

Zen Center of Los Angeles, Inc.

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

March 27, 2011

The Board of Directors of Zen Center of Los Angeles, Inc., a California nonprofit corporation, held a meeting at 1:30 p.m., March 27, 2011 at 923 S. Normandie Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

The following directors were present: Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert (CFO), Darla Myoho Fjeld, Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown, Bob Swan, DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass, John Plum-Hermit Swanger.

The following directors were away: Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen (Secretary), Patti Muso Giggans (President) and Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd (Abbot Seat Holder).

John Plum-Hermit Swanger served as recording secretary of the meeting.

1. Dharma-Joy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Those present sat zazen.
Check-in Round
2. Plum-Hermit facilitated Board Council practice.

The business portion of the meeting began at about 2:15.

3. Review of Agenda

Dharma-Joy led the Board in a review of the agenda, a copy of which is attached.

The Buddha Hand Circle's request to present feedback from residents on the final (effective April 1, 2011) Monastery Housing fee increase was added to the agenda for 3 p.m. The Board had some discussion on the importance of receiving this feedback and doing so in the spirit of Not-Knowing and Bearing Witness.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Board approved and signed the minutes from the January 23, 2011 meeting.

5. Review of Action Items

1. Dharma-Joy reported on the on-going issue of obtaining an affordable audit. He will send a Memberflash asking for contacts for a CPA. Brief discussion on the main purpose and scope of an audit – On-going.
2. Muso reported earlier on communications with Chris Panos re: the Peacemaker loan. The Board re-affirmed the need for full re-payment of the loan - Completed.
3. Myoho reported that the EC continues work on developing a policy for Dana to other Centers, as well as, for special causes or needs. A draft was sent to the Board prior to the meeting. – On-going.
4. Myoho – Send finalized Pet Policy to the Board - Completed. (The document is attached)
5. Myoho – Send the approved Staff Transition Overview to the Board. Completed. (The document is attached)
6. Dharma-Joy – Prepare 2010 Finacial Report, distribute to the Sangha. – On-going.
7. Plum-Hermit – Prioritize projects from Master Plan – On-going.
8. Plum-Hermit – Board Mission, Vision and Practices document – On agenda.
9. Muso – Convey to the donor the Board’s decision pertaining to the land in Arizona – Completed.
10. Sensei Kodo – Explore with the Teachers Circle ways to link with the Board – On-going.

The revised Action Items list is attached at the end of the minutes.

6a. Financial Reports

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Dharma-Joy presented the Financial Report, P & L Budget vs. Actual, Balance Sheet and Statement of Cash Flow as of the end of March. These reports are attached.

Dharma-Joy reported that both Expenses and Revenues are below projected levels. This is due mostly to recurring seasonal variations and the rhythm of the Zen Center calendar. The immediate result is that the projected deficit for 2011 is below the projected level.

BEQUEST REPORT:

Dharma-Joy reported that an expected bequest to the Center is continuing in probate. The exact amount of the bequest is not known.

BOOKSTORE:

Dharma-Joy proposed that Burt Wetanson be authorized for a Center credit card.

The following resolution was duly made, seconded and approved by the Board:

Resolved: "Burt Wetanson is authorized to receive a Zen Center of Los Angeles, Inc. UBOC credit card for use in connection with his work in the Zen Center Bookstore."

6b. Endowment and Investment Report

Bob Swan reported on the Endowment. The current total is \$113,831. Bob will send the 1st Quarter Endowment Report to the Board by e-mail.

7. Executive Circle Report

DONATION FOR EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

Myoho reported that the EC approved a \$300 donation on behalf of ZCLA to the North American office of Sotoshu to aid earthquake and tsunami relief in Japan.

ON-SITE EMERGENCY PERSON

Rosa Ando Martinez has been designated as the Center's interim on-site emergency contact person.

SECURITY HOURS PROPOSAL

Myoho sent a revised Security/Hours proposal to the Board that includes feedback from residents. The proposal will go to the Mandala Circle, Teachers Circle and Day Group for feedback. The proposal will include Bookstore hours.

Board members were asked to send their feedback on the proposal to Myoho for the EC.

DANA POLICY FOR ZCLA

Myoho sent a draft of ingredients, questions and areas pertaining to developing a Dana policy for the Center to the Board. She reviewed this for the Board including: Thinking through what dana is; possible donation categories; how priorities will be set; who decides on behalf of ZCLA?

Board members were asked to send their input to Myoho for the EC.

FACILITIES

Plum-Hermit and Myoho reported on bike storage for residents. Spaces have been designated for bike storage. The EC is working on bike registration forms and ways to assign and track storage.

