

**Clouds in Water Zen Center  
November Board Meeting**

**November 10, 2013**

Attending: Carla Breunig, Kurt Errickson, Sosan Theresa Flynn, Carol Iwata, Nathan Thompson, Sergio Valverde, Rachel Vilsack, Wally Waranka, Elizabeth Wroblewski

Not present: Karin Aguilar-San Juan, Arlene Kelly, Angus MacDonald, Byakuren Judith Ragir

**Nathan called the meeting to order at 11:15 AM**

**AGENDA**

**I. General Announcements**

Elizabeth shared with the Board her decision to step down in order to serve the Sangha in other capacities, including fundraising.

The Board offered their appreciation to Elizabeth and her work on the Board.

**II. Membership Appeal Update**

Sosan provided membership and fall appeal updates as of 11/17/2013 at \$52,172, which includes \$49,751 membership pledges and gifts, and \$2,421 in fall appeal gifts.

Sosan reminded the Board that Give to the Max Day is Thursday, November 14 and we have a \$10,000 match. (Donations up to \$10,000 will be matched.)

Sosan said she felt the membership and fall appeal is on track, compared to previous years. She noted that one difference is that we set this year's goal (at \$100,000) higher than in past years.

Nathan mentioned that his address to the Sangha next Sunday will be about creative ways of giving, including suggesting that people ask their family/friends to donate to Clouds on your behalf, to plant seeds of giving.

Sosan will look into the ability of eTapestry to set up a gift or legacy feature, so that someone could make a gift on someone else's behalf. Both the giver and the recipient would receive an email acknowledging the donation.

## **II. Retreat Planning Committee**

Rachel will work to ensure participation in the Doodle poll for Board meetings and starting a new poll for the Annual Retreat, possibly opening up Saturdays in February.

Nathan asked for volunteers for the retreat planning committee. Carol volunteered. Sosan said she may be able to help. There was interest in seeing if one of the Board members not present to also assist.

## **III. Space Committee Framework and Plan**

Carla shared a Space Committee Framework and Plan document that identified five goal, action steps and tentative time frames. [See attachment.]

Nathan asked about what a site proposal would look for the Board, in effect, would this be exploratory or something that the group would need to seriously consider acting upon?

Carla said that if a property meets our space specification and budget, the Board would see a site proposal before outside contractors would be brought in to assess renovation or other cosmetic fixes. She mentioned this might be more common for a leased space.

Carol offered a suggestion that the Space Committee could involve the Board when there is a property that involves some concrete steps or deadlines, like timeline for renovation and that don't require us to expend a large sum of money.

Carol and Carla suggested that a development and fundraising committee be formed.

The Board discussed a timeline for when we need to begin assessing site proposals. A date of November 1, 2014 was selected.

Elizabeth suggested that we have two Space Committee plans: the one Carla shared and a mobilization plan on who can assist us if we find a property that we need to act on quickly.

Kurt has approached a realtor who specializes in downtown St. Paul properties, and the Space Committee is working with another metro realtor.

Rachel will set up a document space on the Google Drive for Board update (written by Nathan), Space Committee updates (written by Carla), and a teaching (first month written by Byakuren).

[This action item is a carry-over from last month.]

#### **IV. Google Drive**

Sosan has started to collect Board manual materials in electronic form that will be stored in a Board Materials folder in Google Drive.

#### **V. 2014 Stub Budget**

Sosan shared a draft of the January to June 2014 stub budget. Some items she noted:

- Need an increase in membership donations due to the free (dana) offering for Youth Practice
- Make sure we have rental income for Jizo Hall
- May need an event (auction) with a target amount of \$3,000
- May want to look for a rental partner(s) for Jizo Hall
- Discontinue Zen Dog program

Sosan mentioned a monetary gift from an anonymous donor to be used as seed money for a capital campaign.

Additional expense items that need to be added to the budget include:

- Making the website more mobile friendly
- New staff computers

Sosan added that it would be important to look at our technology plan, which could include computers, podcasting or making classes or Dharma talks more accessible.

