

Zen Center of Los Angeles, Inc.

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

September 21, 2014

The Board of Directors of Zen Center of Los Angeles, Inc., a California nonprofit corporation, held a regular meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 21, 2014 at 923 South Normandie Ave., Los Angeles, California.

The following directors were present: Cliff Shishin Collins, Darla Myoho Fjeld, Patricia Muso Giggans (President), Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert (CFO), Deborah Faith-Mind Thoresen, Robert Swan and Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown (Secretary)

The following directors were absent: Wendy Egyoku Nakao (Abbot), DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass, John Plum-Hermit Swanger

Tim Zamora witnessed the meeting.

Enduring-Vow served as recording secretary.

ZCLA Mission Statement

To know the Self, maintain the precepts and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism.

Board Mission and Vision Statement

In the Resource Sphere of All-Enriching Wisdom, the Board of Directors oversees all legal and fiduciary matters. We actively support the Mandala, Mission and Vision, Core Values and Core Practices of the Zen Center of Los Angeles / Great Dragon Mountain - Buddha Essence Temple. We maintain a place for practice, rooted in our Bodhisattva Lineage, and nurture the widest possible view.

1. Welcome, Zazen, Check In Round and Teaching

Muso called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. The Board sat zazen and did a check-in round.

2. Teaching

Bob Swan offered a teaching from Thich Nhat Hanh's *The Heart of Understanding* on interbeing.

3. Review of Agenda

The Board reviewed the agenda.

4. Council

The Board had council.

5. Notice to Board

Cliff Shishin Collins announced that his current life situation is not allowing him time to devote to ZCLA. The Board expressed its appreciation of Shishin's contributions and together agreed that he will take a 6 month leave of absence from the board and will review his situation again at that time.

6. Approval of Minutes & Review of Action Items

The Board deferred approving the July minutes until edits from the Abbot are received.

Action Items:

1. Dharma-Joy – Make revisions to ZCLA loan protocol/organizational precept. Submit recommendation to Board at next meeting. **Dharma-Joy to review with Roshi on her return and forward to board.**
2. Enduring-Vow – Compile Zen Center policies for the Board. Completed. **EV will put binder in closet with minutes.**
3. ZCLA Mission Committee. **Dharma-Joy & Roshi to review.**
4. Plum-Hermit to forward list of internal Zen Center Funds to Board. Completed.
5. Finance Committee - Draft budget deficit reduction & revenue increase recommendations to board at September meeting. **Move to agenda.**
6. Myoho & Dharma-Joy to follow up with Marsha at Lenz Foundation regarding acknowledgment of grant. Completed.
7. Strategic Planning committee to expand process in the identified areas of ZCLA's new story – evolution, 50th Anniversary, Succession Planning and the big picture financial elements in the Strategic Plan, including meeting with Grant Couch, Bank of Manhattan. Completed.

7. Financial Report (Report attached)

Zen Center revenues from Jan – August 2014 are \$286,399 - 94% of target. Guest housing and residential housing programs are the only categories significantly below budget. Our expenses are 92% of budget, up from the 88% at the July meeting. We are currently \$24,000 below budget in terms of expenses. In capital expenses, we've spent \$16,733. Not including the \$8,605 that was approved by the board for cement and fence work at the Nilotpala, we are at 81% of budget in capital expenses due to repairs, mold remediation and water heater replacements required in apartments.

Endowment Report – The ZCLA portfolio is at \$137,705 at end of August, the highest it's been. As of the end of August, Calvert is up 5.5% and the S&P is up 8.39%. Bob will send an updated report at end of September.

8. Finance Committee Report

There was discussion as to the importance and need for increased meetings and focus within the Finance Committee, as well as improved linking with Development and Strategic Planning. There was general discussion as to fee increases and areas for cost reductions.

Action Item – Finance Committee – Draft budget deficit reduction & revenue increase recommendations to present to board in November

9. Other Committee Reports

Temple Directors Report (attached)

Myoho updated the board on the ZCLA Maezumi Roshi archives. ZCLA and UCLA are now working on a formal agreement for the archives.

Wisdom Circle update. Myoho reported that the Wisdom Circle is making significant progress on incorporating Marie Fortune's (Faith Trust Institute) recommendations into the ZCLA grievance policy.

Strategic Planning Report (Latest meeting minutes attached) Stewardship of the group is now shared by Muso and Myoho. Myoho reworked Debbie Ching's notes into a working document for group use to update progress in each area. **ACTION ITEM: Myoho & Dharma Joy to upload document to web for board access.**

Muso reported that succession planning is moving forward with the creation of documents that include a succession planning checklist.

