every year.
- iii/ It was agreed beforehand that no school should use feathers as part of their costumes but there were some schools that did not uphold this rule.
- iv/ I suggest that we need to look at the possibility of changing the members of the Tongan Teachers festival stage committee perhaps every 4 years and have some members from the Tongan wider community.

Fanes' reply to number iv) – The committee members have to be teachers since they are working under or governed by the Principals Trustee (the governing body for the whole festival- members are all school principals).

Tevita Kaufusi – The selection of the committee members is by zone, one member from southern zone, etc, plus the host school teacher representative.

Fane replied to numbers i, ii and iii, since number ii) is a recommendation it will go into the November meeting agenda and please attend the meeting, this is where we change the specific rules. Issue number iii), yes there were some schools that did not obey this rule but what can you do before the students perform on stage, tell them off and dampen their zeal to engage in the faiva. It comes back to us teachers to inform and stipulate to our group not to use feathers as part of our costumes. We spent hours cleaning up the ground since the feathers stuck into grass. It is a requirement by the Auckland council to leave the ground in perfect condition after the Polyfest . We spent three thousand dollars for rubbish and cleaning up in our area last year.

2/ Fane asked Richard Smythe to explain the marking system and how the score papers are transferred from the judges to him.

After the judges filled in their score papers all of the papers are put in a plastic manila folder then it is taken to the office where Richard and a teacher from the host school are working to collect and categorise all the scores in the computer. Only the two of them are allowed to touch the computer. If a school breaks any of the specific rules only Richard is authorised to deduct the marks. Unfortunately, Wesley College was the only school last year who lost marks for not following the entrance rule on to the stage.

3/ Maloni Tutu'ila (Punake for Otahuhu College)

i/ It was passed in the meeting last year that the Tongan stage manager was to negotiate with the appropriate people to remove the sound system (speakers) from the ground where schools have more than 120 students performing. Also the TV New Zealand camera people and other organisations are working around the same area and they are too close up to the performance area. Our school had only one micro phone last year, could we please have three or four micro phones this year.

Fane's reply- I had conveyed this matter to the Board but TV NZ has the exclusive right to be there because they are under a contract to film the performances.

ii/ The security people should do their job properly not just tell the spectators to move back from the demarcation mark because they will move up again. They need to be told firmly or usher them right to the back row.

4/Recommendation from Sione Halafihi - we want to work together with TVNZ for the success of the polyfest , therefore the stage co-ordinator needs to negotiate again with TVNZ about Maloni's concern.

5/ Sesilia Tatu'ila Pusiaki(Punake for Northcote College)

There should be a meeting soon organised by the Tongan festival committee between the kau Punake (tutors) and the judges about the marking schedule of the Tongan stage. The main purpose is to clarify some of the main points in the marking schedule especially the five

objectives (ta'anga, hiva, haka, maaу and teunga). For instance, Ta'anga (poetry) is one of the objectives, and it is worth 20 marks, 10 marks for (kakano 'o e Ta'anga- poetry is relevant to the selected theme of the year) and 10 marks for (lea 'o e ta'anga- using imageries and metaphors for examples in the context of the theme).

6/ Soane Tatu'ila Pusiaki (Punake for Northcote College)

There is a great need for a dialogue or forum between the kau punake and the judges so that judges explain clearly especially to the young tutors the do's and don't's in the faiva. It is important for the young tutors coming up to learn the knowledge and skills from the older tutors like Maloni.

7/Decision: The committee and the stage coordination is to organise the meeting for Friday next week (12/3) depending on the availability of at least one of the judges.

8/ 'Ofa 'Afungia (St.Peter College) suggested to delay the due date for the ta'anga submission.

9/ Decision: Next Monday (23/2/15) is the last day for profile sheet and ta'anga to be submitted for obvious reasons as expounded in bullet point number 3 above.

10/ Maloni recommended to the committee to find time in the final day of the festival perhaps during the breaks to have the de-briefing from the judges.

11/ Discussion: Fane said that there is no break during the programme this year and for the last three years the de-briefing was done by filling in the de-briefing form and sending it back to the committee and in this way we avoided a lot of issues and personal confrontation.

12/ Alisi Tatafu acknowledged the support and assistance of the ex-students to the faiva of their former school. She also re-emphasized the important roles that the student cultural leaders play on the day of the festival. The good behaviour and success of the group in their performances depend on their leadership.

13/ There was a question from the floor about the judges finished marking papers to be given back to each school on Saturday the final day of the festival.

Discussion: The names of the judges have to be protected for legal reasons. Their names have to be covered before photocopying the marking papers to be distributed. That's why there is a delay of sending the papers to each school.

14/The meeting was closed with a prayer by Saia Akau'ola at 6.45pm.

15/ Food was served after the prayer.

Minutes recorded by Tofi'a Taufalele

