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ISKCON GOVERNING BODY COMMISSION SOCIETY

Registration Number S/74662 under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961

P.O. Shree Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia, West Bengal 741313

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

SRI MAYAPUR DHAM, FEBRUARY 12 – 23, 2009

Section 100: **APPOINTMENTS**

101. **GBC Officers and Members**

RESOLVED:

1. His Holiness Romapada Swami is elected GBC Chairman.

2. His Grace Madhu Sevita Das is elected First Vice-Chairman.

3. His Grace Hrdaya Caitanya Das is elected Second Vice-Chairman.

4. His Holiness Bhakti Purusottama Swami is elected GBC Secretary.

5. His Holiness Kavicandra Swami is elected Special Duty Officer.

6. His Grace Hrdaya Caitanya Das is appointed as Full GBC member.

7. His Grace Tamohara Das is appointed as Acting GBC member.

8. Her Grace Dina Sharana Dasi is appointed as Assistant GBC member.

9. His Grace Candrasekhara Acarya Das continues as Candidate GBC member.

10. His Grace Kaunteya Das continues as Candidate GBC member.

11. His Grace Chaitanya Chandra Charan Das is appointed as Candidate GBC member.

12. The resignation of His Holiness Paramgati Swami as GBC member is accepted.

102. **Sannyasa Waiting List**

RESOLVED:

That the following are the candidates for sannyasa for 2009:

Abhaya Das 2-year list

Acala Das 2-year list

Brhat Mrdanga Das this year

Carudesna Das 2-year list

Gaurahari Das 3-year list

Hrsikesa Das 2-year list

Jagat-Caksur Das this year

Jaya Govinda Das this year

Lilasuka Das 5-year list

Mahadyuti Das 3-year list

Makhanlal Das 1-year list

Nitai Caitanya Das 1-year list

Shanto Swami authorized to become an ISKCON sannyasi

Sarvaisvarya Das this year

Siddhartha Das 1-year list

Vasudeva Das this year

Yadunandana Das this year

103. **Reaffirmation of Ministries and Standing Committees**

[Action Order]

Ministries and Standing Committees and their membership assignments proposed for 2009-2010:

Ministry of Communications Minister – Anuttama Das

Ministry of Health and Welfare Minister – Prahladananda Swami

Congregational Development Ministry Minister – Jayapataka Swami

Vaisnavi Ministry Interim Committee: Malati Dasi, Prasanta Dasi, Laxmimoni Dasi, Dina Sharana Dasi

ISKCON Youth Ministry Minister – Manu Das

Ministry of Sannyasa Services Minister – Prahladananda Swami

Sannyasa Standing Committee: Hrdaya Caitanya Das, Sivarama Swami, Guru Prasad Swami, A.C. Bhaktivaibhava Swami, Bhakti Caitanya Swami, Prahladananda Swami

ISKCON Ministry of Deity Worship Minister – Nrsimha Kavaca Das

Ministry of Book Distribution Minister – Vijaya Das

Ministry of Cow Protection and Agriculture Minister – Balabhadra Das

Ministry of Padayatra Minister – Lokanath Swami

Ministry of Educational Development Minister – Sesa Das. Members: Laxmimoni Dasi, Saunaka Rsi Das, Yadunandana Das, Radhika Raman Das

Sastric Advisory Council Purnacandra Goswami (Chairman), Gopiparanadhana Das, Drutakarma Das, Urmila Dasi, Mukunda Datta Das

Ministry of Justice Minister – Sesa Das

ISKCON Property Office Current GBC Executive Committee, Bhaktarupa Das (Member-Secretary)

ISKCON Central Office of Child Protection Director – Tamohara Das

GBC Vaisnava Calendar Committee Bhanu Swami, Gopalapriya Das, Sadasivananda Das, Bhaktarupa Das (Convener)

BBT Construction Grant Allocation Committee (BBTCG) Ramai Swami, Bhanu Swami, Devamrita Swami, current GBC Chairman, Hrdaya Caitanya Das (Convener)

Guru Services Committee Prahladananda Swami (Chairman), Anuttama Das, Visakha Dasi, Virabahu Das, Ravindra Svarupa Das, Bhakti Caitanya Swami

GBC Appointment Committee Praghosa Das, Madhu Sevita Das, Prahladananda Swami, Bhakti Vijnana Goswami, Bhakti Caitanya Swami, Anuttama Das, Laxmimoni Dasi, Sivarama Swami

BI Grant Allocation Committee Devamrita Swami, Bhakti Vijnana Goswami, Sesa Das, Hanuman Das

