

Minutes of 15th Finance Committee Meeting of IASST, Guwahati


Date :12.08.2022

Time : 10.00 Hours

Venue: IASST,
Guwahati, Assam-781035

Members present:

1. Prof. A.K. Mukherjee
Director, IASST, Guwahati
Chairman
2. Shri Thingom Lalitkumar Singh
Deputy Secretary (AI, Division),
Department of Science & Technology
MoST, Government of India, New Delhi.
(Representative of Head, AI Division)
Member
3. Shri. Rohit Kumar,
Deputy Secretary (Finance),
Department of Science & Technology,
MoST, Government of India, New Delhi.
(Representative of AS&FA of MoST, GOI
attended through online mode)
Member
4. Dr. Ashit Biswas, FAO
NIPER, Guwahati
Member
5. Prof. N.Sen Sarma
Head PSD, IASST, Guwahati
Member
6. Dr. D. Goswami, Registrar,
IASST, Guwahati
Invited Member
7. Mr.P. Borkataki,
F.A.O., IASST, Guwahati.
Member-Secretary



Agenda Item No. 1: Welcome Address

Prof. A.K. Mukherjee, Director, IASST and Chairman of the Finance Committee welcomed all the members of the Fifteen Meeting of Finance Committee of IASST. He expressed his special gratitude to the representatives of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India namely Shri Thingom Lalitkumar Singh, Deputy Secretary, (representing Head, A.I. Division) for his physical presence and Shri Rohit Kumar, Deputy Secretary (Finance) IFD, (representing AS&FA, MoST) for sparing his valuable time through online mode and to make it convenient to attend the meeting. After his brief welcome address Chairman requested the Member Secretary to start the proceedings of the meeting.

Agenda Item No. 2: Confirmation of the Minutes of the Fourteenth Finance Committee Meeting of IASST held on 17th November, 2021.

Member-Secretary apprised the house that the approved minutes of the 14th Finance Committee meeting was placed in the 15th Governing Council Meeting for a recommendation, and the salient points were noted in the minutes of the GC meeting. As no adverse comment was received on the minutes of the 14th Finance Committee, the Committee confirmed the same.

Agenda Item No. 3: Action Taken Report on the decisions/deliberations of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 17th November, 2021.

The Member-Secretary apprised the details of actions taken for implementation of recommendations of the 14th Finance Committee Meeting. The Finance Committee noted the action taken report. Regarding the revision of the original budget estimate of capital expenditure from ₹12.77 Crores to ₹31.80 Crores, the Committee suggested expediting the process of obtaining vetting of the revised estimate submitted to the Civil Engineering Dept. of IIT Guwahati and to submit the same to the Program Division, i.e., DST for obtaining post-facto approval.

Regarding the Setting up of 33/0.422 kV substation and associated cable distribution work at IASST, Member Secretary informed that IASST had submitted all the details to DST, AI Division against the Administrative Approval received for implementation of 33/0.422 KV Substation at IASST, for release of fund. However, the AI Division asked for some more information/clarification, which is under process for submission. The Committee suggested obtaining separate financial sanctions for expenditure to be incurred for the Setting up of 33/0.422 KV substation rather than utilizing the regular Capital Cost budget of the Institute for this purpose.



Regarding the Construction of 100 Capacity Women Hostel, Director IASST and Chairman of the Committee have nicely and elaborately explained the necessities of the Women Hostel. All the members agreed to his remarks and suggested obtaining Administrative Approval from DST for the same.

As per the suggestion and recommendation of the 14th Finance Committee Meeting, bifurcation of Capital and Corpus Fund incorporated in the Annual Accounts for the Financial Year (FY) 2021-22 has been noted by the Committee members.

Member Secretary informed the members that booking of the fellowship of Institutional Fellows and monthly payments paid to Contractual Employees under "General" head instead of "Salary" head had been implemented from the FY 2022-23 based on the recommendation of the 14th Finance Committee. For this purpose, reallocation of the budgetary Head from "Salary" to "General" is requested. The Committee suggested submitting a proposal to DST for fund reallocation under these two heads.

Agenda Item No.4: Submission of Audited Accounts for the Financial Year 2021-22 for approval.

The Audited Accounts and Auditor's Report of IASST for the FY 2021-22 were placed before the committee for approval. The committee thoroughly discussed the submitted audited accounts and suggested showing the accrued interest portion separately in the balance sheet from the next FY onwards. The Committee enquired about the sources of creation of corpus fund. Based on the different sources of Corpus Fund, Committee suggested submitting a proposal to DST for obtaining administrative approval. It was also opined that in respect of Corpus Fund created through internal resources, approval of administrative ministry i.e. DST will require to be obtained.

Item No.5: Information regarding current financial position of the Institute

Member Secretary appraised the members about the allocation of grants-in-aid of ₹33.00 Crores for the FY 2022-23 at the budgetary stage against the budget estimate of ₹40 crores approved by the GB, IASST. However, considering the outflow of the fund during previous months of the current FY and to achieve the planned and committed targets of the Institute, it was requested to allocate the approved budgetary limit of ₹40.00 Crores in total. To meet the differences between the approved budget estimate and allocation, Member Secretary requested to recommend using the unspent balance of ₹7.81 Crores of the previous FY in addition to the current year allocation. The committee suggested submitting a proposal to DST in this regard at the appropriate time i.e. at RE stage with the commitment that the allotted grant will be utilized fully during the current FY.

