

LC Meeting Minutes 10/11/15

Present: Chuso, Jun'nyo, Zusei, Shinyu, Hoshi, Rinsen, Do'on, Renso (representing the Dharma School)

Chuso called the meeting to order and presented a new format for LC meetings, beginning with a segment containing brief updates on many topics, each timeboxed to 2 minutes, followed by a smaller number of topics for full discussion.

Dharma School: Before beginning the brief updates, Renso presented notes and decisions from the recent Dharma School teachers meeting. The complete meeting notes are included at the end of this document. Highlights:

- During the October 11 service, Dharma School teachers, priests, and liturgy team piloted a refinement of the Sunday morning schedule that pins the key transition ending Dharma School and moving into the kids' demonstration to the exact clock time of 12:15 in order to improve flow of the service. In the new flow, Priests will also greet Dharma School students a few minutes after class begins. The pilot worked well and will be immediately adopted for ongoing use.
- Lesson plans created following a standard template will be stored in paper at the temple.
- The Dharma Kids demonstration will follow a standard format every Sunday.
- Dharma School teachers will call on Shoken students as last minute assistants when there are more children or less teachers than unusual.

Brief updates

Support for members separating from in-sangha romantic relationships: Rinsen asked council to consider and draft policy and procedures to support the community and all members when romantic relationships between sangha members end. The purpose of the policy will be to promote harmony in the sangha and to support the continued practice and community participation of members who have separated. Shinyu will form a team with members outside of LC to work through issues and present a proposal to LC.

Solicitation to join other communities: On occasion, visitors and members invite members of our community to join other communities of practice. Rinsen has asked LC to formulate clear and fair policy on solicitation to join other communities. Shinyu will form a team with members outside of LC to work through issues and present a proposal to LC.

Membership communications:

- Jun'nyo updated LC on creation of thank-you cards which will be used to send end-of-year messages to members as well as on other occasions when the temple wishes to express gratitude to individuals.
- LC briefly discussed the format and content of the end-of-year mailing which will contain donation summary for taxes and membership renewal information. Finalizing the message depends upon making a decision about how we fund sesshin going forward.

LC and Teachers have discussed moving away from the current fee-for-participation model (each participant is asked to cover his or her own costs) toward a community-funded-model for current sangha members (membership dues from the entire community support sesshin costs for all members). The community-funded-model would fully embody our unchanged intention that sesshin be an offering from the sangha for the benefit of our whole sangha and the greater sangha, rather than being solely an individual experience. Hoshi will lead a discussion of the issue with the community leading up to an LC decision at the November meeting.

- Finally, based on level of ongoing need and interest of many community members with relevant professional skills, LC decided to create a Communications Committee to maintain and level-up our electronic, print, and video communications. Jun'nyo will lead the Communications Committee and will recruit members from the community.

Dharma circle project: As the sangha grows, we want to ensure there is always a space to create and maintain the strong peer-to-peer bonds that arise from small groups. A Dharma circle would meet at a member's home and follow a format provided by our teachers and LC including a ritual opening, group reading, deep listening, informal conversation and fellowship. Shinyu and Rinsen will work on the format, and Jun'nyo will assist Shinyu in looking for one or more community members who would be interested and well-positioned geographically to run a pilot.

Sangha Party: Jun'nyo and Chuso will host a sangha party at their home December 12th. Flyers and Facebook invitations will advertise.

Buddha's Birthday: We plan to host a large public open-house to celebrate Buddha's Birthday in Spring 2016 and raise awareness of the temple in the broader community. We are inspired in this by several other sanghas that celebrate Buddha's birthday as a large public event. Activities may include bringing in buddha images from home to participate in an eye-opening ceremony. Chuso will reach out to community members for help envisioning, organizing, and managing the event.

Budget: We reviewed a draft budget for 2016 and determined that the categories were not sufficiently fine-grained. Hoshi will get a line-item expenses for a month (i.e. September) from the accountant to inform an improved budget. Do'on, Hoshi, and Zusei will work to extrapolate from recent sesshin cost/attendance information to a budget for sesshin throughout the year.

Fundraising campaigns: In the short term, we have a goal of raising funds to support a part-time administrative staff member to help the temple with consistency and quality in many areas. Longer term, we intend a major fundraising campaign to support building a retreat center. Hoshi and Chuso will work toward concrete ideas of how to raise funds for major initiatives with assistance from community members with professional experience in this area.