BBT-GBC Relations Committee Madhu Sevita Das, Svavas Das, Gopal Krsna Goswami, Bhima Das, Satyanarayana Das, Hanuman Das, Sivarama Swami, Hrdaya Caitanya Das, Brahma Muhurta Das, Naresvara Das, Badrinarayan Das (Convener), Jayadvaita Swami, Praghosa Das, current GBC Chairman

Section 200: **FINANCE**

201. **GBC Budget**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

The GBC budget for 2009/2010 is (in INR):

GBC Annual General Meeting	2,75,000
Executive Committee Travel	2,00,000
Emergencies	1,50,000
GBC Meeting Facilities	1,13,000
GBC EC Secretariat	3,00,000

ISKCON Resolve	3,50,000
ISKCON Database	1,12,500
Health & Welfare Magazine	50,000
Dandavats	2,50,000
Cow Protection Ministry	2,50,000
Deity Worship Ministry	4,00,000
Ministry of Educational Development	2,50,000
GBC Corresponding Secretary	3,00,000
GBC Deputy Travel	55,000
Vaisnavi Ministry	75,000
Vaisnava Calendar Web Site	58,750
Mayapur GBC Office	1,00,000
GBC Archives	60,000
Deputies Meetings Projector	70,000
Total:	RS 34,19,250

202. **Appointment of Auditor**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

Sri A. K. Shah, F.C.A., Chartered Accountant, of 125, Netaji Subhash Road, Room No. 45, Kolkata 700 001, is appointed as statutory auditor for the year 2007-2008.

Section 300: **INTERNAL**

301. **Extra Meeting 2009**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

An extra meeting for 2009 will be held at Juhu, Mumbai, starting on the morning of Monday, October 12, and ending on the evening of Friday, October 16.

302. **Annual General Meeting 2010**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

The Annual General Meeting for 2010 will start on the 6th of February and end on the 17th of February.

303. **Relocation of New Vrajamandala**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

The GBC body authorizes the Euro GBC Body in conjunction with the Spanish National Council to make decisions regarding the future of the New Vrajamandala project. If the Euro GBC Body and the Spanish National Council deem it necessary, they may, in consultation with the Property Trustees, decide to relocate Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Govindacandra, Sri Sri Gaura Nitai, and Sri Sri Laksmi Nrsimhadeva.

304. **International Development Steering Committee**

[Action Order]

Whereas Resolution 2007/315 encourages the establishment of an Office of International Fundraising with the mandate to collect funds to support GBC projects, including:

- International projects
- Emergency expenses
- Education and training programs
- Strategic planning
- GBC Body expenditure

Whereas, in pursuance of this resolution, on 22 October 2008, the GBC Executive Committee and a number of GBCs met with several members of the Sri Sri Radha Rasabihari Steering Committee of ISKCON Juhu and understood the benefits of establishing a similar committee to fund ISKCON's international organizational structure as well as its broad-based preaching projects;

RESOLVED:

The GBC establishes an International Steering Committee. The committee will be chaired by D.B Gupta, who, with the GBC members and others who are invited, will define the goals of the International Steering Committee, its structure, and its mission statement.

Initial members will include the GBC EC (whoever they may be during any given year), Ramai Swami, Bhakti Charu Swami, Bhakti Vijnana Goswami, Gopal Krsna Goswami, Revati Raman Das, Ambarisa Das, and Devakinandan Das.

305. **Female Diksa Gurus**

[Action Order]

Whereas there is a factual need for more diksa-gurus in ISKCON to accommodate the worldwide preaching;

Whereas there are mature female preachers qualified to take on diksa-guru responsibilities;

Whereas there are a number of such qualified women who already have siksa disciples;

Whereas the GBC Body previously issued the following statement in 2005, which has now been given further consideration:

425. Female Diksa Guru

The GBC accepts the basic philosophical conclusion presented in the SAC's Female Diksa Guru Paper, i.e. that a mature, qualified, female devotee may accept the role of an initiating spiritual master. The implementation thereof is pending further GBC consideration.

RESOLVED:

1. That resolution 425/2005 – Female Diksa Guru is amended to read as follows:

The GBC accepts the philosophical conclusion presented in the SAC's Female Diksa Guru Paper that a mature, qualified, female devotee may accept the role of an initiating spiritual master.

2. The GBC Body authorizes local area committees to put forward for approval as initiating guru any devotee in their area, male or female, who is qualified according to existing GBC Law.

306. **Rescinding Resolution 2008/311**

[Action Order]

RESOLVED:

That the GBC endorses the BBT plan to create a website to address concerns arising from certain statements within Srila Prabhupada's books.

