
Portland Friends of the Dhamma Third Quarter Board Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2014

PFOD Center, 2539 SE Madison St, Portland

Directors Present: Greg Satir (Vice President), Sakula Reinard (Spiritual Director), Rachel Telesmanick (Treasurer)

Board Officers: Tena Hoke (Secretary), Alistair Williamson (Building Committee Chair)

The meeting convened at 6:40 following a five-minute meditation led by Sakula.

The agenda was approved.

The minutes of the previous meeting, held June 4th, were approved with the addition of a reference to the ByLaws to clarify the criteria for a Board quorum. The Secretary noted that a quorum is present for this meeting.

Treasurer's Report. Rachel presented the Balance Sheet and Dana Expressions (aka Profit & Loss) as of August 17, 2014. Total Assets are \$27,737.93 and YTD net income is \$6,516.71. We had significant income in June due to the center opening with the monastics. July income fell off, quite possibly because of donations made in June. Cash given designated for monastics shows up as income in our books (and is passed directly on to the monastics), but checks written at our events to monastics do not show up in our books at all. Sakula asked if we could track total donations to monastics simply for inspirational purposes. August will be the first "normal" month in terms of income and expenses. Switching banks is on hold.

Spiritual Director's Report. The Spiritual Director's report is attached at the end of these minutes.

Building Improvements. \$1500/month is our rental income goal and we are currently bringing in \$850/month. The long-term goal is to create fewer, more useable spaces from the lower level. A remodel is proposed. Phase 1 would include widening the hallway, pushing out the two offices into the meeting space, and moving the hallway to the south so that it does not bisect the meeting space. Phase 2 would merge the dining, hallway, meeting room and interview room into one larger space with a level floor. Phase 3 would address the restrooms and plumbing. Phases 2 and 3 would be independent of one another.

The following resolution was approved unanimously:

RESOLVED: That the Board authorize the Building Committee to design and get initial cost estimates for a lower-floor remodel that would:

- Create an office that we can rent for \$500 - \$700 per month;
- Create an office that the Spiritual Director can comfortably use for his or her duties as well as personal projects that encourage his or her presence at the center;
- Create a functional and attractive lower entrance.

FURTHER RESOLVED: That to help the Board decide on these improvements the committee will also sketch out how and when future improvements (phase 2 & 3) might be phased. The proposed design

with estimated costs is due by the October Annual Meeting. The committee is authorized to spend no more than \$250 to develop this proposal.

Spiritual Director's Support Working Group. The loan MOU calls upon PFOD to develop a Support Plan for the position of Spiritual Director (SD).

The following resolution was approved unanimously:

RESOLVED: That a Board Committee with Greg as chair and Rachel, Tena, Paul G. and Margaret as members be appointed to develop a recommendation for "a salary appropriate to the position and appropriate to the means of the organization" for the position of SD. Working with the Spiritual Director, the committee should also develop a recommended job description for the position of SD. The committee should complete its recommendations to the Board before the end of 2014. The Board will then be responsible for final decisions regarding compensation, supervision, and performance review.

Building Security. When we purchased this building from Dharma Rain, they advised that theft could be a problem, and advised us of their experience with a cycle of decreasing vigilance, followed by theft, followed by increased vigilance, followed by decreasing vigilance. So far PFOD has experienced a stolen purse and the theft of Sakula's work laptop.

The following resolution was approved unanimously:

RESOLVED: That the issue of how to enhance building security be referred to the Stewardship Committee;

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board approves a budget of up to \$200 for the Spiritual Director to purchase a locking file cabinet.

Review of Assigned Items. There was not enough time to address this agenda item. Greg requested that anyone with incomplete items on the list let him know and provide an updated expected completion date.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Additional Board Activity by E-Mail:

The resignation of Jessica Swanson from the Board was received by e-mail on September 11, 2014.