Sesshin update/procedures: Shoken Council will begin handling most sesshin management in 2016, after Shoken formation is completed. Marketing and some communications may

continued to be handled by LC or jointly and there will always be some areas of overlap and coordination. For October, November, and December sesshins in 2015, LC will continue to manage marketing, communications, registration, financials, and appointing officers for sesshin. Zusei in LC capacity will act as retreat coordinator during this time, and will then work with Shoken Council on the hand-off.

Discussions

Evening Start Time Adjustment: A majority of respondents to the annual sangha survey favored an earlier start time for Wednesday night, however at the same time many were indifferent, and a sizable minority wished to keep the start time as-is. Given that we have invested substantially in marketing materials that are out in the community that list the current start time, LC decided for now to focus on revising flow of Wednesday evening practice to ensure 9:30 end time while leaving start time as 7:15pm gather / 7:30pm start. Zusei will work with Rinsen to propose an initial set of time points and practices to ensure 9:30pm endings, and on purchasing a new clock for the timekeeper. Shoken students will eventually take over liturgical and time management responsibilities for Wednesday nights, and ensuring on-time start and end will be a timekeeper responsibility; LC will retain this responsibility until Shoken Council is ready to take on these responsibilities after formation. Once Shoken formation is complete and students are trained, Shoken students will be able to organize sitting (without priests in some cases) at additional times (e.g. other days/nights of the week) to serve a broader range of schedules.

Roles of Shoken Council and Leadership Council: Recognizing that it will take some time after introduction of the Shoken Council to discern best division of responsibilities, Rinsen laid out the broad vision that Shoken Council will be responsible for managing its policies, its own members in their Shoken Council capacity and for managing liturgical practices and positions; LC will be responsible for general membership, fundraising, and strategic planning. Shoken Policy documents will be stored in a single policy document with LC policies for coherence and convenience of community members. Sesshin will be managed by the Shoken Council to the greatest extent possible. Both with sesshin and in other areas, there will always be overlapping concerns and need for close coordination among the priests, the Presidents of the Shoken Council and Leadership Council, and the LC Liaison to Shoken.

Facilities: We discussed many routine facilities improvements and repairs. LC decided to purchase decals for the doorwalls between the zendo and the dojo with the temple and dojo logos to reduce human-glass collisions and to add branding for the dojo. Additionally, a local chapter of the Flowing Waters Sangha is outgrowing its space and we have invited them to begin using the temple as a practice location. As with other outside groups using the temple space, a member of the Great Heartland Sangha would always be present and/or responsible for the group's use of the space. Shinyu will be our contact with the Flowing Waters Sangha and will let us know if they will begin meeting at the temple.

Dharma Store: Sho'on has volunteered to take over management of the store for a year and to help set a vision for the store going forward. Additional policy is needed to standardize how we accept and track partial-donation/partial-for-profit sales of handmade crafts by community members. Jun'nyo will work with Sho'on on creating policy proposals for LC.

The Leadership Council will next meet Sunday, November 15 at 2pm at the temple.

Full Notes from Dharma School Teachers Meeting 10/9/2015

Meeting began with a brief sitting period

Topics Covered:

- Discussed Survey feedback
- Clear Schedule
 - Continue with current lesson curriculum
 - Kyoan will update Google calendar for new year
- Review of Topics
 - To be done at next meeting
- Review Flow of Time
 - If the need arises where there are too many kids Shoken students may be brought in to assist with lesson
 - Priest may come in ~5-10min after Dharma School begins for a brief face to face time with students
 - Dharma school to end at 12:15 with a bell to be rung and then a bell reply
 - Clean up flag to be placed in window at 12:10 to notify that clean up has begun and gives time to wrap up talk
 - Kyoan will develop a template for use on lesson plans to be kept in temple to refer to
 - When kids are brought to front for demonstration format should be as followed:
 - Today we discussed: _____
 - Ask kids if they would like to share anything from discussion
 - End with "Thank you kids for your practice and thank you sangha for listening to our share"
 - Roaring clapping to follow J
- Kids Activities in addition to dharma school
 - Develop songs 3-5 and bring in Kogen to help with guitar
 - Possibly bring kids out to do singing and get Dharma Kids T-shirts made
 - Possible Kids Jukai and Kids Ango
 - Must be sustainable and looked into further\
- Next Meeting November 6, 2015 3:30pm at the temple
- Dharma teachers all agreed they feel happy and nourished though there is some stress regarding lesson plans.