Accordingly, Resolution 311 of 2008 is hereby rescinded.

307. **BI Standing Committee**

[Action Order]

Whereas the GBC has the responsibility to give clear vision, leadership and oversight in regards to scientific preaching and the Bhaktivedanta Institute;

Whereas funds allocated from the BBT to the Bhaktivedanta Institute need to be supervised;

RESOLVED:

The formation of the BI Standing Committee with the following mandate:
To research Srila Prabhupada's instructions on scientific preaching, and, in consultation with devotees presently engaged in the field, come up with a clear vision for the future of scientific preaching and the Bhaktivedanta Institute. The committee will report to the GBC and the BBT about its progress by the next GBC AGM.
According to that vision, to provide unified leadership to scientific preaching in ISKCON.
To formulate systems for receipt of applications, allocation of funds received from the BBT, and reporting and assessment from individuals and projects that have received such funds.
Individual committee members will not take part in decisions involving projects located in their GBC zones.

The GBC appoints Devamrita Swami, Sesa Das, Bhakti Vijnana Goswami and Hanuman Das as members of the BI Standing Committee.

308. **Ministry of Fund Development**

[Action Order]

Whereas there is a need to increase fundraising and assist fundraisers around the world;

Whereas the Indian RGB and Global Development Committee have recommended that Devakinandan Das become the ISKCON Fund Development Minister;

Whereas Devakinandan Das has shown over many years that he is experienced and expert in the area of Fund Development;

Whereas Devakinandan Das works well with the GBC Body and others in his field;

RESOLVED:

1. The formation of the ISKCON Ministry of Fund Development, with the following mandate:
To encourage and inspire ISKCON centers to fully realize the potential for fund development in their areas
To train ISKCON devotees in the art of successful fund development
To promote a culture of unlimited potential and abundance in fulfilling the mission of Srila Prabhupada.
2. Devakinandan Das is appointed Minister of Fund Development.

309. **CPO Review Panel**

[Action Order]

Whereas the original mission of the Child Protection Office was an important and well thought-out effort, and after ten years of operation the Office has gained additional perspectives on the legal and practical complexities involved;

Whereas the work of the Child Protection Office has far-reaching consequences for the victims, perpetrators, and ISKCON as a whole;

Whereas ISKCON values fair processes and procedures;

Whereas the Child Protection Office has proposed a review process that will assess the policies and procedures of their office;

Whereas executive review of the Child Protection Office is a function of the GBC;

RESOLVED:

That the GBC hereby creates a GBC Review Panel of the CPO comprised of three neutral persons with interest or experience with child protection issues. The members of this panel are to be appointed by the GBC Executive Committee. Upon completion of the current internal review being conducted by the CPO, or in conjunction with it, the Review Panel shall review the revised policies and procedures of the CPO and suggest any amendments helpful in achieving the objectives of the CPO.

The Review Panel will periodically, at the invitation of the GBC Executive Committee, review the CPO's compliance with its own policies and procedures, as well as propose or review additional revisions, and will report its conclusions to the CPO Director and GBC Executive Committee.

The Review Panel shall not represent or advocate for any person or party, get involved in legal issues or formal complaints, or rule on the validity of already issued decisions.

All information shared with the Review Panel remains strictly confidential. After each review, the Review Panel will make a recommendation regarding the length of time until the next review, which should be within three to five years.

310. **GBC Participation in Farm Projects**

[Guideline]

Whereas ISKCON farms and farmers often struggle to make their operations viable;

Whereas ISKCON farms, cow protectors, farmers, and those engaged in rural development often feel unsupported by ISKCON management;

Whereas the successful establishment of varnasrama and rural life was a key concern of Srila Prabhupada;

Whereas the Vedic system is supportive of agricultural and rural communities;

Whereas there has been a global decline in the general status of farm projects;

Whereas ISKCON farm projects in which GBC members put energy are often successful;

RESOLVED:

That all GBC members, as far as possible, commit themselves to spend 10% of their time helping to develop farm projects:
by giving 10% of their classes on the importance of farm development and cow protection
and/or by spending 10% of their time on a farm or farms to encourage the farm devotees

311. **Purchasing from ISKCON Farms and Farmers**

[Guideline]

Whereas ISKCON farms and farmers often struggle to make their operations viable;

Whereas the majority of temples and centers do not buy produce from their local farm, farmers, or goshalla;

Whereas in times of global economic crises, by not buying from our local farms there is danger of high prices and food shortage due to dependence on outside sources which are in turn dependent on oil-consuming transport companies;

Whereas other religious groups successfully purchase from their own projects thereby presenting an ecologically-friendly, self-sufficient lifestyle to the world;

Whereas it was Srila Prabhupada's desire that we, ISKCON, present an ecologically-friendly, self-sufficient lifestyle to the world – independent from outside help;

Whereas the Vedic system was supportive of agricultural and rural communities;

Whereas there has been a decline in the development of ISKCON farms and most remaining farms are struggling;

RESOLVED:

That all ISKCON Deity kitchens, temples, restaurants, and relevant projects should purchase, wherever possible, produce, flowers, and milk products from ISKCON farms in their local region up to a ceiling of their current purchases, provided they are of reasonable quality and can be afforded.