ACTION ITEM: Board members are asked to join the 50th anniversary planning meeting on Oct. 12th at 1:30pm.

There was general discussion and review of the strategic planning process. The importance of coalescing and articulating a new Zen Center vision in order to energize the process was emphasized.

What is new vision? How do we open up to the wider community? Is becoming a Zen Peacemaker Order Group a significant avenue in doing this? How can we incorporate the board deeper into this process? What are we evolving into? Possible connections with other non-profits were discussed. The board discussed center training programs and the need to evolve.

Development Circle Report (attached)

The Development Circle announced that the \$10,000 Dharma Training Fund goal was exceeded this year! For the first time in Zen Center history, the DTF campaign was digital and did not include a large paper mailing, resulting in significant cost savings. The DC did mail letters to center members without email and followed up with in-person asks.

10. **Board Affairs Issues Discussion:**

Tim Zamora was invited to ask the board questions as part of his ongoing exploration of board practices. He was given a board application.

ACTION ITEM: Send Tim a board package containing the bylaws with job descriptions of board members (Not clear who owns this action item).

Muso distributed SFZC's Guidelines that Inform our Process as a Board. **ACTION ITEM: Dharma Joy will scan, clean-up and re-distribute the hand-out electronically to the Board.**

There was discussion as to term limits for board members in general. The board felt this was not appropriate for general members at this time. The board discussed the need for documented processes for recruitment, succession and protocols for board functioning. **Gojitsu was appointed to lead this effort.**

10. **Checkout / Four Vows**

Check-out Round

Chant the Four Vows.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown, Recording Secretary.

September 21, 2014 – ACTION ITEMS

General Procedures

Current Board reports and signed minutes from the previous meeting will be given to Mary Rios/Business Manager as soon after the meeting as possible.

Myoho/EC Steward will report Board decisions and other necessary information to Mary/Business Manager as soon after the meeting as possible.

Notification of decisions and information will be given to those effected (i.e. Residents, Teachers, Circles, Staff, etc.) prior to posting Board minutes.

Recording Secretary will forward the approved minutes to the Program Steward for posting on the Board section of ZCLA website.

Decisions and votes of the Board will be stated and recorded as resolutions and will be maintained in an annual list by the Recording Secretary.

Action Items:

1. Dharma-Joy – Make revisions to ZCLA loan protocol/organizational precept. Submit recommendation to Board at next future meeting.
2. ZCLA Mission Committee. Dharma-Joy & Roshi to draft revisions.
3. Finance Committee - Draft budget deficit reduction & revenue increase recommendations to board at September meeting.
4. Board – Attend the October 12th 50th Anniversary Planning Meeting at 1:30pm.
5. Myoho & Dharma-Joy - Upload Strategic Planning Master document to web for board access.
6. (Not clear who owns this action item) Send Tim a board package containing the bylaws with job descriptions of board members.
7. Dharma-Joy - Scan, clean-up and re-distribute the hand-out electronically to the Board.

Attachments to the minutes, which were distributed to the Board:

1)Agenda. 2) Financial Report. 3) P &L. 4) Balance Sheet. 5) Cash Statement. 6) Temple Co-Directors' Report. 7) Development Circle Report 8) Strategic Planning Committee Report 9) SFZC Board Process Document

2014 Board Meeting dates:

- Saturday, January 25, All Day Retreat, 8:00 – 5:00
- Sunday, January 26, Lunch with Residents
- Sunday, March 23, 1:30 – 4:30
- Saturday, May 10, All Day Retreat 9:00-5:00
- Sunday, May 18, 1:30 – 4:30
- Sunday, July 13, 1:30 – 4:30
- Sunday, September 21, 1:30 – 4:30
- Sunday, November 16, 1:30 – 4:30

**Terms of Directors
(3 year terms):**

Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao as Abbot is an ex officio director and is not included in elections.

Until December 31, 2014

Darla Myoho Fjeld
Patricia Muso Giggans
Bob Swan

Until December 31, 2015

Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown
Cliff Shishin Collins
Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert
Deborah Faith-Mind Thoresen

Until December 31, 2016

Dewayne Gojitsu Snodgrass
John Plum-Hermit Swanger

Approved

Date: _____, 2014 _____

Patricia Muso Giggans (President)

Date: _____, 2014 _____

Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert (CFO)

Date: _____, 2014 _____

Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown (Secretary)