

MINUTES OF THE 5TH THIMPHU THROMDE TSHOGDE MEETING

Venue: Conference Hall, MoWHS
 Date: 30th Sept. 2011 (Friday)
 Time: 2.30 PM to 6.30 PM

The following members were present during the meeting:

1. Kinlay Dorjee	Thrompon	Chairperson
2. Gyeltshen Dukpa	Offtg. Executive Secretary	Member Secretary
3. Kinley	Changbangdu-Olakha	Member
4. Kuenga Yonten	Norzin	Member
5. Namgay Tshering	Babesa	Member
6. Ugyen Penjor	Jungshina-Kawajangsa	Member
7. Ugyen	Dechencholing-Taba	Member
8. Dorji Dema	Motithang	Member
9. Rinzin Dorji	Changangkha	Member

Welcome by Dasho Thrompon

At the outset, Dasho Thrompon welcomed all the Thuemis who were present at the meeting including the Thromde officials. Prior to start of the meeting, the election of the Dy. Chairperson was convened followed by review and endorsement of the minutes of the 4th TTTM.

Following this, the proposed agenda for the 5th Thromde Tshogde meeting was read out which initially included 8 agendas. However, few more agendas were added as indicated below, after being accepted by the Committee for deliberation.

1. Improvement of Labour hutment
2. Access road through reclaimed land at Changbangdu
3. E-4 precinct at YHS area
4. Dismantling of Retaining/ breast walls while approving access roads.

In total, there were 12 agendas that were finally adopted for deliberation during this meeting.



Election of Dy. Chairperson

Dasho Thrompon explained that the election of the Dy. Chairperson for the Thromde Tshogde was required to be done in accordance with the 'Local Govt. Act.2009'. He is required to act as the Chairman and resolve issues in the same manner as being done by the Chairman. He shall have same power and accountability enjoyed by the Thrompon while conducting the Thromde meeting in absence of the Chair.

The voting was done through a secret ballot via the electronic voting machine. The Thrompon pointed out that the voting shall be cast as 'yes' or 'no' for the only contestant, Mr. Namgay Tshering. All the 7 Thuemis cast their votes in turn including the candidate himself after which the voting was declared closed. According to the results obtained, the candidate obtained all the 7 'yes' votes and not a single 'no'. He was therefore declared officially elected following which Dasho Thrompon felicitated him on his election.

Welcoming the new Dy. Chairperson, Dasho Thrompon said that he was fully confident that he would be discharging his assigned duties and responsibilities with competence and dedication as mandated within the framework of the Act in force.

Important works being undertaken

- i) Chadi works for upcoming Royal wedding: Dasho Thrompon mentioned that Thimphu Thromde was busy implementing various *Chadi* activities for the upcoming royal wedding in Oct 2011 and that most of them have now been completed while some of them are on the verge of completion. Most of the works included improvement and repairs of infrastructure works, beautification activities, installation/erection of gates and portable toilets, amongst others.

He further informed that all the responsible Division and section heads of Thimphu Thromde have been carrying out their mandated duties and responsibilities with the required degree of zeal and enthusiasm and that all the assigned activities are expected to be completed by 10th Oct. 2011 as desired by the *Chadi* committee. He commended all those who are actively involved in the implementation of *Chadi* works and expressed confidence that everything would be completed as per schedule. He also requested all the Thuemis to take note of this and be more pro-active so that the joint efforts put in by Thimphu Thromde as a team towards successful implementation of the *Chadi* activities would be recognized.

He also pointed out that few private agencies have also contributed for some of the activities namely i) RICB for the steel gate along Desi lam with contribution of 0.5 million ii) BCCI for the gate near BoD with contribution of 0.2 million and iii) a private firm with a contribution of Nu. 0.15 million for the Coronation park.

- ii) Road through Imtrat Colony: Dasho Thrompon apprised the Thuemis that the Imtrat have been generous enough to grant permission to extend the existing road (adjacent to NPPF

building) through their Colony thereby facilitating the connectivity with the road leading to Memorial Chorten and this was in conformity with the proposed plan. He added that this road, once complete would not only help decongest the present traffic congestion along the existing road but would also help to pedestrianise the Norzin Lam in the long run. The activity is expected to be completed within the next 6 months in two phases with the 1st phase covering the relocation of toilet and carpentry shops, worth 1.5 million already underway. He said that the RBA and MoWHS have been instrumental in getting this project through and their contribution have been very huge as far as implementation of this proposal is concerned.