Carla suggested looking at the Sangha survey to identify people who might be interested in joining a short-term technology committee. Carol and Wally volunteered to help.

Sosan mentioned a few differences that we need to look closely at between the 2014 Stub budget and the 2014-2015 budget, and how expenses are assigned in these budgets. These decision items include:

- Spring Appeal or other fundraising events
- Technology budget
- Jizo hall
- Deciding about payroll, in context of capital campaign seed monies

Elizabeth inquired about re-assessing our topics of class offerings and programming. This information will be shared with the Teacher Ryo.

Sergio shared his experience with curriculum design and an interest in helping with the young adult programming meetings that are already occurring.

Carla asked if a separate account is needed for capital campaign fundraising. Sosan will ask the banker for a recommendation.

The Board brainstormed ideas for a spring fundraisers, including a hosted music event and auction.

The Board brainstormed ideas for Jizo hall, including finding a renter and ways to go about finding one (marketing the space to arts organizations who might have connections).

Nathan discussed the timeline for voting on the 2014 Stub budget (December) and the 2014-2015 budget (February).

Carol added that one idea for of an annual retreat could include a discussion on programming, and how are our vision/beliefs are manifesting themselves.

**Nathan called the meeting closed at 1:18 PM.**

Board minutes submitted by Rachel Vilsack.

## ATTACHMENT

### **FRAMEWORK AND PLAN: Space Committee in conjunction with Board**

#### **-- Goals, Action Steps, Tentative Time Frames -- November 2013**

Goal #1: The Space Committee will make 1 or 2 site proposals to the Board for consideration by \_\_\_\_\_.  
[Need to choose date]. Action steps for this goal:

- Work with realtor(s) to research and identify possible sites.
- Distribute the Space Specifications to various City of St Paul and local groups: City Council members and their staff, Mayor Coleman's office, PED (St Paul Planning and Economic Development), Metropolitan Council, neighborhood economic development groups, etc. [Nov - Dec 2013]
- Learn how to do our own searches using [www.mncar.org](http://www.mncar.org) website.
- Distribute the Space Specifications to the interfaith connections developed in 2012 and 2013 as a result of the Vote No campaign and marriage legislation for LGBT couples. [Nov - Dec 2013]
- The Space Committee will use the pre-screening "check off" list as a way of evaluating whether to go look at a property.
- Meet with Ken Ford to understand the details around zoning in St. Paul [Dec 2013]

Goal #2: The Space Committee will monitor possible sites that involve collaboration and that are contingent upon financing by other groups (public and private). It will also make efforts to forward the goal of collaboration and cooperation with other compatible spiritual groups, non-profits or other businesses.

- Complete Letter of Interest for Wakan Tipi/Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary site (due 11/22/2013). Keep board informed of developments on this project.
- Set up a meeting with the three Christian churches in Minneapolis who share a space: get a tour of their space and have the opportunity to ask questions and learn what makes their collaboration work for them.
- Monitor status of St. Paul Recreation Centers, those that are being "re-purposed" by the City of St. Paul.
- Stay in touch with Woman Well regarding their plans for their building.

Goal #3: The Space Committee will inform the Board about other ground work that needs to be laid in order to support the search for space, purchase or lease of space, renovation if needed, and implementation of inhabiting the new space.

- For example, if we needed to hire a General Contractor for renovation work, we would need to raise funds for this.

Goal #4: Communicate regularly with the sangha about the actions undertaken by the Space Committee.

- With the board, send a monthly email with a Space Committee update.
- With the board, include this update in the monthly newsletter.
- Answer questions from individual sangha members (in-person and via email). Email questions addressed to either Kurt or Carla.

Goal #5: Continue to understand the demographics of our sangha and broader community, and how these relate to site location.

- Conduct a zip code analysis of our St. Paul members and friends: how many live in each zip code area.
- Conduct other market analyses as needed.