

Bengali Association of Greater Birmingham (BAGB) GBM meeting minutes

Date: August 2, 2026

Purpose: Reconstitution of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee following resignations.

Opening remarks

Rakhi Mukherjee welcomed all members and called the General Body Meeting to order. She explained that the meeting had been convened after the resignation of the Executive Committee and upon the request of more than twenty-five percent of the membership in accordance with the BAGB bylaws. She thanked the founding and senior members **Dipankar Ghosh, Pran Datta and Bidhan Roy who agreed to assist in coordinating the meeting** and emphasized that the purpose of the meeting was to restore the normal functioning of the Association before the upcoming Durga Puja.

The General Body was informed that the Executive Committee had resigned, creating an immediate need to elect new leadership. Members had reached out to founding members Dipankar Ghosh and Partha Da for guidance. It was also noted that resignations from Sati Nath and Purba Mukherjee from the Board of Directors required the General Body to reconstitute the Board before electing a new Executive Committee.

Opening Remarks by Dipankar Ghosh

Dipankar Ghosh briefly reviewed the history of BAGB and explained that the Association had been established as a nonprofit organization through the efforts of volunteers. He reminded members that leadership changes over time, but the Association belongs to the community rather than any individual. He stated that the future of BAGB should remain the highest priority. He also explained that at least fifty percent of the full membership (thirty-five members out of 68 voting members) was required to conduct the Board election and that BAGB carries organizational insurance for its official activities. **38 voting members were present at the Governing body.**

Discussion on Election Procedure

Members discussed the nomination process. It was agreed that every nominee should be nominated and seconded by members of the General Body and should personally accept the nomination before being placed on the ballot. It was further discussed that Board and Executive Committee elections are best conducted during an in-person General Body Meeting so that all eligible members have an opportunity to participate.

Board of Directors Election

Members noted that the Association needed to elect three Board members. Nominations were opened from the floor. **Sami Banerjee nominated Rakhi Mukherjee. Rudra**

nominated Sami Banerjee. Dipankar Ghosh was also nominated from the floor as he was the one of the founding members and best person to guide through this crisis period. Following voting by the General Body, Rakhi Mukherjee and Dipankar Ghosh received all votes, Sami Banerjee received one less as there was one abstention from Pia Sen. **The General Body confirmed the new Board of Directors as Dipankar Ghosh, Rakhi Mukherjee, and Sami Banerjee.**

Election of Executive Committee

After the Board was constituted, nominations for the Executive Committee were opened.

President: Tanima Chatterjee was nominated and elected with 36 votes and one abstention from Pia sen.

Secretary: Prasanta Das accepted nomination and was elected (36votes) and one abstention from Pia sen.

Treasurer: Amarshi Mukherjee was nominated and elected with one abstention (36votes).

Food Secretary: Sanjay Sarkar was nominated and elected with 36 votes and one abstention.

Cultural Secretary: Multiple members including Pia Sen and Rumita Roy Choudhury were nominated but several nominees declined. Sanchita Chandra was subsequently nominated from the floor and elected unanimously with 37 votes..

Communication Secretary: Abhijit Roychoudhury was nominated, seconded and elected unanimously with 37 votes.

Special Events Secretary: Shreyashee Ghosh was nominated but was not present to accept. After discussion regarding the responsibilities of the office, members agreed to keep the position vacant temporarily and fill it later through an electronic voting process.

During the meeting another member asked the purpose of the Board of Directors. Dipankar Ghosh explained that the Board exists to ensure that the day-to-day affairs of the Association continue according to the bylaws and to provide oversight during periods of transition. Bidhan Da commented that the Board is especially important during organizational crises. Members also discussed that legal matters involving the Association would generally be handled through the Board.

Transition of the Meeting

Upon the successful completion of the election process, Ms. Rakhi Mukherjee formally congratulated the newly elected Board of Directors and Executive Committee. She then facilitated the transition by inviting the newly elected Executive Committee to come to the stage. She requested the new Executive Committee to present its immediate plans and proposed approach for organizing the upcoming Durga Puja, including the priorities.

Tanima thanked Dipankar Ghosh, Partha Da, Bidhan Da, and all the members for organizing the General Body Meeting and for their continued support. She stated that, as Durga Puja is approaching, we must start the preparations for it that should be our priority. As many members had expressed a desire to review the current Durga Puja process, including the appointment of the priest. She requested the Board of Directors' permission to conduct an online vote so that the decision would reflect the democratic opinion of the General Body.

During the discussion, Bidhan Da asked whether the Executive Committee had a backup plan in favor of a new priest. Dipankar Ghosh and Pia also emphasized the importance of having an alternative plan in place. Prasanta Das, Secretary, responded that the Executive Committee had already initiated discussions with priests, and member Rajesh had also contacted a prospective priest. Prasanta Das added that the priority was to conduct a fair and neutral vote to determine the preference of the majority. The Board of Directors agreed and authorized the Executive Committee to proceed with the online voting process.

Amarshi Mukherjee before taking the charge tried to be clear about all financial records, bank accounts, tax documents, and transaction history. And asked Sabuj (previous treasurer) about all the information. Sabuj mentioned he was not added to the bank account, and the account was opened in Regions bank this year and all money got transferred from previous account. Members discussed the Regions Bank account, historical Alabama Credit Union account, Venmo account, check-signing authority, and transfer of passwords and records. It was noted that checks require two authorized signatures. Dipankar da tried to tell the history of the account. Then Pia di took over talking little about how they used to follow.

The President and Treasurer and one BOD member were tasked with coordinating the transfer of all banking credentials, tax documents, and financial records from previous office bearers. Till now Sanjeev Choudhury only has access to the bank account and Venmo account. Sanjeev's phone number is linked to the BAGB venmo account.

Members discussed obtaining an official BAGB phone number, establishing a permanent organizational mailing address, updating the website, improving the membership email distribution list, ensuring communication reaches both spouses where applicable, and maintaining official organizational records independent of personal accounts. Mayank offered assistance regarding establishment of an official physical address.

Members noted that the venue for the upcoming Durga Puja had not yet been confirmed. The Executive Committee agreed to contact Irondale Middle School regarding venue availability asap.

Sanchita Chandra encouraged all members to put past disagreements behind them and work together with renewed energy for the benefit of BAGB. She emphasized the importance of unity, transparency, mutual respect, and volunteerism in building a stronger community. Shamik thanked all volunteers for their willingness to serve and reminded members that Executive Committee positions are voluntary. He requested the continued support and cooperation of the membership, without unnecessary conflicts or legal threats.

Rudra suggested that the term "BAGB Leadership" used in official communications be reconsidered. He emphasized that BAGB is a volunteer organization and that no individual should be viewed as a leader above others. He stated that the BOD and the EC are equal in their commitment to serving the Association and its members, and that all officers are volunteers working together for the benefit of the community. Sami di seconded it.

Action Items

- Contact Irondale Middle School regarding venue.
- Complete transfer of bank accounts, Venmo, passwords, and tax records.
- Update official phone number, website, mailing list, and email.
- Establish a permanent BAGB mailing address.
- Fill the Special Events Secretary position through a electronic process.
- Continue preparations for Durga Puja.

Rumita Roy Chowdhury raised concern that she had been receiving only selective BAGB emails and not all official communications. She requested that this issue be addressed so that all members receive the same emails. New EC acknowledged the concern and assured the General Body that they would review the mailing list and make every effort to ensure that this does not happen again.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the General Body Meeting was adjourned. The meeting concluded with applause from the members.