iii) Shifting of BOD at Lungtenzampa: Dasho Thrompon highlighted that the proposal to shift the existing BOD at Lungtenzampa to a new location at Changzamtog has been prepared and would be submitted to MoWHS for approval. He expressed his concern that in the event of any fire break-out, the result would be disastrous and the magnitude of the damages would be beyond any imagination, in view of stored petroleum/oil products underground and the close proximity of the adjoining residential buildings.

iv) Contribution of Thuemis: Dasho Thrompon acknowledged that all the Thuemis have been working diligently towards the successful implementation of plans and programs of Thimphu Thromde ever since they assumed their positions some 6 months ago. They have been working very closely with the concerned Thromde officials in resolution of matters that needed their involvement and cooperation. He expressed his full confidence that they would continue to serve in their capacity as Thuemis towards fulfillment of their mandates and responsibilities as being done at the moment. He was pleased to take note of their active participation, especially during public meetings, all of which have been very effective and successful till date while disseminating the required information/ disclosure to the public.

Review and endorsement of 4th Thromde Tshogde minutes

The status including actions taken on the issues discussed during the 4th Thromde Tshogde meeting were reported as follows:

- The request to maintain the old existing name plates will be taken in to consideration during the preparation of the city address system by UPD.
- As regard to the U-turn/roundabouts between Olarongchu asnd Babesa Lhakhang, UPD reported that three options have been identified based on site visits but in absence of any concrete policy directives on having roundabouts along expressway, the implementation of these options is not easy. However, it was decided that these option be presented to the cabinet for their feedback and directives for which a comprehensive plan need to be developed by end Oct.2011. Similarly, the plan and drawings related to shifting of BoD to Changzamtog need to be completed by end Oct.2011 for presentation to the cabinet. (Action: UPD)

- The support to restore/renovation of old traditional houses shall be taken up during the review of traditional villages which is currently ongoing.
- On the issue of purchase of REVA electric car, Dasho Thrompon said that 4 such cars have been bought till date which included 2 cars bought from the money generated through public auction of old vehicles while the remaining 2 cars were bought instead of approved tractor and Bolero. He reiterated that the maintenance costs of old vehicles including high POL expenditures due to old age of the vehicles have contributed to substantial expenditures on operation and maintenance of vehicles which need to be reduced through available alternatives.
- The budget allocation for TT (Thimphu Thromde) for FY 2011/12 was endorsed. The copies need to be circulated to all the Thuemis by AFD.
- The proposal for late penalties was reported to be under process
- The proposal to waive off late penalties need to be based on prevailing rules. Some of the Thuemis were of the opinion that the late penalties could be waived off to encourage people to pay at least the principal amount that is due. It was reported that the Revenue section was working out the details related to charges pertaining to long-term land lease which will be presented in the next Thromde Tshogde meeting (*Action: Revenue section*)
- As decided earlier, the Thuemis would be provided with a booklet, a printed version of the online census registration on a quarterly basis together with all relevant forms. Provision of small offices to the Thuemis would be explored in the near future to facilitate storage and to create a conducive working environment.
- Water tariff revision was implemented with effect from 1st August 2011.
- On water supply to Changbangdu and Changzamtog, the tender price was being negotiated with the lowest evaluated bidder.
- USD 900 as a membership fee for CITYNET as requested by UPD was approved.
- The review on traditional villages is being done by UPD which will include Mr. Kinley's plot at Olakha under Lungtenphu LAP.
- Swapping of land between Jungshina and Taba LAP was approved by Tshogde and has subsequently been forwarded to the Land Commission.
- It was resolved that proper plans have to be prepared for E-4 precincts for submission to the MoWHS for further deliberation and approval. The minimum plot size recommended by all the Thuemis was 13 decimals instead of required 25 decimals.
- The DCR is presently being reviewed by DCD and therefore granting of construction permit can only be examined on completion of the ongoing study.
- Requirement of formal dress code for the public while visiting Thromde office was approved and accordingly announced in BBS.
- Uniform *samples* for TT workers/ laborers were approved and the procurement was under process.
- A presentation on the status of the crematorium project will be made in the next meeting.
- The proposal to purchase aerial photograph was reported to be under process.



Agenda no.1 : Proposal to revise wages for wet sweepers under Sewerage Section.

The Head, Sewerage section informed that the wage rates for the non-bhutanese wet sweepers under TT were not revised as per the circular no. MoLHR/ECM/11/1150 dated 15/ 7/11 of MoLHR while that of the nationals was revised with effect from 1st Aug.2011. The 5 non-national wet sweepers, who were recruited with effect from March 2011 for the operation and maintenance of sewer systems (including cleaning of sewage overflow and blockages), were paid at the rate of Nu.135/day equivalent to that of labor category II.

