

DHARMA COUNCIL MEETING

April 18, 2024

The Dharma Council provides oversight and stewardship of Dharma presentation and practice at DRZC to support its core mission and values.

In Attendance: Myo'i, Daikō, Christina, Jyōshin, Gabe

Absent: Jiko, Sanin

Facilitator: Daiko

Location: Uji

Recorder: Gabe

Agenda

1. Tiny Meditation
2. 60-Second Check-in
3. Approved Minutes from prior meeting
4. Next Meeting Date: May 9, 2024. Daiko will not be present for the May or June meeting. We need volunteers to facilitate those meetings. **Myo'i will facilitate May meeting and Jyoshin will facilitate June meeting (tentatively)**
5. Member Concerns, if any: A Member would like to expand the scope of the Sangha Support Network (see agenda item "e" below)
6. Updates on action Items from previous meeting(s):
 - a. DC members not present at today's meeting will vote via email on whether to approve the development of the "New Member Advisor" position. **APPROVED VIA EMAIL**
 - b. DC members not present at today's meeting will vote via email on whether to invite a particular senior member to join the DC. **APPROVED VIA EMAIL**
 - c. All members to review the Guidelines for Cohort Groups prior to the April meeting.
 - d. DC members not present at today's meeting will vote via email on whether to approve starting an Avatamsaka Sutra chanting group. **APPROVED VIA EMAIL. DAIKO INFORMED KAKUON OF OUR APPROVAL**
7. Questions/Topics for Today's Meeting:
 - a. Guidelines for Cohort Groups
 - i. *Background:* Gabe is suggesting that the Guidelines for Cohort Groups document be reviewed/edited - in particular with regard to the requirement that all group members "sign on to the Ethics Statement".
 - ii. *Summary of Main discussion points:* We don't actually have a document for people to sign. We have DRZC's booklet: *Ethics and Precepts in Sangha Relationships*

- iii. *Decided:* The language about group members signing on to the Ethics Statement can be changed to “all members are expected to abide by Dharma Rain’s ethical guidelines as detailed in our Ethics and Precepts in Sangha Relationships booklet.
 - iv. **Action Item(s): Gabe will edit the language Guidelines for Cohort Groups document**
- b. New Dharma Council Member Recruitment
- i. *Background:* Ko’in has agreed to join the Dharma Council.
 - ii. **Action Item(s): Jyoshin will add Ko’in to Dharma Council email and Google Docs lists. Gabe will add a link to the Dharma Council Roles document to our notes template.**
- c. Proposal from Sage to start a Zen Poetry Cohort Group.
- i. *Background:* See email to the Dharma Council from Sage
 - ii. *Decided:* Proposal approved
 - iii. **Action Item(s): Myo’i will let Sage know that the Dharma Council approves the Zen Poetry Group; Myo’i will look into the status of the Mental Health Practitioner Cohort Group proposal; Myo’i will review what is currently on the website with regards to Cohort Groups and consider adding relevant content and documents - e.g. descriptions of current cohort groups, guidelines for cohort groups, new group proposal forms etc..)**
- d. Proposal to change the dates of Jukai in order to add more classes to the Precept Class Series.
- i. *Background:* The most repeated comment in the Class evaluations from the most recent series of Precepts Classes was that we needed more classes in this series. If we move the Jukai sesshin back 2 weeks we could increase the number of classes in the series from 6 to 8.
 - ii. *Summary of main discussion points:* DRATT discussed this and were OK with extending, but felt it was a DC decision.
 - iii. *Decided:* The Dharma Council is fine with making the change from 6 to 8 weeks.
 - iv. **Action Item(s): Gabe will notify Genko that the Dharma Council approves this change and ask Sanin to update the Master Record of Classes document**
- e. Sangha Forum Debrief - Takeaways? Follow up?

- i. *Background:* Here are the [notes from the Sangha Forum Q&A](#)
- ii. *Summary of main discussion points:* Sokyo suggested that Sangha Support Network needs additional promotion and expansion to include visits. Other sangha members also suggested that many DRZC programs and resources like informal sanzen could be advertized/publicized more effectively.

Regarding potential expansion of Sangha Support Network to include visits: There are liability and boundary issues to consider, and liability is primarily in the Board's domain. A bulletin board approach where members can post requests might be effective and reduce DRZC liability. It used to be that there was a smaller list of vetted folks who signed up to offer sangha support. Perhaps home visits are an aspect of sangha support that could be extension of the Hand in Hand program? It would be good to look carefully at types of possible sangha support and define scope/limits of what is offered and by whom.

With regard to publicizing programs and resources: There was a push recently to have Shuso announcements be shorter; More E-bulletin promotion with links to website content could be helpful; Much of this info is in the blue book - perhaps this could be put on the website? Establishing the New Member Advisor position will likely be helpful with this - they could consider ways to orient new members. For example, DRZC used to send out new member packets. We could consider offering periodic "Orientation to DRZC" workshops with emphasis on navigating our programs and structures, detailing ways to get support etc... These orientations could fit in well after Sunday AM programs.

- iii. *Decided: Let's invite Ryotan to the next Dharma Council meeting to discuss expansion and promotion of the Sangha Support Network.*
- iv. ***Action Item(s): Daiko will invite Ryotan to the next Dharma Council meeting. Gabe will email Zonnyo (as Shika) and Reiju (e-bulletin) about adding content and links to the e-bulletin.***

- f. Wesak - The Dharma Garden Council would like to go back to having the Wesak celebration happen at 10:30 (in the place of the dharma talk) instead of 9:40 (in the place of service) to allow for Dharma School participation, and a more "processional" feel. **Deferred to next meeting.**
- g. Little Library Proposal from Daoren - **To be continued next meeting.**

Background: See 4/18 email from Daiko for full proposal. The Little Library would be a free standing box of dharma related books available for anyone to take

from, or donate to. Daoren would be primarily responsible for overseeing the installation and maintenance of the Little Library. Daoren is requesting the Dharma Council approval of the project as a starting point. Who else needs to approve it?

Summary of main discussion points: Most libraries of this kind accept all kinds of book donations, and we wouldn't want to encourage donations which would then be removed by Daoren.

Action item(s): All DC members will look at the little library proposal more closely and bring questions to our next meeting.

8. Recurring Monitoring Reports and Announcements
9. Action Item Assignments