Where practical, the ISKCON temples, restaurants, or projects concerned will explore the possibility of purchasing land and making it available to farmers to cultivate. Additionally, temples should make available, at a reasonable cost, space for farm produce to be sold.

312. **Reporting Book Distribution Scores**

[Action Order]

Whereas Srila Prabhupada was always very eager to receive the book distribution scores from around the world;

Whereas book distributors also find great inspiration in knowing the scores of other book distributors around the world;

Whereas many temples do not report or irregularly report their book distribution scores;

Whereas new emphasis needs to be put on book distribution as one of the main means to spread Krishna consciousness;

Whereas it is one of the main responsibilities of a Zonal Secretary to make sure that books are distributed as much as possible in his or her zone;

Whereas the World Sankirtan Newsletter will be posted monthly on the GBC conference;

RESOLVED:

That each GBC member reviews the World Sankirtan Newsletter scores every month and ensures that the temples they are responsible for are (a) listed properly, (b) reporting regularly, and (c) reporting accurately.

They should make their best effort to send in any corrections within two weeks of each posting.

313. **Restriction of Participation in ISKCON**

[ISKCON Law]

Whereas straightforward procedures are required in the laws of ISKCON whereby ISKCON authorities can, should the need arise, restrict particular individuals from participating in ISKCON;

RESOLVED:

The following replaces Law Book Sections 5.6.2.5.6.7 “Discipline and Conduct of Temple Devotees, 5.6.2.5.6.8 “ Removal of a Devotee from a Temple, 5.6.2.5.7.2 “ Suspension of Congregational

Members, and the entire Section 8.4 " Disciplinary Remedial Measures, except for Subsection 8.4.5 " Expulsion (Excommunication) " Paragraph 1 only, and Subsection 8.4.9 " Grievances Regarding Management:

Reasons for Discipline
Persons participating in ISKCON's activities, regardless of ashram, occupation, initiation status or previous history, may have their participation restricted when their continued association is likely to disturb the peaceful conduct of the affairs of ISKCON. Activities creating such a disturbance are to be defined and determined at the ecclesiastical discretion of the GBC, and may include, but are not limited to:

Misconduct and Failure to Follow Authority

1. Wilful violation of GBC resolutions.
2. Vilification of ISKCON, the GBC Body, or other ISKCON authorities.
3. Misconduct (breaking of service agreements, physical assault except in self-defense, improper relationships with the opposite sex, improper sexual behavior, abusive behavior and quarrelling with devotees, improper dealings with the external society, and so on.)
4. Habitually or knowingly making false charges and accusations or other vaisnava-aparadhas.
5. Serious interference in the guru and disciple relationship.
6. Duplicitous or untruthful dealings (giving false promises to devotees, lying to spiritual authorities, and other serious prevarications).
7. Acts that endanger ISKCON assets and the preaching mission.

Depending on the severity of any improper activity, corrective steps may consist of informal discussions, written warnings or censures, disciplinary measures such as placing the offending participant on probation or suspension, or permanent prohibitions against future participation, or any other measures deemed appropriate to the situation by the GBC.

Disciplining Authority
The GBC Body, the GBC Executive Committee, any Regional Governing Body, Divisional Council, National Council, Zonal Secretary, or local affiliate authority which includes the local temple executive or board or other authorized persons may decide to restrict anyone from participating in ISKCON activities under their jurisdiction.

Censure
Censure is a reprimand aimed at reformation of a person participating in ISKCON's activities and prevention of further offending acts. It is a preliminary step that may lead to probation or suspension. Censure may serve as a condition precedent to other forms of religious discipline.

When ordering the censure, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person the specific actions that were irresponsible, inappropriate, or in violation of ISKCON Law and why they were judged so.

Probation
Probation applies when the disciplining authority has determined there have been serious or repetitive breaches. It is an opportunity for a person facing disciplinary action to rectify his or her situation and regain their status as a participant in good standing. When ordering the probation, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person:

- the specific breaches and why they were judged so.