Therefore, the proposal was to enhance their wages to that of the same category as per the revised wage structure, which stand at Nu.220/day so as to be at par with their fellow workers.

Dasho Thrompon added that while the revised rate was fully justifiable in view of their nature of work, the possibility of them carrying out works for private houses on payment basis to TT could also be worked out. This arrangement would not only relieve the private house owners from finding sweepers as and when needed, it would also help TT generate additional revenue, a part of which could be given to them as incentives. The charges to be levied for private works could be approx. Nu.50/hour depending on the type of works and locations. However, a comprehensive ToR need to be formulated prior to advertisement in the media.

Dechencholing-Taba Thuemi was in full support of the idea in view of non-availability of wet sweepers in the market. The Committee endorsed the revision of wage rates for the wet sweepers at Nu.220/day effective from 1st Oct. 2011 in view of the justification stated in the proposals.

Agenda No.2: Requirement of additional pool vehicle for DCD

The Head, DCD informed that an additional vehicle was required for the division, especially to cater to numerous site visits and demolition works. Dasho Thrompon said that one vehicle (Wagon R) was recently approved for DCD which has already been purchased. He added that the additional vehicle may not be required for the moment since there are always 3-4 vehicles found parked outside the office at any point of time. This, he said which could be borrowed from concerned Divisions whenever need to optimize the vehicle utilization. He further cautioned that the expenditure for pool vehicles under the Thromde is already over 10 million annually which is a very huge amount and therefore, there is a need to minimize the expenditures as far as possible.

Changbangdu-Olakha Thuemi suggested that electric cars would be more suitable as it saves on driver's salaries as well as fuel. The Offtg. Executive secretary was of the opinion that alternatives such as provision of fuel allowance to the officials commensurate with the grades could be explored.

After a prolonged deliberation , Dasho Thrompon said that the additional vehicle will not be purchased for the moment and that the available resources shall be utilized to the extent possible. In the meantime, Dasho Thrompon instructed AFD to study the arrangements being adopted by other utility agencies in terms of usage of their pool vehicles or other alternatives such as fuel allowances etc being adopted. The options shall be discussed during the next management meeting. (Action: AFD)

Agenda No.3: Survey and Demarcation Costing

The Head, Land & Survey section (LSS) made a brief presentation related to Survey and demarcation of plots with available statistics, the constraints faced and subsequently a strategy to improve the existing procedural steps.

He further apprised that a '*pilot project*' was being initiated in Samteling LAP where there are no confronting issues concerning excess land etc, basically to expedite the survey work. The concerned owners of about 48 plots have been intimated through kuensel but the concerned Thuemi of the LAP stated that he was not aware of this arrangement.

The Thuemis requested that they be given a copy of the plot owners along with dates for survey, in addition to letter of advertisement posted in the media, to enable them to inform the concerned plot owners to be available for the survey work as per the schedule that has been worked out.

The Head, LSS also pointed out that the plot owners usually approach them with a request for repeated demarcation saying that the initial pegs that were pegged on the ground have been lost/ stolen. This, he said was not reason enough for them to do subsequent demarcation, free of cost. In support of this, he presented a proposal indicating the rates for subsequent demarcation. While the meeting recognized the need to have realistic rates for subsequent survey and demarcation, it was resolved that the rates should be studied and debated more thoroughly prior to implementation.

Dasho Thrompon concluded by saying that the advertisement for survey and demarcation shall be issued in media atleast 15 days in advance with a copy endorsed to the respective Thuemis. Besides, efforts should be made to contact them through mobiles wherever possible so that they would not be in a position to complain in the future in the event if they are absent on the prescribed day. It was also noted that the adjacent owners are also required to be present during the survey exercise and they should be informed as well.

Agenda No.4: Outsourcing of Survey work under TT

The head, LSS informed that there were several requests for plot survey which have not been attended so far in view of very limited surveyors available for the work. Therefore, in order to be able to clear all the backlogs, he proposed that such works could be outsourced to a private survey consultancy firms (who have been authorized to carry out cadastral survey by competent authority).

Meanwhile, he added that the surveyors have been carrying out such works even during weekends and holidays owing to pressure from the plot owners and to clear the backlog as soon as possible. Consequently, he proposed that the concerned surveyors including their assistants be compensated through payment of Nu. 1000/- per day and Nu.500/- per day respectively for the work that they undertake during weekdays and holidays.

Dasho Thrompon said that outsourcing of such works is not encouraged at the moment, especially because land is a very sensitive issue and also that no specialized consultancy firms are presently available in the private sector who would be accountable in the event of any disputes arising in the future related to the work done by them.

