



Dharma Rain

Zen Center

Guidelines for Filling a Vacancy in the Abbacy

Version date: 07/04/2021

If the Abbot's position were to become vacant without a Board-authorized successor because the previous Abbot suddenly died, became incapacitated, resigned, or otherwise suddenly left the abbacy without a successor, the Elders Council would immediately meet to plan a course of action to assist and advise the Board in finding, recruiting and selecting candidates. The exact process may vary depending on circumstances, but the guidelines below are provided for reference.

1. The Elders Council would assist the Board in contacting and consulting with possible outside advisors about the Abbot selection process as necessary. Outside advisors may include other American Zen abbots familiar with our temple and previous abbots, members of American Zen Teachers Association and the Soto Zen Buddhists Association of North America who are familiar with Dharma Rain's style of practice.

2. The council would assist the Board to prepare a "Notice of Available Position" that would be distributed within the American Zen communities. The Notice would include the following:

- A description of the Abbot's role including duties and responsibilities
- The temple's compensation statement including the proposed range of salary and description of non-monetary compensations
- A description of the temple's candidate selection process including (1) the procedures for candidates' review, evaluation and hiring; (2) a listing of the Board's evaluation and

selection personnel including any outside advisors; and (3) communication procedures for potential candidates during the evaluation process.

- A list of candidate evaluation criteria that will be followed during the selection process.
- A candidate selection timeline that could include milestone dates for (1) the formal advertising of the vacancy, (2) submittal of applications or statement of interests, (3) review of applications, (4) interviews, (5) internal evaluation period, (6) candidate notification and negotiation, and (7) formal announcement.

3. The council would initiate and oversee the preparation of an information packet that would be distributed by the Board to all serious potential candidates. This package would include items such as: The Elders Council Statement of Lineage Tradition and Temple Culture, a history of Dharma Rain, a description of membership composition and physical assets, the temple organization model with a description of the duties of temple officers and councils, the latest approved annual financial statement, and other items as appropriate.

4. While the abbacy is vacant, the council would work jointly with the Board and other temple councils to ensure that operations continue to function normally. During this time of transition, the council would maintain its oversight responsibilities to ensure the stability of the temple's culture and the processes that maintain it.

5. The council would assist the Board with communications and presentations to the general sangha, informing the sangha of the candidate selection process and of any decisions reached during the Board evaluation. The council would also assist the Board with communications to the American Zen community in general, the Portland Buddhist community, and the local public at large.