- the specific program of rectification.
- the specific prerequisites for restoration, if any.
- the time period of the probation, which shall be no longer than one year.

At the end of the period of probation, the disciplining authority must decide one of the following:

- The participant is rectified and is no longer on probation.
- A determination of further probation under the same or modified conditions is required to complete the rectification process.
- The person cannot be rectified within a reasonable period of time and must be suspended from participating in or permanently disassociated from the society's activities under the jurisdiction of the disciplining authority, as per the terms given below.

Suspension Pending Investigation
When there is substantial reason to believe that a person participating in ISKCON's activities has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law and the person's continued participation will be injurious to the properties, good name, physical assets, or other resources of the society, or if there are serious allegations of impropriety requiring investigation, then a participant shall be suspended pending investigation.

Suspension pending investigation is to separate a person from ISKCON activities so that a thorough investigation of allegations may be conducted and the suitability of the person to participate is determined.

The disciplining body must conduct an immediate investigation so as to minimize disruption. After completion of the investigation, the body shall make a determination as to the truth of the allegations and the future course of action as per one of the following:
The suspension shall be revoked with no further restriction on participation.
There shall be a probationary period with a program of rectification as described under probation above.
He or she shall be suspended from participating in or permanently banished from the society's activities under the jurisdiction of the disciplining authority as per the terms given below.

Suspension
When there has been a determination that a person has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law such that the person's continued participation in the activities of ISKCON is likely to damage the good name, reputation, or other resources of the society, or significantly violates the teachings and precepts of Srila Prabhupada and Krishna consciousness, as determined by the GBC, but there is the possibility that the person may eventually be rectified, then the person may be suspended from participating in all activities of the society under the jurisdiction of the disciplining authority.

When ordering the suspension, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person:

- the specific breaches and the grounds or bases thereof
- the specific prerequisites for restoration

Suspension of the right to participate is not limited by time, but shall remain in effect until specifically withdrawn by the disciplining or any higher authority.

Excommunication
When there has been a determination that a person has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law such that the person's continued participation in the activities of ISKCON is likely to damage the good name, reputation, or other resources of the society, or significantly violates the teachings of Srila Prabhupada and Krishna consciouness, as determined by the GBC, and there is little possibility that the person may eventually be rectified, then the person may be permanently prohibited from participating in the activities of the society under the jurisdiction of the disciplining authority. When ordering the excommunication, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person the specific breaches and the grounds or reasons thereof.

If the GBC Body determines that a person shall be excommunicated from the activities of the entire society then the GBC Secretary shall issue a Notice of Non-participation, barring the former participant from participation in all ISKCON activities.

Appeals
If an ISKCON participant has his/her participation restricted by the action of a local affiliate's executive or board then he/she may appeal to the local Divisional or National Council, or, if one does not exist, to the local Zonal Secretary.

If an ISKCON participant has his/her participation restricted by the action of a Zonal Secretary or Divisional or National Council, he/she shall have the right of appeal to the Regional Governing Body (if one exists in the area) or the GBC Body (if there is no Regional Governing Body in the area).

If he or she has his/her participation restricted by the action of a Regional Governing Body, he/she shall have the right of appeal to the GBC Body.

If he or she has his/her participation restricted by the action of the GBC Executive Committee, he/she shall have the right of appeal to the GBC Body.

Any disciplinary action taken against an ISKCON participant by any of the above-mentioned entities shall stand unless and until it is overruled by a higher body.

314. **Tenure and Participation of Sannyasis**

[ISKCON Law]

Whereas the Law Book Committee has been revising laws relating to discipline of all participants within ISKCON;

Whereas in the process of analyzing the law relating to reinstatement procedures for a devotee who has fallen from his sannyasa vows, it was decided that a revision was required;

Whereas Law Book Section 9.1.2.3 "Reinstatement Procedures for a Devotee Who Has Fallen From His Sannyasa Vows" reads as follows:

> *If a sannyasi frequently falls down or goes away for a prolonged time from ISKCON but later returns, the following procedure is to be followed:*
>
> *A sannyasi who returns should not wear the sannyasi dhoti, but later he may also be re-instated. Exactly when these procedures should be used will have to be judged according to individual circumstances. (81)*

Anyone abandoning the sannyasa-asrama to take up the grhastha-asrama shall immediately relinquish his sannyasa name and title and resume his name at first initiation.

RESOLVED:

That Law Book Section 9.1.2.3 " Reinstatement Procedures for a Devotee who has fallen from his Sannyasa Vows is replaced by the following:

If an ISKCON sannyasi is unable to maintain his lifelong commitment to renunciation he should communicate, in writing, his decision to leave the sannyasa-asrama to the Sannyasa Minister or to the GBC Executive Committee.

