

DHARMA COUNCIL MEETING

November 10, 2022

The purpose of the Dharma Council is to assist and advise the Abbot and Godo in determining matters of liturgy and teaching. The Dharma Council provides oversight and stewardship of Dharma presentation and practice at DRZC to support its core mission and values.

In Attendance: Gabe, Kengan, Enji, Jyōshin, Jiko

Absent: Sokuchū, Daikō, Christina

Facilitator: Gabe

Location: Zoom

Recorder: Enji

Agenda

1. Tiny Meditation
2. 60-Second Check-in
3. Approved Minutes from prior meeting
4. Next Meeting Date: 12/15/22 (Celebrate departing members)
5. Updates on action Items from previous meeting(s):
 - a. Jiko will bring the idea of trying an Ango theme to the teachers group, as well as the suggestion for classes on Liturgy as a theme for Weds nights after Jukai. (Complete - Not much enthusiasm for the idea of Ango themes; Gyoshi plans to do a class series on Bodhisattva Vows for Weds nights after Jukai. Will expand to include “vow” in general. Kengan and Sosetsu will collaborate)
 - b. Jiko will raise the need for additional vetting of Weds evening discussion topics with the teacher’s group. (Complete - future shusos will involve their teachers in the vetting process)
6. Questions for Today’s Meeting:
 - a. *What are next steps to take for recruiting new DC members? Engage teacher’s group and other seniors for recommendations? E-bulletin?*
 - i. Background: Jiko has identified one candidate who is interested. We have space for up to 3 new members. Summary of main discussion points: We want to directly recruit people first rather than put out a call in the e-bulletin, and if we only recruit 2 new members instead of 3, that’s OK..
 - ii. Action items: Jyoshin will ask another potential candidate suggested by Jiko. Gabe will facilitate DC communication between meetings about additional candidates if needed.

- b. Follow up on creating a more comfortable environment for non-residents on Sesshin: What changes have been implemented? What further adaptations would be supportive? (Jiko)
 - i. Background: It was previously suggested that non-residents be provided with a place for breaks, a comfortable place to rest, a way to take showers, etc... Upgrades are currently planned for the library and dorms - can we fold this in as part of that project?
 - ii. Summary of main discussion points: Comfort of people staying overnight is covered, but not so much for people who are not staying the night.
 - iii. Decided: Kengan will add this concern to temple officers agenda, so the shika and shuso can be part of this conversation.
- c. Discussion topic (Jiko): For years DRZC participated in ongoing dialogue with local evangelicals. A few DRZC members are working with a few evangelicals to get this started again. What ideas do DC members have about presenting this opportunity to the community, engaging new participants, and guiding the ongoing process?
 - i. Brief context, situation, or issue: Is this something we want to bring back to our Zen Center practice? Is there interest in the sangha?
 - ii. Summary of main discussion points: This feels like a meaningful dialogue in these polarized times. Jyoshin knows of at least one person who may be interested in participating if it happens again. We will need a point person on the DRZC side who can work on the logistics. It could be someone gets it rolling, and someone else emerges as a point person later. If it's just organizing it, Jyoshin may be willing to do some initial coordination, perhaps as her Dharma Council role. Note: the group worked better when it was a dedicated group who agreed to meet once a month for a year.
 - iii. Decided: Jyoshin will talk with some folks and explore possible next steps.

7. Recurring Monitoring Reports and Announcements:

- a. Temple Officers: DRZC library update - a new/returning Daoren is resuming care of the library on a weekly basis (this is great news!) and also Uji is scheduled for a remodel/new, more comfortable seating in the new year; Property update - the Board is continuing to look into use of the property for housing; DEI update - a guest speaker and workshop leader was well received; Form - seniors will be encouraged to model zendo forms and help newcomers, to help them feel welcome; Seijiki sesshin update - went well.
- b. Dharma Rain Active Transmitted Teachers: No update
- c. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: in process of planning December DEI forum. The goal is to be a chance to listen to people's aspirations.
- d. Other Reports/Announcements: Jiko and Jyoshin have started the process of reviewing DRZC's liturgy with an equity lens.

- e. We have a guest speaker on Nov. 20th. Would be good to label guest teachers and guest speakers in the ebulletin.

8. Action Item Assignments and Deadlines

- a. Jyoshin will ask another potential DC candidate suggested by Jiko.
- b. Gabe will facilitate DC communication between meetings about additional DC candidates if needed.
- c. Kengan will add the topic of creating a comfortable environment for non-overnight retreat participants to the Temple Officer's agenda
- d. Jyoshin will do some exploration around the topic of resurrecting the dialogue with evangelicals.