

BRIGHT WAY ZEN - Strategic Planning Retreat: March 31, 2018

Meeting called to order at 10:03AM

PRESENT AT THE MEETING: Domyo Burk, Janna Allgood (Chair of the Board of Directors), Zack Bartel, Jim Lewinson, Shoketsu Ellen Carlin, Joan Maurer, Jeff Young, Myoju Bella Jhunjhunwalla (as member of Strategic Planning Committee), Frankie Borison (as member of Strategic Planning Committee)

Check in: The participants sat for a few minutes of Zazen followed by each person saying a few words about what they were bringing to the meeting.

Background for this Strategic Planning Meeting, provided by Domyo:

- About 1 year ago the Board drafted a mission and vision statement and did some brainstorming regarding strategic planning.
- Recently, Domyo projected a budget for about 10 years at our current growth rate and found that after paying increased costs for a larger practice space, we could only afford about \$24,000/yr salary+benefits for the guiding teacher/executive director, which is far from a living wage for full-time work.
- A subcommittee was formed to further refine the mission, vision and to provide brainstorming on the strategic opportunities in preparation for this meeting.

Discussion of draft of mission and vision statement:

- Vision statement: the first sentence was modified to ...providing a place of refuge in Washington County where people...
- Board and members of strategic planning committee unanimously voted to adopt the Mission and Vision statement with the change referred to above.

Review of member and participant survey:

Janna offered the observations:

- That about 50% of the responses noted that talks and discussion, meetings and media for providing instruction or information were the most valuable resources provided by BWZ.
- BWZ is a relatively young organization with about 27% of the members here only 18 months or less and 40% members for 3-5 years.
- This may have implications for whether we have the level of commitment to address some aspirations.
- Everyone who responded, 40 people live locally and regarding why people didn't participate in BWZ activity, 64% said they needed to spend time with family.
- Only about 33% said making friends was a goal of attending BWZ.
- The most valuable offerings were Zazen and Dharma talks. Everything else was in a distant second place. Playing devil's advocate, Janna offered the conclusion that one could think we are doing fine offering what we do and offering more may have limited pay off.
- Regarding "What would you like to see at BWZ in the future?" The answer with the highest weighted average was "long term stability." (Respondents rated all

answers on a scale of 1-5; weighted average takes respondent's ratings into account).

Discussion of three main strategic areas of opportunity:

Domyo led a discussion regarding three areas of concentration for Strategic Planning: Sangha Growth (in terms of numbers of participants and members), Deepening Member Commitment (current members), and Building Sangha Resources (attention to finances, material resources, physical place of practice). The Board and others present unanimously accepted these three areas of focus for guiding Strategic Planning for the time being.

Nominal voting: All brainstormed ways to address the 3 areas were posted on the wall, and each participant voted for 5 strategic opportunities to prioritize:

Sangha Growth:

- Creating a sandwich board for outside the Zendo. (5 votes)
- Start a Thursday evening practice. (4 votes)
- Create a brochure and compile a list of senior members willing to do outreach. (2 votes each)

Deepening Member Commitment:

- Create a Sangha buddy system (6 votes)
- (Currently Myoju is working with Domyo to contact people who we haven't seen for a while and a member directory is in process)
- Conduct a community service project (4 votes)
- Activism together (1 vote)

Building Sangha Resources:

- Crunch the numbers (Figure out our financial goals and plan how to get there) (11 votes, most popular item)
- Planned giving (facilitate, get started) (4 votes)
- Annual "Fun"raiser (1 vote)
- Discuss our overall, long-term approach to fundraising (2 votes)

Discussion of results of voting:

The top items by priority voting and considering we need to not try and do too much, were the following, recognizing that even though an item didn't receive a vote, it could be pursued by the Zendo:

1. Crunch the numbers
2. Create a Sangha buddy system
3. Create a sandwich board
4. Start a Thursday evening practice event
5. Conduct a community service project
6. Create a planned giving system.

Next Steps and goal: all items will be completed or substantially underway within 12-18 months. The board of directors will track progress at each board meeting:

1. **Crunch the numbers work group including Domyo, Janna, Joan, Frankie and Jeff will create a recommendation and report to the Board of Directors.**

- Then a communication to the Sangha members will be provided about the plan to address this item.
2. Sangha buddy system was assigned to the Stewardship Committee. This will be available to members. The guest master will support new visitors before they become members.
 3. Sandwich board. Domyo has a board, and Janna will ask Richard if he may be able to help.
 4. Shintai Jody Dungay is considering starting a Thursday practice event in the fall.
 5. Thinking about a Community Service Project was delegated to the Sangha Stewardship Committee.
 6. Planned Giving: We may invite Thomas Bruner to provide a consultation about how to set this up. Frankie will move this forward, with consultation with Domyo and Janna, and Frankie will chair a new committee to focus on Building Sangha Resources.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM

**Respectfully submitted:
Jeff Young
Secretary to the Board of Directors**