Anyone who has abandoned the vows of the sannyasa-asrama, whether as per the procedure described above or otherwise, is required to also immediately relinquish the sannyasa dress and sannyasa name and title and resume the name accepted at first initiation. He should not again accept sannyasa dress or refer to himself by his sannyasa name and title without following the proper procedures for approval of sannyasa.

315. **Discipline of Devotees Approved to act as Initiating Gurus**

[ISKCON Law]

Whereas in 2007 the GBC Body passed resolution 307 "Tenure & Discipline of Local ISKCON Officials, a systematic and cohesive rewrite of ISKCON Law Section 5.5 as applicable to local ISKCON officials. Law Section 5.5, however, was originally written to be applicable to all ISKCON leaders, defined in Law Section 5.1 as All members of the GBC, initiating gurus, ministers, sannyasis, Regional Secretaries, Temple Presidents, Temple Vice-presidents, Members of a Temple's Board of Directors, Project Leaders (for projects such as ISCOWP, BI, etc.), and other ISKCON Leaders [sic];

Whereas procedures are also required for discipline of approved initiating gurus that are as far as possible consistent with the terms of 2007/307 mentioned above;

RESOLVED:

The following replaces Law Book Sections 6.4.5 "Sanctioning of Gurus by the GBC and 6.4.6 " Renunciation of Guru Responsibilities:

Resignation
If a devotee previously approved to act as an initiating guru in ISKCON is no longer able to provide spiritual guidance to his/her existing disciples and therefore resigns, he/she is required to notify the GBC Executive Committee. If the resignation is accepted, the initiating guru is required to notify his/her disciples in writing. The GBC Executive Committee or GBC Body shall then give direction to the disciples and ISKCON members in general, as deemed appropriate.

The former initiating guru's name shall then be removed from the list of approved initiating gurus.

Reasons for Discipline
If it is deemed that continued approval of a particular devotee's privilege to act as an initiating guru in ISKCON is likely to disturb the peaceful conduct of the affairs of ISKCON, such approval may be restricted or rescinded. Activities creating such a disturbance are to be defined and determined at the ecclesiastical discretion of the GBC and may include, but are not limited to:

Misconduct and Failure to Follow Religious Principles or Higher Spiritual Authority

1. Wilful violation of GBC resolutions, in particular, but not limited to, deviating from ISKCON's procedural requirements, such as canvassing for disciples, or not obtaining permission from local authorities before initiating someone, or being neglectful in the standard spiritual practices.
2. Vilification of ISKCON or the GBC Body.
3. Misconduct, such as physical assault, except in self-defence, improper relationships with the opposite sex, improper sexual behavior, abusive behavior to devotees, improper dealings with external society, etc.
4. Habitually or knowingly making false charges and accusations or other vaisnava-aparadhas.
5. Disregard of the devotees need to accept and receive guidance and shelter from spiritual guides of their choice.
6. Duplicitous or untruthful dealings, such as giving false promises to devotees, lying, or other serious prevarications.
7. Having taken re-initiation/shelter of a non-ISKCON guru or institution.
8. Having rejected ISKCON or Srila Prabhupada.
9. Having undergone a change of service, of asrama, or of living situation, which threatens the approved initiating guru's ability to give guidance or set a proper standard of personal conduct.

Improper Discharge and Neglect of Duty

1. Misuse of Funds.
2. Consistent failure to submit required reports.

Spiritual Discrepancy

1. Failure to follow strictly the rules and regulations as described in Srila Prabhupada's books.
2. Philosophical deviation.
3. Failure to regularly attend the temple morning program without a bona fide or good cause.
4. Failure to follow any of the four regulative principles or to regularly chant sixteen rounds of japa.

Depending on the severity of any activity deemed improper, corrective steps may consist of informal discussions, written warnings or censures, or measures such as placing the devotee on probation, suspension of the devotee's approval to conduct initiations, or rescinding of that approval, or any other measures deemed appropriate to the situation by the GBC.

Disciplining Authority
A devotee approved to act as an initiating guru in ISKCON may be censured by any of the following:

- A simple majority vote of the GBC Body.
- The GBC Executive Committee.
- A simple majority vote of a Regional Governing Body.
- A simple majority vote of a Divisional or National Council.
- Where there is no Regional Governing Body or Divisional or National Council, three GBC's, which must include the GBC(s) of that area.

