

STILL MOUNTAIN MARCH COMMUNITY MEETING

March 8, 2015 @ 11:00 a.m.

-Meeting commenced shortly after 11:00 a.m.

-Meeting facilitated by Jim MacBain, President of the Board, who circulated an agenda listing four items of Board Business, a Teachers' Council Report, and Issues from the Community.

Board Business

Treasurer's report: Hugh

Hugh reported that Still Mountain has filed with the IRS for status as an organization to which contributions can be claimed on tax returns as deductions for charitable donations. Approval is expected within a few months; once received, the status will be retroactive for 27 months, meaning any contributions since Still Mountain was formed presumably will be eligible.

Hugh circulated copies of the current financial statement, which included estimated ongoing monthly expenses of approximately \$390 (Turner Center, web site, liability insurance), about \$1000 of one-time expenses to which we are already committed (IRS nonprofit filing, Howell Nature Center deposit for fall retreat), and total dana income of \$1371 since December. Although the current bank balance is \$1124, Still Mountain will still be responsible for Turner Center fees for January and February and an insurance payment of approximately \$320 due in June. In short, our finances are very, very tight and we all are encouraged to contribute as generously as we can.

Work is in process on a "donor button" for the web site that will make online contributions possible. This feature is not yet functional but is expected to be soon.

Member-at-large position: Jim

Jim reported that there had been two candidates for the open member-at-large position on the Board, but one of them has withdrawn. Judi Green, the remaining candidate, was selected by acclamation.

Insurance update: Jim

As of this past Wednesday (March 4, 2015), Jim announced, Still Mountain has liability insurance, which covers Board members, teachers, and accidental.

Community Meetings: Yair

Following up on our discussion in February regarding Still Mountain's organizational structure and decision-making processes, Yair explained that the Board is recommending the establishment of a Community Meeting Committee to take over responsibility for the Community Meetings. As proposed by the Board, this Committee's functions will include:

- * Setting monthly agendas for the Community Meetings (in addition to the standing items, such as Board reports and Teachers' Council reports);
- * Facilitating the Community Meetings;
- * Identifying a Secretary to take minutes of the Community Meetings;

- * Arranging for snacks before the Community Meetings.

There were questions for clarification, no objections to the plan were raised, appreciation for the Board's follow-up to last month's discussion was expressed. Su Hansen volunteered to serve on the Committee. David said that he was aware of another person whom he believed would be interested in also serving, but he was hesitant to mention her name in her absence. The Board hopes that the Committee will be functional soon enough to conduct the April Community Meeting.

Teachers' Council Report

Announcements

Representing the Teachers' Council, David made a number of announcements and asked for community input regarding days of meditation.

- * The needs assessment previously reported and discussed has been designed and initiated: the online section has been sent out and everyone is asked to please give their input (an in-person section was completed following sitting this morning); results will be compiled and fed back to the sangha.
- * We are still planning a retreat this fall at Howell Nature Center.
- * We have opted out of bringing Jason Siff back for another retreat this summer; his tight schedule offered few options and the logistics were not favorable for us.
- * Shaila Catherine has agreed to come in the latter part of next year (i.e., of 2016) to do a retreat. Information about specifics will be sent out when available.
- * Publication of the interview that Crazy Wisdom did with David has been postponed from their spring issue until fall.

Days of meditation

The Teachers' Council has been discussing the possibility of offering days of meditation on occasion, which would include some instruction and opportunities for extended sitting together. David asked the group whether there would be interest in this, and a number of those present indicated that they would be.

Issues from the Community

Marketing concerns

The need for someone to volunteer to work on marketing Still Mountain and our various offerings to the community at large was raised. There was widespread agreement with this and discussion followed. Individuals volunteered to provide specific contributions to our marketing efforts (e.g., Mariko can send information to certain U of M folks, Judi is interested in working on a list of places that marketing information should be sent, Su can provide information about Crazy Wisdom's publication deadlines), but no one was in a position to take on the main job of being in charge of our marketing. A brainstorm next month to identify places that marketing information might be sent was suggested and agreed upon. Linda Longo will facilitate this short 10-15 min session. Jim MacBain will send out an email soliciting a volunteer to take on the role of

marketing efforts. The email will also alert folks about the brief brainstorming session at our next Community meeting.

Teacher training

The question was raised whether Still Mountain will have a teacher training program. David responded that he expects that we will have one and that it probably will involve approximately a three year commitment by those involved, but that there are no specific plans in place at this time.

Other sitting opportunities

A question was asked about opportunities to sit other than our Sunday sittings, including with other groups in the community and/or the possibility of forming new such groups. A major issue in forming such a group is finding an appropriate space. Some resources for sitting were cited (e.g., IMA2, Deep Spring). Kalyana mitta groups were mentioned, although Still Mountain does not yet have an established way of helping to organize them. Jim MacBain will add a list of local opportunities to our website.

Online vehicle for social communication

A suitable vehicle for online social communication among us (i.e., apart from the official Still Mountain email list) has not yet been identified. Hugh explained that the issues are complex and technical. There was brief discussion of certain features of things like Google Groups and Dropbox. The search will continue.

Length of meetings

It was pointed out that the meeting had run longer than the hour that the Board had suggested for today. Jim explained that the Board had intended to propose that Community Meetings be limited to an hour. Lively discussion ensued, with several of those present expressing support for the idea that meetings may need to be longer than one hour, especially while we are still in an early stage of organizational development. A show of hands indicated a mix of opinions, with some in favor of limiting meetings to one hour and some in favor of the need to allow them to go longer, with the latter more numerous than the former.

Meeting concluded at approximately 12:25. Next Community Meeting: April 12, 2015, @ 11:00 a.m.