Item No.6: Consideration for Introduction of Research Fee

Member Secretary briefed the structure of the revised studentship fee and it was informed that this revision of fee structure is proposed to make it uniform for all categories of Research Scholars. Committee noted the same and approved the revised fee structure.



Item No.7: Consideration for payment of Remuneration to external expert for Academic progress evaluation

Committee recommended the maximum ceiling of ₹4000/- for payment of remuneration to external expert based on the ceiling of Sitting Allowance fixed as per OM No.19047/10/2016 E-IV dated 12.04.2017, Government of India, MoF, Department of Expenditure and also suggested to explore some avenues for introduction of remuneration for visiting faculty/ expert, invited from abroad for delivering lecture/ for evaluation of thesis/progress reports of faculty etc. This remuneration should be based on the structure of remuneration adopted by nearby Universities/ Research Institutes. A committee may fix the upper ceiling of remuneration (within ₹4000/-) depending on the work to be performed.

Item No. 8: Consideration of proposal for payment of Overtime Allowance to Operative Staff and Staff Car Drivers

Committee recommended and approved the rates of the Overtime Allowance payable to Operative staff and Staff Drivers as follows:

- (i) Operative Staff (on regular basis) : For working days : Rs.15.85 per hour
: For Sundays, Holidays -Rs.21.15 per hour
- (ii) Operative staff/Driver (casual/contractual employees) :

Category	Hourly rate of OTA
Casual/Contractual employees drawing minimum of wages as notified by the Ministry of Labour/ UT Administration whichever is higher.	$\frac{1}{8}$ th of the daily wage.

Here operative staff includes: Electricians, Plumbers and Animal Keepers.

(iii) Staff Car Drivers (Regular):

Emoluments	Rate of OTA per hour	
	Up to the first one hour in excess of the prescribed hours of duty	Thereafter (₹)
₹ 2,201 and above	Nil	16.50



Further, the member from IFD, DST appraised the concern of the Ministry of Finance over recruiting staff through an outsourcing agency and advised to procure such services through GeM.

Item No.9: Information regarding GeM procurement

Member Secretary briefed on the GeM purchase over the last financial and current year. It was also informed regarding the supply of low-quality products, non-co-operation of GeM Vendors regarding the return of defective items and the non-responsiveness of vendors regarding buyer's complaint redressal. The committee noted the information submitted regarding GeM procurement and difficulties/problems faced by the Institute for GeM procurement. It was suggested to bring these issues to the notice of GeM Authority copy of such Communication may be forwarded to AI, Division.

Item No.10: Compliance of verdict of Honourable Gauhati High Court in the case of Juri Pathak vs UOI & Ors. regarding her pay fixation

Committee members noted the compliance submitted. However, it was noted that another court case has been filed by Mrs. Juri Pathak, Technical Officer. The Committee recommended that draft reply of the Respondents on this court case may be vetted by DST before filing to the Hon'ble Court. On the query of the member representing Head, AI Division on how pay fixation was made for the employees at the time to conversion of IASST in 2009, it was explained that pay were fixed after due examination and recommendation by a committee set up for the purpose. Thus, the Committee finds it inappropriate for the concerned employees to represent against such fixation of pay after a lapse of more than 10 years and reopen the cases now. However, in cases of representations and court cases on the matter, the Committee recommends that institute will re-examine and if any anomaly is found, the matter may be referred to DST.

Item No.11: Information regarding procurement of major equipment

Member Secretary submitted a list of 3nos. Major Equipment to be procured during the F.Y. 2022-23 with tentative cost and informed that this list and the list of minor equipment have already been submitted to DST at the time of proposal submission for grant of 2nd Instalment of G.I.A. The committee members requested that they recommend separate budget allocations to procure these 3nos. Major equipment, namely (i) Isothermal Titration Calorimetry (I.T.C.) (ii) Spectroscopic Ellipsometry and for exchange of existing XRD with a new one costing ₹4.27 crores as recommended by Scientific Advisory Council (S.A.C.). Member of the Committee recommended the proposal for separate budget allocation for this procurement subject to the availability of funds of the project division.




Item No.12: Any other Item(s) with the permission of the chair

(a) Unsettled audit paras raised by Principal Accounts Office (Internal Audit Wings of Ministry of Science and Technology) upto FY 2019-20 and by Audit and Accounts Department (Office of Director General of Audit, Environment and Scientific Department, Kolkata upto the FY 2020-21)

The Committee suggested and recommended to set a target for settling the Audit Paras raised by both Internal Audit Wings of Ministry and CAG. Member Secretary informed that the replies are under process and sent them to the concerned department at the earliest.

The Committee also recommended to place the progress of disposal of audit paras in the FC meetings as agenda item.

As there was no other matter to discuss, the Committee ended with a vote of thanks by the Member Secretary. Prof. A.K. Mukherjee, Director of IASST, also extended his special thanks and gratitude to the AI, Division, Department of Science and Technology, and IFD of the Ministry for their continuous support for the smooth functioning and overall development of the Institute and also the other Committee members for their presence in the meeting.


(A.K. Mukherjee)

Chairman

निदेशक/Director
आई.ए.एस.एस.टी, पश्चिम बड़ागाव
IASST, Paschim Boragaon
गुवाहाटी-35:असम:भारत
Guwahati-781035:Assam:India


(P. Borkataki)

Member Secretary

वित्त एवं लेखा अधिकारी
Finance & Accounts Officer
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