In the case of probation, suspension or rescinding of approval, a devotee approved to act as an initiating guru in ISKCON may be disciplined by the following:

- A simple majority vote of the GBC Body. The GBC Body shall then delegate a committee to perform the necessary follow-up actions.
- The GBC Executive Committee.

The disciplining body or officials must ensure that all details of the disciplinary action are placed on record with the GBC Secretary and, if applicable, entered into the relevant resolutions of the disciplining body.

Nothing in this law section shall be deemed to limit the ability of any Regional Governing Body, Divisional Council, National Council, or other local authority to withhold permission for a devotee approved to initiate in ISKCON from conducting initiation ceremonies within their jurisdiction.

Censure
Censure is a reprimand aimed at reformation of the devotee and prevention of further offending acts. It is preliminary step that may lead to probation or rescinding of approval. Censure may serve as a precedent to other forms of religious discipline.

When imposing censure, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person the specific basis of the censure, including the actions that were irresponsible, inappropriate, or in violation of ISKCON Law and the grounds thereof.

Probation
Probation is an opportunity for a devotee to rectify and regain his or her status as an ISKCON-approved initiating guru in good standing. Probation does not mean that the privilege to initiate has been withdrawn, but it may include a partial curtailment of such approval.

When ordering the probation, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person:

- the specific actions that were irresponsible, inappropriate, or in violation of ISKCON Law and the basis thereof.
- the specific program of rectification.
- the specific partial curtailment of the privilege to initiate, if any.
- the specific prerequisites for restoration, if any.
- the time period of the probation, which shall be no longer than one year.

After the period of probation, the disciplining authority must decide one of the following:

- The devotee is rectified and is no longer on probation.
- A determination of further probation under the same or modified conditions is required to complete the rectification process.
- The devotee has not been rectified and the privilege to initiate should be suspended or rescinded.

Suspension Pending Investigation
Where there is substantial reason to believe that a devotee approved to initiate in ISKCON has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law such that continuation of the privilege to initiate is likely to damage the good name, reputation, or other resources of Srila Prabhupada or

the society, or if there are serious allegations of impropriety requiring investigation, then the devotee's privilege to initiate should be suspended pending investigation.

Suspension pending investigation is to separate the devotee from his or her role as initiating guru so that a thorough investigation of allegations may be conducted and the advisability of continuing the approval is determined.

The disciplining body must conduct an immediate investigation so as to minimize any disruptions. After completion of the investigation, the body shall make a determination and decide the future course of action. They may order one of the following:

- The suspension shall be revoked and the privilege to initiate restored.
- There shall be a probationary period with a program of rectification as described under probation above.
- It is not expected that the devotee can be rectified within a reasonable period of time and the privilege to initiate shall be suspended or rescinded as per the terms given below.

There shall be no public worship of a devotee whose privilege to initiate is under suspension pending investigation by the ecclesiastical action of the GBC.

Suspension
When there has been a determination that a devotee approved to initiate in ISKCON has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law such that the privilege to initiate is likely to damage the good name, reputation, or other resources of Srila Prabhupada and the society, but there is possibility that eventually the devotee may be rectified, then the devotee's privilege to initiate should be suspended.

When suspension is imposed, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person:

- the specific transgression or misconduct causing the suspension and the grounds thereof.
- the specific requirements for reinstatement.

Such suspension of the privilege to initiate is not limited by a period of time and shall remain in effect until specifically withdrawn by the disciplining or any higher authority.

There shall be no public worship of a devotee whose privilege to initiate has been suspended by the ecclesiastical action of the GBC.

Rescinding of Approval
When there has been a determination that a devotee approved to initiate in ISKCON has acted irresponsibly, inappropriately, or in violation of ISKCON Law such that the privilege to initiate is likely to damage the good name, reputation, or other resources of Srila Prabhupada and the society, and there is little or no possibility that the devotee may eventually be rectified, then the devotee's privilege to initiate shall be rescinded.

When the privilege to initiate has been rescinded, the disciplining authority must clearly set forth in writing to the disciplined person the grounds or reasons thereof.

There shall be no public worship of a devotee whose privilege to initiate has been rescinded by the ecclesiastical action of the GBC.

Appeals
If an ISKCON initiating guru is disciplined by a National or Divisional Council, he/she shall have the right of appeal to the Regional Governing Body (if one exists in the area) or the GBC Body (if there is no Regional Governing Body in the area).

If he/she is disciplined by three GBC members he/she shall have the right of appeal to the GBC Executive Committee or the GBC Body.

If he/she is disciplined by a Regional Governing Body he/she shall have the right of appeal to the GBC Body.

If he/she is disciplined by the GBC Executive Commitee he/she shall have the right of appeal to the GBC Body.