The following draft PFOD vision statement was approved unanimously (Greg, Sakula, and Rachel) by e-mail on October 1, 2014:

Draft PFOD Vision Statement: We envision a City Sanctuary/Refuge, where we as laypeople can set aside our worldly burdens within a community that nurtures virtue, contentment and calm, so wisdom can arise. We aim to provide support for personal explorations into the Buddha's teachings, guidance in training our minds, and direct contact with the lineage of Ajahn Chah monastics. Finally we envision a community of mutual support and companionship as we strive to apply these teachings in our daily lives, and walk the eight fold path.

Spiritual Director's Report

August 21st, 2014

My main concern for the community at this moment in time is for us to recognize the good work that has brought us to this challenge of owning our own building.

Report on What We've Done and Are Doing:

We've done crazy lot of work this past year resulting in a move from *securing a foundation* to *sustaining a foundation*. To name a few milestones, this move required that we support our community to stick together while scaling down our programs by 75%, raise money, restructure our donation verbiage to include fundraising, restructure our operations to include training leaders within the community, expand our renters base, adopt a MOU (written from scratch) and vet new programs and leaders to bring our offerings of events, classes and workshops back online. As well we've revamped our mode of operations to include a leadership training program that encourages a base of volunteers in maintaining the building while hosting all events in a smooth and harmonious fashion.

This board's good efforts have not gone unnoticed by the monastics of our lineage. Demonstrating their support by their presence at our Grand Opening were 13 monks, 1 priests and over 200 lay people. And the word spreads. In my recent visit to Victoria B.C. (for a retreat with Ajahn Geoff), the leaders of the Victoria Insight Meditation Community shared with me their hope to absorb a bit of what we have done in Portland as inspiration to what they might do in Victoria (i.e. moving toward a foundation in support of monastic teachers). They were so moved by what we have accomplished that they invited me up to observe, commune and advise with them as they consider (under Ajahn Sona's advice) to mimic how PFoD operates.

The Program Committee has developed several new programs and has its eye on still developing a family/kids program and a lineage/training program. Besides these two in development, the committee, like the board, at a stage of sustaining/maintaining as opposed to creating. For at least the next six months, if not longer, this committee will meet every other month, half as often as this past year in which it saw to or brought back and implemented **The Beginners Program, A Chanting Workshop, A Buddhism 101 Course, A Book Club** and oversaw the changing schedules and format of the **Sunday evening and the Friday Night gatherings**.

A Few Final mentionable's: With LP Pasanno's blessings, Matthew, Jessica and myself will form a Teacher's Round Table (a casual gathering to support our roles as Dhamma leaders/teachers). Scott Bengé and Heather Fercho, also with LP Pasanno's blessings have accepted our invitation to sit in for us when any one of us are unable to be present for our groups.

Report on Ongoing Research into Ways to Support Community Harmony:

Community Tea: Establishing a monthly or bi-monthly Tea hosted by members of the Board, Program Committee and Operational Teams as a means to communicate and engage with interested parties of the community about decisions and activities of PFoD's leaders.

Conflict resolutions: In considering ways to promote harmony I did a bit of research on what steps to take when harmony is disrupted with conflict. I came across a movement born out of

Non Violent Communications called Restorative Circles. I thought this seemed worth sharing as a possible addition to our operations. If you are interested in learning about this method of resolution [Please watch this video.](http://vimeo.com/6557584) (<http://vimeo.com/6557584>)

Report on Visioning:

With input, edits and feedback from several people, I have been working on crafting a Vision Statement to provide direction in developing a 3 to 5 year plan.

Vision Statement: We envision a City Sanctuary/Refuge, where we as laypeople can set aside our worldly burdens within a community that nurtures virtue, contentment and calm, so wisdom can arise. We aim to provide support for personal explorations into the Buddha's teachings, guidance in training our minds, and direct contact with lineage of Ajahn Chah monastics. Finally we envision a community of mutual support and companionship as we strive to apply these teaching in our daily lives, and walk the eight fold path.