

# Dharma Rain Zen Center

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2021 via Zoom

**Present:** Kakumyo Lowe-Charde (K); Stacy Zonnyo Riger (2); Rick Hogetsu Mitchell (1); J. Kakuon Christian (3); Kevin Ansui Geoffrey (6); Carrie Schultz (2); Alice Chan (guest); Jean Renso Bond (guest); Sam Murphy (guest).

**Absent:** Sarah Zuiryu Flynn (5); Jeanna Annen Moyer (T); Kevin Minshu Dorney (resigned).

**Quorum:** Met

November minutes have been approved.

There are currently no meetings scheduled for 2022.

### Update Previous Action Items:

Kakuon has not yet drafted a statement on the board's position on nominating new members who do not have a long relationship with the temple.

Kakumyo presented a proposal on non-monetary memberships. (See below.)

Zonnyo has contracted with a consultant on DEI workshops. (See below.)

Kakumyo reported back to the HSC Committee on the board's reasons for relaxing Covid restrictions. (See below.)

Kakuon talked to Minshu about his availability for board meetings. Due to a hectic and unpredictable work schedule, he has resigned.

**Member Concerns:** In November, Gabe Penk submitted a letter of resignation from his position as garden manager and from practice at Dharma Rain. He cited his "concern and disappointment" with the "temple's overall culture," including "an inability to recognize and substantially address issues of privilege, a relatively 'apolitical' attitude, and limited demonstration of support for all the ways the temple receives support." The board discussed the letter, with members expressing regret that Gabe is leaving, and understanding for his

reasons. Kakuon will draft a letter of appreciation for his dedication to managing the garden, to be reviewed by Kakumyo before sending.

**Siskiyou Co-housing:** Dharma Rain made an approximately \$100K balloon payment in November to the LLC shareholders. This is approximately one-fifth of the total debt from the buy-back. One outside creditor was paid in full as required, and another shareholder was paid in full because the amount owed was relatively small. The other payments were pro-rated.

**Financial Report:** Zonnyo presented the first quarter financial report (attached to the agenda and posted to Google.docs). The report shows a net income of \$50,561 including Frog Song, with total income at \$97,214 (164% of budget) and total expenses at \$75,662 (83% of budget). Total equity is at \$4,880,787, with an unrestricted cash account of \$139,281, a nearly five-month operating reserve.

**DEI:** Dharma Rain has contracted with TUSK to lead a three-session workshop on Diversity and Equity Issues. The sessions will be open to 25 people, with those in leadership positions strongly encouraged to participate. Alice and Carrie volunteered to work with Zonnyo in coordinating with TUSK to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to our needs.

**HSC:** Kakumyo reported that, though most members agreed, there was some dissent in the committee regarding the board's decision to reopen the zendo to full capacity in January. Given the recent rapid increase of cases nationally due to the Omicron variant, the board recognizes the need for the HSC to continue monitoring the situation and acknowledged that the reopening could have to be reversed. Zonnyo and Kakuon will draft a letter to the HSC committee to this effect.

**Teacher Support:** Kakumyo made a motion, seconded by Ansui, that the position of Godo (head teacher), currently held by Sally Jiko Tisdale, receive a \$250 monthly stipend beginning in January. After brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Membership Subcommittee:** Kakumyo made a motion, seconded by Zonnyo, that Dharma Rain add a line to the membership page regarding the option of non-monetary memberships. The motion passed unanimously. The exact wording, emailed to board members after the meeting, reads like this: *Dharma Rain acknowledges the importance of generosity in practice*

*and believes that it can be expressed in many ways. To broaden the ways the temple can receive generosity, we will add a line to the membership page that says "If financial donations are an obstacle, dedicated volunteer time can be recognized with membership. Click here to sign up." When that is clicked, staff will contact the person, and work out a volunteer arrangement that consists of  $\geq 3$  hours a month. Staff would make a note in Quickbooks that prevents the individual's membership from being cancelled for lack of funding. Staff will also need to confirm that this commitment is being honored, at least every 6 months.*

**Board Membership update:** The board will seat four new members in January. Given this turnover, the board will wait until February to look for a replacement for Minshu, who had one year left on his term. It was agreed that "institutional memory" should be a consideration in seeking a replacement, to balance out the relative inexperience of some of the other new members. Kakumyo will present names under consideration at the February meeting.

**Garden Future Direction:** Prior to his resignation, Gabe Penk had submitted a letter asking about the sangha's vision for the garden. Among the questions he asked are: *How do we prioritize recipients of produce; how does the garden fit into long term plans for the temple grounds; what is the relationship between the garden and residents, volunteers, members and the community; how is the garden inclusive of and accountable to Native communities.* It was acknowledged that Gabe will be difficult to replace, and that we may need to scale back the size of the garden in the next planting season. This will not impact the operation of the temple, but will limit the amount of produce we donate to the community for those in need. The board previously approved a motion to fund a 10-hour a week contract position for the garden manager in 2022. The board will go ahead with this plan. Kakumyo will draft a job description, and request help from Gabe. The position will be open to members of the community as well as sangha members.

**Property Updates:** Nothing new to report.

**Action Items:**

Kakuon will send a blurb to the newsletter explaining the process for choosing new board members.

Kakuon will draft a letter of thanks to Gabe Penk.

Zonnyo, Alice and Carrie will coordinate with TUSK on planning and scheduling DEI workshops.

Zonnyo and Kakuon will draft a letter to the HSC committee letting them know we appreciate their continued COVID monitoring.

Kakumyo will come up with a job description for the garden manager position. Ansui will help, with possible input from Gabe.

The board needs to schedule meeting dates for the first half of 2022. We can do this by email.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m., with fond farewells and expressions of appreciation to the departing members present, Ansui and Kakuon. Respectfully submitted by Hogetsu Rick Mitchell, board secretary.