

Still Mountain Community Meeting Minutes July 12, 2015

1. Mary Grannan reported on Turner Center and Community Rec & Ed's concerns about Dana discussion as part of classes.
2. Teachers' Council report by David: Council has been discussing processes and priorities, including teaching at retreats. Two retreats a year are planned, one with Still Mountain teachers and one led by outside teachers. They have been discussing other formats for teaching, such as workshops. The October 2015 retreat will be led by Bilha and David. Registration is open first to Sangha members, until August 17. This retreat is open to all levels.

Shyla Catherine will lead the October 2016 retreat. She comes at the wisdom aspect of Vipassana from concentration practice. She will lead a longer retreat in 2017, either May or September, for 10 days.

Registration for the October retreat is in the email sent to Sangha members, but those just taking classes need to be told to either sign up for emails or register via the website when that opens up.

3. Sondra Villafuente, would like to join Still Mountain as a teacher and will be teaching with Hugh in Plymouth. In response to a question about plans for teacher training within Still Mountain, David commented that the need has been acknowledged and he has some thoughts about it but no plans made yet. This planning is likely to start toward the end of this year and continuing into 2016, with training to start in 2017.
4. Marketing: Erica asked if there are more Still Mountain bookmarks that can be handed to students in classes. Hugh will take care of contacting Simon to see if there are any left, and if not, to have more made.
5. Jackie's proposal to donate to the #BlackLivesMatter movement led to discussion of the issue of donating to outside organizations. Donation to a political group is problematic, given our non-profit status. We decided that at this point we could make a donation of up to \$200 but would need a written proposal for any request. There was also some feeling that the community as a whole rather than the Board should make any decision about such a donation.
6. Hugh had previously talked about upgrading website—decision was that we don't need to do this yet. Carola is working on getting a Paypal donation button up on website.
7. Election of new directors: Anita, Jim, and Yair will be going off Board. Jim raises question of whether a group as small as ours needs to have a very active board.
8. Bylaws discussion: legalese is necessary, and the model was Pat Conner's work for IMA2. The contributions and suggestions of Erica and Sara R., who both read the by-laws through carefully, was acknowledged.

The by-laws require an annual meeting of the community, and Erica asked what the difference would be between this annual meeting and monthly meetings. Jim said the purpose of the annual meeting is mainly to elect new directors. Judi suggested that it also include a retrospective of the

past year---what we've done in the past year, and as Erica suggests, looking ahead to teachers' plans for the next year.

Usha asked about opportunities for community members to weigh in on issues. (she hadn't been getting emails---underlining the importance of getting interested people on email list.)

There was clarification of some of the legal language, e.g., an "adjourned" meeting of the Board is a meeting that has been rescheduled due to lack of a quorum.

Jim reviewed the changes and alterations to the by-laws.

9. Concerns about lack of ethnic diversity in Western Buddhist communities and the issues of supporting the #Blacklivesmatter movement resulted in a good discussion of the importance of working on our own racial issues before considering outreach to other communities. Such work on ourselves could include cultivating mindfulness of implicit biases and of white privilege. Jackie will raise this issue at another community meeting, to get a sense of level of interest and people willing to be on a committee to set up some kind of training.
10. There was further discussion of processes for community meetings: need for someone to help Sarah as facilitator, and pros and cons of talking stick.

Minutes submitted by Judi Green