Therefore, it was unanimously decided that the Thimphu Thromde shall continue to carry out the survey and plot demarcation works and that the concerned surveyor and assistant, engaged for survey works during weekends and holidays shall be paid DSA/ overtime as per the prevailing rules applicable for civil servants/ muster- roll employees.



Agenda No.5: Request from Dechencholing-Taba Thuemi for DCR amendment

The Thuemi for the above constituency informed that as per the prevailing DCR, the areas falling under UV-2 precinct permits the building height to be G+1 plus attic while that for UV-1, it is G+2 plus attic with required setback of 3metres all around and area coverage of 40%. His request was to minimize the setback to 2 m with plot coverage of 60% instead and 40%.

Dasho Thrompon remarked that such amendments cannot be approved although the public would invariably approach with similar requests. Such considerations would only impact negatively which will include reduction in the number of parking facilities within their plot area compared to what is indicated in the DCR. He also added that Thimphu city would look aesthetically pleasing if the provisions as contained in the DCR are strictly followed.

Jungshina-Kawajangsa Thuemi was of the opinion that it is rather difficult to differentiate between precincts and that the plot coverage could be reduced with increased building height.

There was mixed response from among the Thuemis on the issue with some saying that the coverage could be increased while the number of storey could be kept as prescribed.

The Offtg. Chief Urban Planner responded that such issues, especially related to plot coverage, permissible building floors were extensively discussed, debated and approved keeping in view of the surrounding environment and proximity to palace area. (Action: UPD)

Agenda No.6: Request from all Thuemis for increased salary

All the Thuemis were unanimous in their request for increased salary. They said that their monthly salary which has been fixed by the government at Nu.2,000/- per month is not at all justifiable in view of the fact that they shoulder responsibilities equal to the gups and at the same time they are not allowed to carry out any kind of part-time jobs. Their request to the government is to consider their request for salary equal to that of the gups.

Dasho Thrompon replied that the salary for the Thuemis had been kept at par with that of the Mangyeps as per the 'Pay commission report'. He reminded the Thuemis that he has had talks with the Hon'ble Lyonpo, MoWHS and Secretary/MoWHS on this issue and will be further apprising the Hon'ble Lyonchen soon.

He expressed solidarity with all the Thuemis on this issue and expressed hope that this request would be positively considered at the soonest in light of their heavy responsibilities. Additionally, he said that a comprehensive report may have to be submitted to the Hon'ble Lyonpo/ MoWHS to expedite the matter as it may need Cabinets' approval.

Agenda No.7: Request from Norzin Thuemi

The Thuemi of Norzin constituency pointed out that there were several spelling mistakes, particularly in Dzongkha on the signboards meant for shops, offices, hotels, restaurants etc. and was deeply concerned that such issues have not been adequately addressed in the past as a result of which the public cannot conveniently interpret them as it should be.

Dasho Thrompon also acknowledged that there were spelling errors on the signboards and that DDC has been repeatedly expressing dissatisfaction.

The Tshogde decided that a committee be constituted comprising three (3) persons who would inspect and identify all those signboards requiring corrections and officially inform the concerned owners to make necessary amendments/ rectifications.

Agenda No.8: Review of points raised by Motithang Thuemi

The Motithang Thuemi desired that the points that were raised during her meeting with the Motithang residents on 9/10/11 be reviewed and discussed. Accordingly, the points discussed were as follows:

- i) *Increase in plot coverage from existing 40% to 60% following provision for underground parking:* The request was not considered at the moment since DCR is presently under review which include this aspect as well.
- ii) *Wastewater drains:* Thimphu Thromde responded that the preparation of the storm water drainage plan is expected to commence soon which will cover the entire Thimphu city including Motithang. Meanwhile, the construction of drains in the area shall be prioritized depending on the need and budget availability. Joint site visits, to this effect shall be initiated soon to identify such drains requiring immediate construction or renovations to resolve wastewater conveyance and disposal issues. A proper study will also be possible with the help of aerial photographs which are expected to be available soon.
- iii) *Sewerage connections:* It was agreed that the capacity of the existing sewage treatment plant at Babesa is now almost reached and therefore additional wastewater cannot be introduced. Hence, the new sewer connections would not be possible until the year 2014 when the new plant is built and commissioned through assistance provided by ADB. However, it was decided that the service of vacuum tankers shall be made available twice a year, free of cost (*instead of existing once a year*) for all the properties where water billing exists.
- iv) *Public vehicular parking:* Thimphu Thromde said that public parking areas are being identified throughout the city to cater to ever-increasing parking crunch and that this areas are being planned for development, depending on the feasibility and availability of budget.
- v) *Scarcity of water and delay in survey of excess land:* The scarcity of water is expected to be addressed soon following the completion and commissioning of the new water supply scheme at Changzamtog near the truck parking within the next 3-4 months. The issue on survey of excess land is being expedited in consultation with the National Land commission.