Any disciplinary action taken against an ISKCON initiating guru by any of the abovementioned entities shall stand unless and until it is overruled by a higher ecclesiastical body, up to and including the GBC.

316. **Guru Worship Standards**

[Action Order]

Whereas the Srila Prabhupada's Position committee wishes to focus our ISKCON laws more solidly on Srila Prabhupada's position;

Whereas ISKCON is an unprecedented worldwide Gaudiya Vaisnava mission which aims to incorporate many individual diksa and siksa gurus and their disciples within a unified framework of cooperative preaching and teaching. Accordingly, to foster unity in ISKCON's preaching efforts, to emphasize Srila Prabhupada's preeminent position as Founder-Acarya, and to establish respect toward Vaisnavas and siksa-gurus in ISKCON, the GBC Body, considering the present time and circumstances, wishes to establish adjustments to details of guru worship in ISKCON;

Whereas it is the GBC Body's understanding that adjusting these details is needed now in order to maintain and better implement the essential principles of sastra, Vaisnava culture, guru-nistha and guru-seva;

RESOLVED:

Sections A and D of ISKCON Law 6.4.8.1.3, Standards of Guru Worship in ISKCON, are amended as follows:

> *(Present Law)*
> *A. ISKCON devotees shall instruct new members to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada and to receive guidance, training and assistance from those who are practically and directly instructing them in Krishna consciousness. ISKCON members shall not compel or coerce new members to accept any particular siksa or diksa guru or to take diksa initiation at any particular point in time. New members shall choose when and from whom they wish to request initiation, however for a minimum of six months of strict sadhana, they must focus their attention on Srila Prabhupada as the Founder-Acarya and their siksa guru. After having established a solid relationship with His Divine Grace's vani, they may accept an ISKCON guru and after a subsequent minimum of six months accept vaisnava diksa.*

Is amended to:

A. ISKCON devotees shall instruct new members to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada and to receive guidance, training and assistance from those who are practically and directly instructing them in Krishna consciousness. ISKCON members shall choose when and from whom they wish to request initiation. They must focus their attention on Srila Prabhupada as the Founder-Acarya and as their preeminent siksa guru. After having established a solid relationship with His Divine Grace's vani, and after a minimum of six months of strict sadhana, they may accept an authorized ISKCON devotee as a prospective diksa guru, and after a subsequent minimum of six months, accept vaisnava diksa from him or her. It should be understood that the purpose of siksa and diksa within ISKCON is to strengthen the devotee's relationship with Srila Prabhupada in terms of fidelity, attachment, and affection.

> *(Present Law)*
> *D. With an aim to focus more fully on Srila Prabhupada and every devotee's special relationship with him and to correct any imbalance in application between the respect offered to siksa gurus, diksa gurus and other senior Vaisnavas contributing to a devotee's spiritual progress, an ISKCON siksa or diksa guru may accept public guru-puja (arati and/or foot bathing) in person once a year on ISKCON property, as a Vyasa-puja.*

Is amended to:

D. In order to focus more fully on Srila Prabhupada and every devotee's special relationship with him, an ISKCON siksa or diksa guru may accept public guru-puja (arati and/or foot bathing) in person once a year on ISKCON property on his or her Vyasa-puja.

317. **Action and Public Statements of Hridayananda Das Goswami**

[Statement]

The GBC has carefully reviewed the recent action (giving blessings) and the public statements of Hridayananda Maharaja concerning homosexuality. These remain controversial and divisive in ISKCON, and the GBC does not endorse or support them.

Teaching obligations have kept Hridayananda Maharaja from attending the GBC meetings this year, so the GBC has not been able to discuss this issue with him. A GBC delegation will soon meet personally with him to discuss this issue and attempt to reach a common understanding.

318. **Law Book Implementation**

[Action Order]

Whereas the existing Law Book has been revised by the Law Book committee and most sections are ready for implementation;

Whereas the Deputies have reviewed and approved the revised sections;

RESOLVED:

That the Law Book revisions accepted by the Deputies will be reviewed by a team of Kavicandra Swami, Sesa Das, and Malati Devi Dasi by 31st May, 2009. The whole GBC Body will then have opportunity to review the final draft up until 30th September, 2009.

If any GBC member objects to any suggested changes, the change shall be deleted from the draft. If the Law Book committee feels the change should be made, they will prepare a proposal for the AGM 2010 where the proposed change will be reviewed and approved or rejected by the whole body. After the GBC Meetings in Mumbai in October 2009 the revised Law Book (minus any items objected to as above) will be accepted, replacing the current Law Book.