A bike rack for non-residents has been approved and a spot designated.

The Chiden Room project is moving forward toward implementation. Faith-Mind continues to oversee that project.

The Center is purchasing two paintings for its collection, at the suggestion of Roshi, by the artist Inge Klimpt. The paintings are “Holocaust Buddhas”.

8. Development Circle Report

Plum-Hermit reported that the Dharma Training Fund mailer is on track to be sent out in mid-April.

The Angell Foundation Grant application was completed and submitted on March 21. The Center is requesting a \$48,000 grant for 2011. The Angell Foundation will send notification in June.

9. Mandala Circle

It was reported that one focus of the Mandala Circle’s work this year will be on the importance of communication as a personal and collective practice. This is reflected in the narrative that Sensei Kodo did for the Angell grant application.

It was also reported that the MHAE Prison Project and the Prison Circle will meet again on April 7.

It was reported that Andrew Rafferty, the man who had stalked the Center for several years, committed suicide in November, 2010. The Center recently learned of this. A memorial service will be held for him at Zen Center on Thursday, March 31.

10. Other Business

Affiliated Sitting Groups – whether or how the Board might acknowledge sitting groups affiliated with ZCLA – Tabled.

Disaster Preparedness Stewards – whether new stewards have been designated, who they are and the Board’s role – Tabled.

11. Mission, Vision and Practices Document

Plum-Hermit send out the revised document prior to the meeting for possible further discussion. (The document is attached).

No further discussion was deemed necessary at this time. The 'further questions for Board discussion' were not included in the document proposed for Board approval. The Board will continue discussions of those questions going forward.

The following resolution was duly made, seconded and approved by the Board:

Resolved: "The Board of Directors adopts the Board Mission, Vision and Practices document as sent to the Board on March 21."

It was agreed that Plum-Hermit would have the approved document sent out to the Sangha as a Membersflash. Dharma-Joy will post it on the Board section of the website.

12. New Business

The Buddha Hand Circle members Lorraine Gessho Kumpf (Steward) and Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson met with the Board at 3 p.m. They conveyed feedback they have received from residents on the final Monastery Housing fee increase, due to take effect on April 1.

The BHC recommended that the final increase be cancelled.

The Board and the BHC had some discussion and clarified some process questions. The Board re-stated its commitment to working with residents who have financial hardship as a result of the increase. The point person for that is Myoho. All such requests and discussions are conducted in confidence.

The Board thanked Gessho and Luminous-Heart for bringing the feedback forward. They left the meeting at 3:20 and the Board continued discussion of the feedback and recommendation. Myoho presented recent data on rents for comparable units in the neighborhood and found that rents continue to rise in the area. The Board re-affirmed its appreciation for the importance of the resident community for the well-being of Zen Center and its commitment to have ZCLA housing fees be at least 20% below the average rents in the area.

It was agreed that Plum-Hermit would send out a summary to the whole Board, including those not present at the meeting, for further discussion. Once a decision is reached by the Board Dharma-Joy will convey the Board's decision and reasoning to the BHC.

13. Closing

Check-out Round
Chant the Four Vows.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Recording Secretary.

Approved

Date: May ____, 2011

Bob Swan

Date: May ____, 2011

Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown

Date: May ____, 2011

Darla Myoho Fjeld

Date: May ____, 2011

DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass

Date: May ____, 2011

Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert

Date: May ____, 2011

John Plum-Hermit Swanger

ACTION ITEMS FROM March 2011 MEETING

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.

Decisions and votes of the Board will be stated and recorded as resolutions.

Action Items:

1. Dharma-Joy - ZCLA audit / Send Membersflash to Sangha re: referrals or accounting connections.
2. Myoho -- Policy on Center donations to other groups/causes. Continue to gather input.
3. Dharma-Joy – Prepare and distribute the 2010 Financial Report to the Sangha.
4. Plum-Hermit – Draft facilities projects priorities from Master Plan for the Board.
5. Sensei Kodo - Explore in the Teachers Circle ways to link with the Board.
6. Bob Swan – Send 1st Quarter Endowment report.
7. Board members – Send feedback on Dana Policy to Myoho/EC.
8. Board members – Send input on Security Hours Policy to Myoho/EC.
9. Plum-Hermit / Dharma-Joy – Send Board Mission as Memberflash. Post on website.
10. Plum-Hermit / Dharma-Joy – Write summary of BHC feedback. Convey Board's decision to the BHC.

SOMEDAY

1. Dharma-Joy – recommendations regarding financial support for Abbots in retirement