Agenda No.9: Improvement of labor hutments

Dasho Thrompon expressed his concern that the existing labor hutments occupied by the city laborers are in a very bad shape with no proper sanitation facilities. It was very important that basic facilities,



particularly shelter and sanitation are improved which may include provision of a 2-roomed apartment to each one of them.

He said that there are plans to produce cement-soil bricks (1:8) to be used for construction of the new labor hutments. There are 4 machines available for sale at Nu. 88,000/-per each which can produce such bricks. He said that TT would be buying 2 machines now and deploy about 5-6 people on a full-time basis to produce the bricks which is the most prominent building material, followed by timber, which can be obtained from the felled trees. The old CGI sheets, retrieved through dismantling of old and unauthorized houses including used ones available at stores could be used for roofing.

Through this arrangement, the cost of building hutments would reduce significantly and therefore be made more affordable in the long run, especially in view of budgetary constraints. The work shall be done departmentally on a phase-wise manner since getting it done through contract would be a very costly affair.

It was decided that a committee comprising three (3) persons led by the Dy. Chairman shall be constituted to oversee the fabrication and constructions. The other two members shall be from the Engineering and Environment divisions.

Agenda No.10: Road through reclaimed land at Changbangdu

The committee decided to permit the road construction through the reclaimed land. However, the planning division shall ensure that the road so constructed is in conformity with the planning documents (TSP: 2002-2027). In the process, few crash barriers along the Expressway shall be opened up to facilitate the road construction after the study is completed.

Agenda No.11: E-4 precincts at YHS area

There are 2 plots located in the E-4 precinct adjacent to YHS area which are in close proximity of the area designated as UV-2 (Sub Cat II) precinct. The Thuemis were of the opinion that these two plots should also be considered for the same precinct as it is located very close to it.

It was decided that a proper site inspection shall be carried out to study the feasibility for inclusion of these plots under UV-2 (Sub Cat II) precinct. If found feasible, a note-sheet shall be processed for necessary approval. (Action: UPD)

Agenda No.12: Dismantling of Retaining/ breast walls while approving access roads

The Offtg. Chief Urban planner explained that several retaining walls built through government resources, especially along Changzamtog ring road are required to be dismantled to facilitate the construction of access roads to the individual plots. Accordingly, it was felt that suitable compensation may have to be paid by the concerned owners to Thimphu Thromde for dismantling of these structures excluding depreciation.

Dasho Thrompon resolved that such cases shall be dealt on a 'case-by-case basis' based on site inspection and feasibility. He also opined that it may not be prudent to collect compensation on such issues since access roads need to be given to all plots as per requirements.



Miscellaneous issues

- i) An allowance for mobile voucher, worth Nu.500/- per month for all Thuemis was approved effective from 1st Oct.2011.
- ii) Attic full height: Dasho Thrompon explained that the proposal to allow full-height attic was sent to the MoWHS for approval some 3 months ago but there has been no response till date. During this period, approval for 24 buildings have already been accorded for construction of full-height attic but with no RCC slabs above the attic, except for accommodating water tanks (*to prevent further addition of floors over the attic*). Jungshina-Kawajangsa Thuemi said that a '*letter of undertaking*' need to be obtained from each individual to whom such approvals have been accorded since disconnection of water supply and electricity is not at all effective in the real term. An agreement to this effect would permit Thimphu Thromde to pursue the matter legally in the event of non-compliance to the imposed conditions.

The Head, DCD confirmed that 25 such approvals have so far been issued verbally but not in writing. The Tshogde decided that an office order, to this effect shall be issued to regularize the deal. The DCD was asked to obtain '*agreement*' for all the approved 25 cases to enable TT to take appropriate actions in the event of default or non-compliance.

A proper inventory of such cases shall be maintained by DCD which will include copy of agreements, locations (based on constituency) and other pertinent details as may be warranted. Any deviated structures other than what is permitted shall be immediately demolished and actions taken as may be deemed suitable. (Action: DCD).

Conclusion and date for next Thromde Meeting

The next Thromde Tshogde meeting is scheduled on the 18th of November 2011 (Friday)



MINUTES WRITER: Mr. Mahesh Pradhan, Chief Engineer.