
Portland Friends of the Dhamma Annual Community Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2015

Portland Dhamma Center, 1404 SE 25th Ave, Portland

Present: Charla (Board Member, Facilitator), Kristen, Rachel (Treasurer), Mary Ann, Katharine, Matt Nathan, Jessica, Chad, Stephanie, Matthew, Tom, Pilar, Alistair, Tena (Secretary), Inese, Adrienne, Greg (Board Chair), Renee, Patty, Sakula (Spiritual Director), Alex, Josh

The meeting convened at 10:00 with a five-minute meditation.

Charla led an introductory opening exercise which helped establish the upbeat tone of the meeting, and then she explained the agenda for the morning.

The following people gave brief reflections on accomplishments of the past year. After each person spoke, various attendees expressed appreciation for all the people that worked on the task.

Kristen – Team lead for building remodel

Sakula – Building acquisition and development of its uses

Matthew & Jessica – Programs

Josh – Library

Patty & Sakula – Tea time with the monks

Tena – Compensation committee

Stephanie – Children’s committee

Rachel - Treasury

Following a break, people broke up into 4 small groups and rotated around 4 different stations, with each group visiting each station for approximately 7 minutes. Then everyone came back together and each station leader summarized their findings as follows.

COMMUNICATIONS (facilitated by Rachel):

What helps keep you informed about PFOD activities and events?

- Observer
- email - Yahoo group
- text messages
- website - (taking off old information, and include year in all postings)
 - for new folks mostly keep it robust!
- announcements in classes
- Oral transmissions - talking with other community members
- Facebook
- Instagram
- NW Dharma Association
- Fliers (take away for new folks at events, not necessarily at PFOD)

What is the best way to keep you informed? to ENGAGE you the best?

- text message (close to the event, and for specific support)
- email (close to event) +1
- Phone Tree
- announcements in someone's words
- Personal invitation about events
- MONTHLY calendar displayed visually in the center

Other ideas to increase communication:

- Blog
- Little Free Library (lending library outside)
- Display Case outside
- Need to communicate multiple times for volunteer needs and with notices.

PROGRAMS (facilitated by Sakula & Tena):

What current programs aid a sense of community practice?

- Kids program + Sunday Sila
 - Families are welcome
- Beginners programs
 - Beginning meditation
 - Buddha's basic teachings
 - Upasika intro
- Book group
- Tea with the monastics
- The meditation period
- The chance to hear people talk about their practice

What more could our programming offer to aid community practice?

- Broader training, possibly with like-minded groups
 - NVC
 - Diversity trainings for center
 - brainstorm about how to increase diverse participation (racial, gender, ability, etc)
- Thai Forest Traditions
- More topic-focused short courses
 - metta (all 4 divine abidings)
 - other foundational practices
 - Pali
 - discussion group on buddhist practice in daily life
 - Book discussion of dhamma book, that includes personal sharing of experiences on a topic.
- programs with Outreach components
 - outside PFOD
 - to Thai community - programs in Thai
 - or spanish (Pilar can translate in spanish)
 - Regular tea time for feedback on programs
- Social action/justice service work
 - tie in with Buddhist Global Relief
- Early morning sit
 - Wednesdays 6:30am or 7:30 am

- Chanting in Pali
 - Buddhist choir group
 - chant for monks
- Therigata study
 - Feminism + Buddhism
- Day Long meditations
 - Retreats or mini-retreats
 - more time for meditation!
- More time to sit (45 min sessions), and share about personal practice.
- Open building 1 hour before scheduled program for people who would like additional meditation time.

REFUGE (facilitated by Greg):

What about the community and the building feels like a refuge?

- **A Lot!**
- Shared interest
 - Pali Canon
 - People to talk with
 - Talk Dhamma/Group Meditation
- Non-hierarchical
 - Everyone contributes their ideas
- Building is an anchor
 - place as a focal point
 - Sacred Space -- different than normal spaces
 - Place of heart
- The Happiness of having good friends
 - Lots of people who can offer guidance
 - not worrying about failure/problems
 - allows me to be my best self
 - seeing we all have quirky minds
- Culture of Dana + other paramis
 - Openness to give and receive
- Rooted in Monastic Sangha
 - 1-on-1 direct guidance from monks
 - meal offerings
- Variety of Programming
- Many Doors
- 5 precepts
 - Right Speech
 - Security + Honesty
 - Integrity - no worries about theft
 - Opportunity to behave gracefully
- Sharing/Check-in
 - Don't feel alone
 - It takes me to my center
 - Sharing Stillness
- Beauty of Building
 - Easy to love
 - Relaxing when I enter

- Puts you in “that space”
- Widening base of volunteer
- The Building feels permanent
 - like owning your own home
- Beautiful
 - maybe a bit cold
 - relaxed feel/less regimented
- A place to give non-monetarily
- Affiliation with monastics
 - something bigger than ourselves
- Feel comfortable to not know tradition
 - welcoming
 - it's ok
 - off the hook

PARTICIPATION (facilitated by Charla):

Where/How do you see yourself able to participate over the next year?

<p>Community Workparties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building • Cleaning • Gardening • Library 	<p>Supporting Communication + Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-group moderation • website support • enews - articles/content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex Pandzik - Cleaning • Katharine Quince - Cleaning • Josh Shamoon - Books, sorting and expanding library • Matt Quince - Reference + Dana • Stephanie (OT) • Mary Ann - Cleaning/Gardening • Kristen Saxon - Building Committee • Alistair - Building (encourage/help people to take care of it as their own) • Greg F. - Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex Pandzik - Database! • Tom - supp with PSU interns • Patty - stewarding (welcoming) • Pilar - stewarding (welcoming) • Matt Quince - website/lite tech • Katharine Quince - communications/outreach • Jessica - newsletter editing, outreach for children's program
<p>Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monastic Tea-Time • Set up • Clean up • Meal Offering events 	<p>Fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning support • Mailings • Outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katharine Quince - • Matthew Grad - especially 3rd fridays • Patty Pandzik - OT Kitchen coordinator • Josh - set-up/clean-up, transport monks as needed • Tom - occasional participation in set-up/cleanup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katharine Quince - Fundraising • Stephanie (when I can) • Greg F. - need to talk about what we need. planning! • Kristen Saxon

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pilar - Saturday meal offerings• Mary Ann - setups, cleanups, transportation to/from Hermitage (during daytime only)• Jessica - 3rd Saturday meal offerings	
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The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm, and followed by a potluck lunch.
