

BRIGHT WAY ZEN BOARD

Minutes of Meeting of November 25, 2015

Present at the meeting:

Board members: Domyo Burk, Ellen Shoketsu Carlin, Bella Jhunhunwalla, Jim Lewinson, Jeff Young, Lorna Simons

The financial report and attendance reports are hereby appended to these minutes.

The Minutes of the Board Meeting of April 30, 2015 were approved.

Introduction:

Domyo provided an update on several topics that came up in the previous meeting.

- She began receiving her housing allowance in May 2015.
- Additions to the calendar
 - Segaki, Nehan and Wesak
 - Dharma studies class. Domyo suggested that the fee for that class be left in the BWZ budget for future developments.

Board Election

Only one position is open (Dawn's tenure ended). Jeff volunteered to serve again. After some discussion, it was agreed that it should be handled as follows:

- Domyo will send an email to eligible members notifying them that a position is open and asking if anyone is interested. If anyone responds, the situation will be explained – Jeff has volunteered but it is open to others.
- Based on the results, then all members will be informed of Jeff's reappointment OR an election will be implemented (paying members get two votes).

Membership and Attendance Report

(Report attached.)

As of 11/25/15 there are 31 pledged members (same as a year ago). That includes 11 former members – 4 have moved away and 7 have drifted away to other things. Also, 4 or 5 people aren't pledged members but are contributing regularly.

During the last year, 167 new people came through the door (attendees from Dharma Rain are counted as new attendees). Average attendance for Tuesday nights increased slightly from 12.75 to 17. There was a lower increase for Sundays, from 11 to 12. Attendance was lower in the summer.

There was some discussion of trying to find out why people didn't return to help in planning what to do to increase attendance.

An email survey could go to everyone on the email list with some possible questions:

- Have you come before? If not, or don't come regularly, what would bring you back or encourage you to attend more regularly. Provide a list of possible reasons with checkboxes.
- The idea was floated of provide a list of possible or current activities and ask them how much they feel our activities represent "the way" or what else they would like to see done. But Domyo noted that our activities are based more on how she wants to share the dharma, so that might not work.

The feeling was that although the results might not provide a lot of useful information, it could be a baseline for future reference and maybe give us some ideas about things we might not have thought about.

Another idea was to provide something in addition to the basic meditation introduction given for newcomers. Domyo said she had actually been thinking about an informal flyer that would include brief descriptions of various aspects of our practice. It could be provided in physical form and also on the website. Domyo said that the website also needs to be updated.

A thought for further out is to offer practice and dharma discussions via videoconference.

Another possibility is to request that newcomers come to zazen and then schedule a meeting with Domyo, who could offer to meet them once or twice and then they could become members.

The objective is to make people feel more welcome and support their practice.

Financial Report

Domyo presented the actual budget for 2013 and 2014, projections for the rest of 2015, and projections for 2016 with and without a move to a new space. Several items were of note:

- January-October 2015 average pledges per month were \$1307; projected total pledges were \$15,684, total contributions were \$16,500.
- Projected 2015 income is \$17,800, an increase of \$1,495 over the previous year. For 2016, the projected increase is \$1,500, assuming growth at about the same rate.
- An increase in Domyo's housing allowance, from \$350 to \$400, is proposed for 2016.
- A one-time payment for \$645 in 2015 for a two-year membership for Wild Apricot software (price break for two years), which is for the Zoom videoconferencing.
- If necessary in order to accomplish a move, we could safely run "in the red" for a while. Projected bank balance without a move for 2016 would be \$14,264; with the move, the projected balance would be \$8,139

There was some discussion of issues in connection with a possible move:

- We might need to do a fundraising drive focused on specific items needed for the move, fixed, tangible things.
- For fundraising over the long term, the most important thing is to keep people clearly informed about what's going on:
 - Need to show that we are growing and how and ask for longer-term financial help.
 - Need to be specific and have a set goal
 - Move-in fees, moving expenses
 - If we find a possible new location, people need to be informed about our expectations and what we plan to do.

Growth and Possible Move

We talked about how pressing the need to move is at this time. Attendance of 20 is crowded now, challenging capacity and traffic flow in the meeting room, as well as parking for cars. We agreed that it would be smart to start looking around and get information about what's out there.

Two possibilities have already been scouted by Domyo:

1. Cedar Hills shopping center (SW corner at intersection of 26 and 217). It's close to Domyo's home. There are several spaces that look like they've been empty for a long time, and the former "Curves" space could probably be used with very little alteration. It has lots of parking. It already has a church inside and other unusual uses.
2. TV Highway at Cornelius

We agreed that a search committee is needed, and Bella volunteered, since her husband can help. She and Domyo can look at some possibilities together.

Programs for 2016

- Saturday zazen will start in January.
- Domyo will try to set up remote attendance for meeting (Zoom) in the coming months.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorna Simons
Secretary