

ZEN CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES September 16, 2015
City Center

Attendance

Board members present: Larry Bye, Linda Ruth Cutts, Helen Degenhardt, Bruce Fortin, Roger Hillyard, Albert Kutchins, Mark Lachman, Brian McCaffrey, Dennis McNally, Margie O'Driscoll, Joe Rodriguez, Ed Sattizahn, Mark Schieble, Fu Schroeder, and Anna Thorn.

Board members absent: Jon Voss

SFZC officers present: Rita Cummings, Susan O'Connell, and Jordan Thorn. Mimi Saunders (recording).

Guest speakers: Allison Crump, Emerging Leadership Forum (ELF) participants, Maria Linsao

Guests: Tova Green, Nancy Petrin

Approval of Agenda & Minutes

Helen moved to approve the August 20, 2015 minutes and Bruce seconded the motion. The board voted -- with one abstention -- to approve the minutes.

Abbess/Abbot reports

Linda is in the process of offering dharma transmission to Tova Green. Linda felt the Expanded Abbots Council and Paths and Gates process functioned the way it should this year. The San Quentin Zen Group recently became one of Zen Center's affiliates. The Cultural Awareness and Inclusivity Committee (CAIC) interviewed a person who may be selected to assist with diversity training. Linda will be writing a letter for *Sangha News* on the ongoing development of SFZC's endowment investment policy. She will also be bringing a disability policy to the board for approval. Thinking ahead to the Tri-Temple meeting in January, Linda wondered if the issues raised by the ELF group could serve as the meeting focus.

Ed reported that he will be doing a jukai with Lien Shutt. They will be offering the precepts to five of Lien's students. Lien is the first person of color who has led a jukai in the City Center Buddha Hall in quite some time. The search is ongoing for firms whose investment fund screening would meet the criteria requested by the board. Fall practice period begins in two weeks and City Center is going through a transformation as new senior staff members David Zimmerman and Darcy Wallace arrive. A new ino and tenzo will also be joining us. The RBT program at City Center has dropped from 26 to 16 persons and CC is being very careful about the folks coming in.

Fu reported that Green Gulch Farm is in the midst of many changes. A new pathway to the Welcome Center was completed and Work Week crews were involved in many different projects. Anna Thorn is the new tenzo where she will help set up a kitchen apprentice program. The apprentice programs seem very effective at creating a cohort of students and bringing clarity to their training. GGF has accepted 44 people for the practice period which begins in a few weeks. Fu will be traveling to celebrate Reirin's entrance as resident teacher at Milwaukee Zen Center. She also reported that Angel Kyodo Williams recently visited and taught at Green Gulch and the hope is that she will come again.

President's report

Susan said it was important to talk about succession planning from both the short-term and long-term perspective. She praised the work Gib has done with the NextGen group and underscored her continued commitment to mentoring. The Wilderness Foundation has asked again if ZC would sell The Pines property outside Tassajara. Susan continues to work with David Prowler on the Senior Living project. We didn't get responsive proposals from our last round of RFPs. Everyone wants to be involved in design, but we want construction oversight and financial expertise. We're trying another round of organizations. We've chosen Maria Dwight to work with us on marketing and we sent a term sheet to the property owners and requested a written response by September 24. The Sangha Project submitted a letter of interest for a \$25,000 grant to Kalliopeia Foundation. We're planning a way to communicate with internal audiences about how the project is being refined in response to input from the board and other groups. Brian and Ed have prepared a term sheet detailing the relationship between ZC and Sangha Project. One pressing need is a sufficient family policy. We would likely need to organize a taskforce to accomplish this.

Finance committee report on budget performance for the year

Helen reported that the committee has reviewed the first quarter of FY16 (ending in July). Zen Center is about \$55,000 ahead of projected net revenue; however, this will drop when Tassajara guest season closes and the GGF farm season ends. All of the projected personnel costs are on target. Programming expenses – with the exception of online programs – will likely be the over budget. Although Tassajara guest expenses were lower than projected, we appear to be hitting a ceiling in terms of how much revenue can be generated. GGF revenue was \$100,000 over projections. At the end of September when the August numbers are in, the committee will recalibrate the budget. All directors and department heads will be invited to participate. The committee is also working with Susan on the accounting office restructuring and re-staffing and consultant costs, which will prove useful in the next budget cycle.

There was a brief discussion about how to increase hospitality income at GGF and CC. In addition, Rita confirmed that the CIO was trying to work within the existing FY16 budget and was starting to plan priorities and expenses for FY17 budget.

Plans for board October Harvest solicitation effort

Margie and Dennis reported that every member of the board has agreed to participate in the October Harvest development effort. In the next few days, board members will receive the names of those who they will contact, a script, and a 6-week schedule from Development. Margie, Mark, and Dennis will check in and support everyone. We'll have a progress check-in during the Board Retreat at Tassajara. Mark underscored how important it is for the board to model fundraising.

Next Board Meeting + 2015 Calendar

October 9-11, 2015	Board Retreat	Tassajara
November 18, 2015	4-8:30pm	Greens
December 13, 2015	4-6:30pm	Holiday Party at Greens

Respectfully Submitted,
Mimi Saunders

Attachments: TDC materials on balance sheets for organizations and Secretary role resolution.